School administrators' views on effective school development: A case study

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Abstract. In this study, the aim was to identify the views of school principals in public schools in Muratpasa in Antalya regarding the concept of an effective school and to analyze their opinions on effective school development. Based on a qualitative research design, it was conducted using a holistic multiple-case study approach. Individual interviews were used as the data collection technique and descriptive analysis was employed to analyze the collected data. According to the findings, most school administrators were familiar with the concept of effectiveness; however, they tended to perceive it more as social events. The most significant characteristics of effective schools were emphasized as the quality of educational services and the sensitivity toward school climate and culture. It was highlighted that each school should have its own unique mission and vision. The importance of flexible discipline and the role of punishment and reward were emphasized with the necessity for effective schools to move beyond routine behaviors and provide students with diverse learning environments. Motivation plays a crucial role in meeting different expectations and positive reinforcement is achievable through positive communication. Finally, the school administrators indicated that the greatest barrier to becoming an effective school is the lack of supervision.

Keywords: Effective school, school administrator, case study

Introduction

In an effective school, students' cognitive, affective, psychomotor, social, and aesthetic domains are supported, and a highly optimal learning environment is created. These schools are capable of generating differences, and these differences emerge from ideas. The main focus of school effectiveness is the ability of schools to independently make a change in student achievement. Effective schools provide students with appropriate materials, physical conditions, and all necessary resources to ensure their success. They contribute to students' development not only cognitively but also affectively (Özdemir, 2000).

An effective school enables all students to benefit from the opportunities offered to them to the maximum extent, meaning that the prepared program achieves its intended goals (Lezotte, 1991). Studies conducted from past to present reveal similarities in the dimensions of effective schools. According to Edmonds (1979), effective schools have five key characteristics: they should clearly define their instructional goals, conduct systematic evaluations both generally and specifically, ensure that all students are able to learn, maintain a safe atmosphere that encourages teaching and learning, and include principled educators (Edmonds, 1979). Conducting research in many schools across Asia, Cheng and Wong (1996) identified the following dimensions: community contribution, teacher professionalism, quality-oriented school structures, and high achievement expectations. Zigarelli (1996) examined six themes—qualified teachers, teacher participation and satisfaction, the leadership and communication

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skills of school administrators, strong institutional culture, positive school management relations, and high parental involvement—and tested their effects on student achievement (Zigarelli, 1996).

The teaching and learning environment, which is highly significant for an effective school, emerges as a result of the interaction between the organization and its surroundings, and this environment varies according to the climate of the organization. This environment—where information is communicated, students are active, and instructional activities take place—is the setting in which educational practices are carried out (Başaran, 1982). The responsibility of the school administrator is to create an effective and productive school environment, while teachers are responsible for creating an efficient and effective classroom environment. By establishing a calm, harmonious, and active atmosphere, teachers foster group awareness and participation among students. Such an environment becomes possible through the encouragement of the teacher and the participation of the students (Baştepe, 2009).

When considering the goals of an effective school, they are objectives that, like in any system, enable the school to maintain its existence. They address the questions, "Why does the school exist? What does the school produce in order to survive?" A school is established to provide education at a certain level within the education system, focusing on citizens of specific age groups. To continue its existence, the school produces educational services. At the same time, it produces materials and ideas that contribute to and promote education. In this way, it diversifies its organizational purpose (Başaran, 2000).

From the perspective of managerial goals, the aim is to ensure the school's effectiveness. The degree to which organizational goals are achieved determines a school's effectiveness. The level of effectiveness increases as the administration enhances the quantity and quality of the education provided by the school. Managerial goals include not only raising students according to predetermined timelines but also improving their competence. Therefore, an educational administrator must both expand access to education and enhance its quality (Başaran, 2000).

Regarding the educational goals of the school, these goals—defined as the qualities of behaviors intended to be instilled in students—essentially describe the ideal citizen to be educated. Identifying the characteristics students should acquire is seen as one of the major challenges in educational administration. With which behaviors should the student be equipped? Should the student be raised with the values of the past, the values of the present, or those required for future life? These questions must be carefully addressed, guided by research (Başaran, 2000).

Four key characteristics of effective schools can be listed as follows (Macgilchrist, 2004): student rights and responsibilities; student representation and engagement in learning; professional and highly qualified leadership and management; a focus on teaching and learning; and a learning organization in which school staff are willing to participate in learning and professional development programs. The foundation of research on effective schools consists of identifying factors related to the internal environment of the school.

When studies on ineffective schools are examined, it is evident that, just as in effective schools, the most salient issue is the administrator and their management style. Administrators working in ineffective schools are regarded as unsuccessful and inadequate because they are not sufficiently active in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities, lack instructional leadership skills, exhibit bureaucratic attitudes, and fail to establish institutional culture and policies (Baştepe, 2004). As in other organizations, determining the criteria of success in schools is particularly challenging. For this reason, Cameron argued that instead of trying to define effectiveness criteria, it is more meaningful to start from the indicators of ineffectiveness. These indicators include failure, organizational conflict, problems, errors, low performance, and issues arising from the ambiguity of duties and responsibilities of administrators, teachers, parents, and students. If such indicators are absent in a school, the school may be considered

effective. In cases where effectiveness criteria are not clearly defined, establishing criteria for school improvement becomes highly useful (Şişman, 2002).

The school is a social system with its own organizational climate and culture. Since the inputs and outputs of these organizations are people, organizational climate and culture hold great importance in institutions where human relations are central. The school administrator has the greatest responsibility in shaping this culture and climate. If the school administrator succeeds in creating an effective culture and climate, employee motivation increases and a healthy school environment emerges (Çelik, 2002).

Achieving educational goals is possible through instructional processes. Because teachers are the fundamental component of instruction, they must possess certain essential qualities. There is a close relationship between effective schools and effective teachers. In effective schools, teachers collaborate and work interactively, supported by school principals. They share the instructional strategies and materials they use in lessons. Their communication with students in the classroom is strong. The teacher's primary focus is learning, and teachers must also learn while they teach. Professional responsibilities include continual progress and staying updated in their field. Another important factor is communication: in the classroom, not only what is taught but how it is presented is highly significant. Effective teachers master their subject area, are skilled in classroom management, maintain high energy, communicate effectively with students, use their voice and gestures well, and present material with enthusiasm—even topics that may not initially seem interesting to students. Research shows a parallel relationship between personality traits and effective teaching (Polk, 2006).

Students are at the center of effective schools. The goal is for students with different academic abilities to reach predetermined standards. A student's social and socioeconomic background is not the only factor determining success. Teachers believe that every student can succeed and therefore maintain high expectations. They also see it as their duty to communicate these expectations to students. Students are willing to participate in social activities, and teachers and administrators encourage and guide them in this process (Şişman, 1996).

For families to be more responsive to problems that may arise in schools, they must share responsibility in education. The outcomes of school–family relationships directly affect student education; therefore, school administration should prioritize communication with parents. Compared to unsuccessful schools, successful schools are known to have stronger environmental and parental support and participation. This situation not only enhances success but also reduces disciplinary problems (Glass, Bjork &. Brunner, 1992).

Schools exist within a particular social environment and are closely connected with that environment. Preparing the environment for learning and gaining the support of the external community contribute to making a school effective. A well-organized school environment is crucial for effective teaching. If there is disorder and disciplinary issues in a school, learning cannot occur sufficiently. Therefore, the aim of an effective school is to minimize, even if not entirely eliminate, such issues. Ensuring a minimum level of necessary facilities and resources is essential for an effective education system. Effective education systems are expected to provide basic health and safety needs for all students (Kemal & Karip, 1996).

Several models have been designed in the field of organization and management to determine organizational effectiveness. In the goal model, it is observed that schools have complex sets of goals, which may at times conflict with one another. Academic goals, vocational skill development goals, and political and economic goals vary depending on societies and their environments (Şişman, 2002).

According to the resource–input model, schools, like other organizations, require certain resources to achieve their goals. These include family-related resources, school resources, student resources, social

characteristics, and peer groups. The more resources a school provides, the more effective it becomes. In this model, the alignment between a school's inputs and outputs is crucial. The primary outputs are defined as the successes students achieve on various assessments (Şişman, 2002).

According to the process model, determining school effectiveness is based on examining in-school and in-class processes. In this model, the school is not perceived as an open system; rather, what happens inside the school is directly associated with students. In other words, there is a strong connection between events occurring within school boundaries and the level of school effectiveness. In-school processes consist of management, teaching, and learning processes (Şişman, 2002).

In the satisfaction model, the stakeholders related to the school include students, teachers, school administration, the school board, district and provincial education organizations, and families. According to this model, the extent to which these stakeholders' expectations are met determines school effectiveness. Recently, total quality management has become a popular approach in schools (Şişman, 2002).

According to the legitimacy (legality) model, due to recent societal changes, school environments have become more competitive. A competitive setting may be observed as schools seek to access more resources. The survival of schools is closely linked to being accepted by society; greater societal support enables schools to secure more resources. This model also emphasizes schools' responsibility toward the community (Şişman, 2002).

According to the organizational learning model, societal changes influence the school. If a school can adapt to its environment and contribute to the improvement of that environment, it may be considered effective. The model differs from others in its emphasis on learning behavior. It includes adapting to societal changes and needs, evaluating internal processes, examining the environment, and preparing school development plans. Schools are expected to keep pace with political, economic, and technological changes occurring in their surroundings. One limitation of the system is the inability to clearly define the relationship between organizational learning processes and school outcomes (Şişman, 2002).

According to the total quality management model, the primary purpose is to enhance school effectiveness. This model appears as a combination of the satisfaction, process, and organizational learning models. A school can only be effective if it meets the expectations of its stakeholders (Şişman, 2002).

Katz and Kahn's model is fundamentally based on the systems model and emphasizes negotiation among organizational members. The ratio of output to input in technical and economic terms indicates improvement in effectiveness. Political permeability reflects political influence and constitutes the political dimension of effectiveness, which is highly important for effective schools (Kahn & Katz, 1978).

The Hoy and Ferguson model is a synthesis of the systems model and the goal model. Although these models differ, Hoy and Ferguson argue that both address organizational behavior from either an open or closed perspective; therefore, they can be integrated. Organizational adaptation refers to alignment with internal and external forces. Organizational effectiveness concerns the achievement of internal goals. Organizational unity means the absence of internal conflict. Organizational commitment refers to motivation and dedication of members to the organization. According to Hoy and Ferguson, these dimensions relate not only to goals but also to the means for achieving them, maintain consistency, and provide theoretical guidance. Through empirical research, they tested the validity of the model and concluded that it is applicable (Hoy, 1985).

Cameron's model of organizational effectiveness was designed to examine school effectiveness. The criteria Cameron (1978) developed to measure school effectiveness focus not on school goals but on organizational characteristics (Şişman, 1996).

In Creemers' educational effectiveness model, the main variables include curriculum, quality of instruction, grouped procedures, and teacher behavior dimensions, with attention given to the alignment among these components (Şişman, 2002).

In Scheerens' school effectiveness model, the primary dimensions are content, school and classroom processes, and outputs (Şişman, 2002). Numerous models have been developed concerning organizational effectiveness, and the most important and widely applied ones are discussed above.

The aim of this study is to define the concept of an effective school based on the views of school administrators working in the Muratpasa district of Antalya and to identify what needs to be done to improve school effectiveness. For this purpose, the study seeks to answer the following questions: what the concepts of effectiveness and efficiency mean to administrators; how administrators define an effective school; how the process of structuring an effective school should be carried out; what practices are observed in effective schools; and what responsibilities stakeholders should fulfill.

Research on effective schools in Türkiye is limited in number. Therefore, empirical studies on this topic remain insufficient, which increases the importance of further research in this field. A review of quantitative studies reveals some common findings. First, managerial, organizational, and personal variables have been shown to be associated with school effectiveness. Additionally, studies investigating the relationship between school effectiveness and student achievement are scarce. It has been determined that the schools examined generally possess characteristics of effective schools. However, most studies have revealed insufficient cooperation between schools and parents or between schools and the community.

Second, qualitative findings focus on what can be done to enhance school effectiveness and emphasize the components of an effective school. Establishing a strong school culture and a positive school climate, supporting and developing teachers professionally, and improving the quality of classroom learning were identified as common themes. Finally, qualitative studies have highlighted key shared components related to school effectiveness, such as fostering a positive school culture and environment, supporting teachers' professional development, and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning processes. Overall, when these findings are considered together, it can be concluded that administrators, teachers, instructional processes, school culture and climate, and collaboration with parents play crucial roles in ensuring school effectiveness. In summary, it is emphasized that school effectiveness must be strengthened through continuous professional development, collaboration with the school community and wider environment, and activities aimed at improving student learning. Based on these common findings, it is observed that qualitative and mixed-method studies are limited, whereas quantitative studies dominate the field. Given that effectiveness is a construct with a strong qualitative dimension, future research should examine it more deeply using qualitative and mixed-method approaches (Polatcan & Cansoy, 2017).

Furthermore, it has been observed that researchers often rely on previously developed scales, that newly developed scales lack adequate attention to validity and reliability, that studies predominantly focus on public schools, that sampling diversity is insufficient, and that quantitative designs are mostly preferred. The studies reviewed are not large-scale or long-term projects (Turhan, Şener, & Gündüzalp, 2017).

Many new concepts and approaches have emerged in the field of education. These newly introduced concepts and approaches lead the education system toward change and restructuring. Therefore, new

meanings are increasingly attributed to the concept of an "effective school," and the need for research in this area continues to grow rapidly.

School effectiveness plays a significant role in the development and progress of society. In this context, conducting research in this field is essential for accurately identifying existing problems and proposing solutions for improvement.

Methodology

In this study, a qualitative research method based on interpretive paradigm (Gunbayi & Sorm, 2018) was employed. The main focus of qualitative research is to understand, explain, examine, explore, and clarify the conditions, emotions, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of individuals (Çokluk & Şekercioğlu, 2014). Since the research was conducted with school administrators working in various public schools in the Muratpasa district of Antalya who voluntarily participated in the study, a holistic multiple-case study design (Yin, 2017) -one of the qualitative research designs based on case study methodology—was used.

A case study is defined as "an intensive and holistic description or analysis of a single or bounded system. Understanding the case is a central issue in data analysis, and data are typically obtained through interviews, field observations, and documents" (Merriam, 2013). In a holistic multiple-case design, more than one case that can be perceived as a whole on its own is examined. Each case is studied holistically, and then the cases are compared with one another (Yin, 2017).

Yin (1984) describes case study as a research method used when the central questions of the study are "how" and "why," when the researcher has little or no control over events, when the phenomenon is examined within its real-life context, and when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident (Yin, 1984).

Sampling

The sampling of the study consisted of 15 school administrators selected through convenience sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods. Purposive sampling allows for an in-depth examination of cases that are believed to provide rich information. In this sense, purposive sampling methods are useful in many situations for exploring and explaining phenomena and events (Palys, 2008).

Due to confidentiality and ethical considerations, the names of the participants in the study group were not disclosed, and codes were used instead. Participants were coded according to the order in which they were interviewed as K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K7, K8, K9, K10, K11, K12, K13, K14, and K15.

Data collection

The data were collected through audio recordings and note-taking during the interviews. First, the recordings were reviewed and transcribed. The transcribed data were documented after all individual interviews had been completed. A descriptive analysis method (Gunbayi, 2023) was used in the data analysis process.

For this study, the researcher visited the schools of the participating administrators and conducted the interviews on-site. All interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed by listening to the recordings. Prior to each interview, appointments were scheduled based on the availability of the participants. All interviews were conducted face-to-face. During the scheduling process and again before the interview began, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the ethical principles the researcher would follow, and confidentiality procedures.

Throughout the interview, questions were posed in a conversational manner to help participants feel comfortable. Depending on the flow of the conversation, the order of the questions was occasionally adjusted. Feedback was provided according to the responses given, and an encouraging approach was maintained. Although participants were informed beforehand of the minimum estimated time required for answering the questions, no upper time limit was imposed to allow the conversation to reach saturation. Consequently, some interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes, while others extended up to 2 hours.

Ethics statement

During the interviews, participants were first reminded that ethical responsibility ultimately belonged to them, and they were treated with courtesy and respect throughout the process. Interviewers should demonstrate appreciation and gratitude toward participants for agreeing to contribute their individual insights and experiences to the study, and this attitude should be reflected in the interviewer's interactions (Creswell, 2018; Patton, 2018).

In preparing the interview questions, sufficient time was allocated to ensure that the items were comprehensive and did not involve personal or private information about the participants. The questions were piloted under the supervision of the thesis advisor. Care was taken to ensure that the questions were clear and answerable. It is essential that interview questions avoid excessive generalizations and maintain clarity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2018; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

This research was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines. Ethical approval was granted by the Akdeniz University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee (Decision No: 248, 30/11/2020)

Rigour

In this study, qualitative rigor based on credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Gunbayi, 2024) was maintained throughout all stages of the research process. To ensure the reliability and accuracy of the study, methodological steps were carefully planned, systematically implemented, and thoroughly documented. From the design of the research to the analysis of the data, all phases were conducted in accordance with qualitative research standards; the literature was reviewed in detail, and the methods to be used were selected with great care. During the data collection process, school administrators were interviewed directly by visiting their schools, and all interviews were conducted face-to-face. Interview dates were arranged in advance based on the availability of the school principals, and at the beginning of each interview, participants were reminded of the purpose of the study, confidentiality principles, and the ethical guidelines that the researcher was committed to following. Semi-structured questions were posed in a conversational manner, creating a comfortable and open atmosphere for the participants.

All interviews were audio-recorded, and the recordings were later transcribed meticulously by the researcher. During the data analysis process, participants' responses were compared and grouped according to similarities, differences, and thematic patterns. The questions included in the semi-structured interview form were evaluated together with the experiences conveyed by the participants, and findings were used to generate conclusions and recommendations that aligned with the purpose of the study. In this way, the research process reflects the standards commonly emphasized in the qualitative research literature, including reliability, validity, data saturation, systematic documentation, and researcher neutrality.

Data analysis

In this study, comparisons were made, and consistencies and overlaps among the participants' responses were identified. Both the semi-structured interview form and the specific narratives shared by the participants were examined, and recommendations were developed based on the information obtained. In qualitative research, the goal is not to reach conclusions through numerical data, but rather to provide the reader with a descriptive and realistic portrayal of the phenomenon under investigation. Nevertheless, it is possible to conduct certain numerical analyses on data collected through qualitative methods (Gunbayi, 2023).

Data analysis begins with the interviews conducted with the participants. During the analysis process, the data are continuously documented and subsequently categorized. Interview transcripts are regularly revised throughout the process (Cohen, 2007).

From an epistemological perspective, this study is grounded in the interpretive (hermeneutic) paradigm. Since the research aims to reveal school administrators' views, interpretations, and experiences regarding effective schools, the process of knowledge production focuses on interpretation, meaning-making, and understanding social reality from the perspectives of the participants. Additionally, in the findings and discussion sections, the study incorporates a technical knowledge interest by offering practical recommendations for improving school effectiveness, and an emancipatory knowledge interest by identifying existing administrative and organizational issues in Türkiye and highlighting the need for transformation.

Findings

After the analysis of the literature and data collection tools, the themes were categorized as stated in the research method. These themes are listed as follows: effectiveness and efficiency, effective school, structuring in an effective school, practices in an effective school, the roles of stakeholders, and models designed to improve the effective school.

All participants focused on the existence of a predetermined goal for effectiveness. Achieving these goals, which were decided with the participation of stakeholders, constitutes the basis of effectiveness.

> *"According to my way of thinking, the concept of effective means being able to perform a given task in accordance with its purpose. In other words, it means performing the task with high performance and in the way that is expected." (K4,1)*

> *"When we look at the literature, the indicator of being effective is the level of achieving the goals." (K6,1)*

For some school principals (K7, K10, K5), goals refer to the general aims of Turkish National Education, while for others (K6), they represent a developmental process related to self-actualization.

> *"So if a school is an effective school, the concepts and goals it sets should be more universal. It should be a place where students can look more broadly, be freer, and develop themselves. Actually, the school should be such a place even before being an effective school. Those who can achieve this best — those who can reach these goals — are effective schools." (K6,1)*

> *"A school that raises its students in line with the aims of Turkish national education, that prepares our children properly for future generations, and where teachers and staff are happy comes to my mind." (K7,1)*

Although more than half of the participants (11 participants) could not define efficiency, they expressed their opinions regarding the fulfillment of needs and its necessity.

> *"To reach everyone: the student, the administrator, everyone. That is, to meet expectations, to ensure easy communication. To be able to meet expectations." (K1,1)*

> *"Preparing the equipment in accordance with today's conditions, being able to keep up with the expectations and developmental speed of our students especially in the information age. And being able to provide services that meet these expectations for our teachers and all staff in the school." (K1,1)*

Eight participants emphasized the necessity and inevitability of change, stating that schools must adapt to changes in order to be effective.

> *"When an effective school is mentioned, I understand a school that is effective in every sense—not only academically but also socially, artistically, and in sports. If a school adds value to its environment or neighborhood, it is an effective school. If I can influence the behavior of the students in this neighborhood, if I can — by saying I, of course I mean the school — lead teachers and students toward desired behaviors, then it is my effective school. If I add value to my environment... For example, if compared to the past I can add something positive; if I can reduce theft incidents, even simple ones; then I have begun to change something. Or if children greet each other in the neighborhood, use kind words, and there is no swearing, then it is effective." (K9,1)*

Nine participants stated that mission and vision should be prepared in line with goals and that they are among the most important factors of an effective school. They also emphasized that mission and vision differ not only between rural and urban school contexts, but also significantly among schools within the same province.

> *"When we think of schools that provide education in line with the goals stated in their mission and vision, such schools come to mind. In this sense, we can think of it as an educational model formed by conducting student-centered activities that highlight students. "(K3,1)*

> *"A school is as good as its principal. If the principal can plan for the future… I have been an administrator for 20 years. I have seen many schools. For example, teachers who visit schools or work in different schools know this better, or they notice it better when administrators change. You look at it and see that some schools in Antalya that had strong vision and were effective suddenly move in a completely different direction. Why? Because they cannot carry the same momentum forward. Or the opposite happens: suddenly the school shines and moves forward. This happens due to the perspectives and efforts of the principal and the assistant principals." (K2,1)*

According to 14 school administrators, student-centered activities constitute the foundation of an effective school. They emphasized the contribution of artistic, social, and cultural activities to student development and drew attention to the necessity of going beyond routine behaviors, critical thinking, and creative and developmental activities rather than solely focusing on academic achievement.

> *"Children are mostly social, that is, in our school, for example, in terms of both clubs and individual sports, and in terms of individual abilities, there are many children who participate in activities with the support of parents and the school. These are more common in effective schools." (K2,1)*

Eight participants stated that discipline, punishment, and reward in an effective school should be intertwined with a flexible learning environment, emphasized the importance of school climate and institutional culture, and referred to needs-based planning.

> *"Successful staff should be rewarded. It creates a climate in the institution. It creates an institutional culture. You celebrate birthdays, when someone buys a house you buy a gift and bring it, when they are sick you visit them collectively. There is a ceremony in the school. You teach the new students a chant. The school has its own anthem. The school has its own climate. Just as a flower grows and flourishes in its own climate, a child also needs to have a climate in*

the school they come to so that they can grow. Likewise, teachers should develop in this climate. Administrators should also grow in this climate." (K4,1)

Thirteen participants expressed the dimension of efficiency in effective schools by presenting their views on preparing students for higher levels of education, raising them in line with the aims of Turkish National Education, and using existing resources effectively without waste.

"Yes, people say this is a good school, an effective school, and during registration periods they even try to change their home addresses to get into these schools. In such schools, bus services are more common. Parents are more involved. Students act according to their goals and objectives. Children are mostly social; in our school for example, in terms of clubs, individual sports, individual talents, there are many children who participate in activities with the support of their families and the school. In effective schools, this is more common. For example, last year we had about 12 to 15 medals individually, related to the individual efforts of students encouraged by their families. Therefore, if the administration is good in an effective school, if teachers are devoted to their work, if children are conscious and disciplined, and if the parent is also included in the process, an effective and disciplined school emerges gradually on its own." (K2,1)

Eight participants described the effective school as a place loved by students, parents, and teachers, where they can express themselves comfortably and freely state their needs.

"If children greet each other in the neighborhood, address each other with kind words, and if swearing and similar behaviors do not exist, it is effective. Or at least let me say this: if children come to school willingly and happily, running to school, then I think I have started to become an effective school. My aim is to add value and make sure each day is not the same as the previous one." (K9,2)

Eight participants emphasized the importance of trust in the school, the development of a sense of belonging when needs are met, and the parallel increase in willingness to work as satisfaction rises, and they listed the contributions that happy staff and students make to the school. *"It needs to be in unity with parents. When needed, parents should come to the school willingly. For this to happen, parents must believe in school. Teachers and other staff must be happy. I already mentioned technical laws. Once these things begin, success will eventually come. Efficiency or effectiveness will be inevitable." (K7,2)*

Ten participants stated that positive and optimistic thinking dominates in an effective school, emphasized the unnecessary nature of negative directives, and mentioned respect for individual rights and freedoms, more democratic and universal values.

"Saying things like 'I did it, so it's done; I tell you to do it, so you will; you will follow the regulations' actually prevents students from thinking freely. If a student comes here to learn and receive education, they should be able to ask questions, research, think, and direct their thoughts as questions to the other side. While doing so, they should not fear the administrator. They should not fear being scolded or punished. Administrators need to include the student in the process and support this." (K3,2)

Five participants emphasized the importance of mutual understanding in an effective school and expressed the necessity of communication.

"They should not fear being scolded or punished. Administrators must include students in the process. I think administrators need to receive this training and look from the student's perspective." (K3,2)

According to participants' views, while structuring an effective school, goals must be achieved at the planned level, differences should be created during this process, positive reinforcement should be

prioritized, clear and understandable procedures, criteria, and principles should exist, and employees must continue learning to maintain this efficiency.

Eight participants spoke about the importance of fulfilling goals at the planned level and emphasized acting according to needs and opportunities.

> *"Here we generally act according to the expectations of our students. We decide together. We plan according to what they want. We try to meet all the individual expectations of our students. Because as a group, each student is different, has different ideas and expectations. Therefore, we plan in a way that meets the needs of all students. We plan according to their needs in all subjects, including social areas." (K1,3)*

Half of the participants emphasized the importance of schools going beyond routine behaviors, providing students with different learning environments, and carrying out extra work, stating that students' desired changes and self-actualization depend on these differences. Descriptions such as "a school hungry for success, students who research and are active, a school that does not repeat itself" were prominent.

> *"As I have said from the very beginning in the broadest sense, there are children and young people in an education system. They must actualize themselves, hold on to life, adapt to change, become global citizens, carry peace in their work, look at the world with peace, and stay away from poisonous thoughts such as discrimination and racism. This applies to all children in the world." (K6,3)*

Half of the participants emphasized that motivation is important in meeting the different expectations and needs of stakeholders in an effective school, and that positive reinforcement can be achieved only through positive communication and cooperation.

Nine participants stated that in an effective school, goals are not achieved randomly, and that clear and explicit criteria are required according to the structure and mission-vision of the schools.

> *"In an effective school, there must be criteria. There must be criteria for administrators, for students, for goals. Not randomly like 'let's start and see how it goes,' but they need to be defined more clearly." (K2,3)*

Seven participants emphasized the importance of being a learning organization so that teachers, administrators, and parents can keep up with the era, follow changes, and develop their own knowledge and skills.

Eight participants stated that there is a significant guidance need for appropriate educational and social activities required by students, and that guidance teachers and classroom teachers can support this, highlighting the importance of school administration guiding teachers.

Nine participants expressed that for schools to be effective, physical needs, classroom maintenance, and materials must be completed through cooperation with TSK, stakeholders, and collaboration. They emphasized the importance of meeting basic needs by mentioning institutional culture and school climate.

With the exception of four participants, eleven participants spoke about organizing task distribution and the importance of acting collectively in decision-making environments.

Participants described the importance of having qualified administrators and teachers, and an educational environment in which all stakeholders participate collaboratively. The vital importance of institutional culture is evident here.

All participants except one emphasized that in an effective school, decisions must be made collectively at every stage, and all stakeholders must participate collaboratively in all activities and processes. They stated that if even one stakeholder is missing, effectiveness cannot be achieved. Under this theme, many interrelated concepts were used by the participants, showing that all of them affect each other in a spiral manner: personnel relations (K4), proper functioning of the institution (K8), internal order (K6), good communication (K1), parents who support the school (K2), teachers acting as a bridge between parents and the school (K4), cooperating parents (K4), parents and cooperation (K5), parents who support the school (K7), institutional culture (K9).

Table 1. Themes that emerged in the content analysis

CATEGORIES	CODES
Effectiveness and Efficiency	Goal Orientation
	Needs
	Organizational Adaptation
	Vision and Mission
	Student-Centered Activities
	Flexible and Disciplined Environments
	Efficiency / Promoting Desired Behaviors
Effective School	Beloved School
	Happy Staff and Students
	Optimistic and Positive Attitudes
	Strong Empathy
Structuring in an Effective School	Achieving Planned Goals
	School that Makes a Difference
	Positive Reinforcement / Motivation
	Clear and Understandable Procedures / Criteria / Principles
	Learning Organization
Practices in an Effective School	Guiding School
	School that Meets Physical Needs and Deficiencies
	Human Resources / Organizing School
Roles of Stakeholders	Qualified Teachers and Administrators
	Sense of Participation / Organizational Culture

Conclusion and Discussion

The first topic related to the themes and results emerging from the interviews is the concepts of effectiveness and efficiency. Barnard (1938) defined effectiveness as "the degree to which the organization achieves its goals" (Balcı, 1993). It was observed that all participants were able to explain the concept of effectiveness; however, they confused the concept of efficiency with social activities. According to the participants, schools can be effective if they serve the goals formed with the participation of stakeholders who create the effective school.

In this study, although the participants' definitions of efficiency did not align with the definitions in the literature, the fact that they expressed their views on the importance and necessity of needs supports the

idea that effectiveness is a concept related to efficiency. According to the participants, goals that allow students to adapt to life, express themselves, and acquire a profession lead student toward achievement and productivity. Additionally, according to the participants, meeting teachers' needs motivates them, makes them feel belonging to the institution, and creates a sense of being valued. Based on the idea that the education system is implemented through schools, the goals of education—and therefore of the school—can be summarized as raising good individuals, good citizens, good producers, and good consumers (Aydın, 2002). Considering this, it is clearly seen that being efficient actually serves being effective.

According to Hoy and Miskel (1996), the most crucial feature of an effective school is the level at which it achieves its purpose and its high capacity to adapt to the environment (Miskel & Hoy, 1996). In the project study titled Indicators of the Turkish Education System and Effective Schools, Bakay and Kalem (2009) concluded that the most important indicator of an effective school, according to teachers, was the effectiveness of school processes; and according to principals, it was school climate (Kalem & Bakay, 2009). In this research, it is also seen that participants' views on the characteristics of effective schools directly or indirectly show similarities to these features. In this regard, it can be stated that the most important characteristics of an effective school are first, delivering educational services in the best way; second, giving importance to school–environment relations; and third, giving importance to school climate and culture.

In an effective school, families are aware of and support the school's mission. They are offered opportunities by the school administration to contribute to achieving this mission (Balcı, 2001). The participants' belief that each school has its own unique mission and vision, their view that being effective and efficient can only be achieved through a vision and mission determined according to needs, and that including parents and other stakeholders in this process will increase the impact, overlaps with this point and clearly demonstrates the necessity of mission and vision.

One of the results emerging in this research is student-centered activities. The prerequisite for these activities is ensuring safety and making physical conditions suitable for students. A certain level of minimum resources and facilities must be provided for an effective education system. Schools with effective education systems must provide facilities and equipment that can meet basic health and safety needs for all students (Kemal & Karip, 1996). From this perspective, the participants' statements that physical needs, classroom maintenance, and materials must be completed through TSK, stakeholders, and cooperation for schools to be effective, and their emphasis on institutional culture and school climate in relation to meeting basic needs, support this idea.

It has been emphasized that teachers in successful schools devote more time to teaching, and that teachers and students in these schools participate in more academic activities than those in unsuccessful schools (Celep, 2000). From this perspective, the fact that participants presented their views on preparing students for higher levels of education, raising them in line with the aims of Turkish National Education, and using existing resources effectively without waste aligns with the productivity dimension of effective schools.

According to Karatepe, being in communication with stakeholders affects managerial effectiveness (Karatepe, 2005). Şişman mentioned optimistic and positive attitudes (Şişman, 2002). Gündüz and Balyer (2012) concluded that effective school principals manage conflicts effectively (Gündüz & Balyer, 2012). Considering these statements, it is seen that the participants' descriptions in this study—that all stakeholders should come to school willingly, that school should be a place where they can express themselves freely, that they feel happy and belong, that optimistic and positive environments exist, and that everyone understands each other and experiences strong empathy—are consistent with one another.

According to Koçak and Helvacı (2011), one of the areas in which school principals are effective is human resources management, and one dimension of human resources management is managing conflicts. According to these researchers, for school principals to be effective in the school environment and family dimension, they must introduce the school's mission very well to parents and the school community (Helvacı & Koçak, 2011). The emphasis on task distribution, organizing who will be where

and how, and acting collectively in decision-making environments in this study overlaps with these statements in the literature.

According to Peters and Waterman, excellent organizations are those in which both loose and tight characteristics coexist (Peters & Waterman, 1987). Accordingly, in this study, participants stated that discipline, punishment, and reward in an effective school should be intertwined with a flexible educational environment, emphasized the importance of school climate and institutional culture, and referred to needs-based planning.

Since the school fulfills the function of differentiating the individual through instruction, the attention of school administrators focuses on the demands of society, problems, children, students, parents, and staff (Açıkalın, 1998). In this research, it was highlighted that going beyond routine behaviors, providing students with different learning environments, and conducting extra work are important for effective schools; participants concluded that students' desired changes and self-actualization depend on these differences. Descriptions such as "a school hungry for success, active students who research, a school that does not repeat itself" are prominent.

If the school administrator can create an effective culture and an effective school climate, they can increase teachers' motivation and contribute to the development of a healthy school identity (Çelik, 2002). In this context, this research emphasized that while meeting the different expectations and needs of stakeholders in an effective school, motivation is important, and positive reinforcement can be achieved through positive communication and cooperation.

Support from the environment, teacher professionalism, school orientation toward quality, and high expectations regarding achievement can be considered characteristics of effective schools (Girmen, 2006). In this research, participants similarly emphasized the importance of being a learning organization so that teachers, administrators, and parents can adapt to the era, follow changes, and develop their own knowledge and skills. It was concluded that effective schools focus on the necessity and inevitability of change and must adapt to changes to remain effective.

Student-centered activities constitute the foundation of an effective school. The contribution of artistic, sports, social, and cultural activities to student development, the importance of going beyond routine behaviors, critical thinking, and the necessity of creative and developmental activities rather than solely academic achievement were emphasized. Goals should be achieved at the planned level, and actions should be taken according to needs and opportunities. A significant need for guidance emerges for appropriate educational and social activities required by students, and this can be supported by guidance counselors and classroom teachers. Additionally, school administration should guide teachers as well.

Apart from the issues mentioned above, this study once again revealed the lack of supervision in organizations in Türkiye, and school administrators emphasized that the greatest deficiency on the way to becoming an effective school arises from this gap.

Recommendations

In relation to the school administrator dimension, administrators should visit classrooms and implement directive supervision by guiding teachers in areas where deficiencies are observed during lessons. Administrators should reward and encourage all kinds of success that occur in the school. More in-service training activities should be organized in line with needs to improve teachers' and administrators' insufficient knowledge, skills, and professional competencies; they should be convinced of the contributions of these programs, and support should be provided to ensure participation. An improvement is needed in reducing the bureaucratic workload of school administrators. Thus, school principals will be able to better organize, manage, and supervise instructional activities and devote more time to students and teachers. School principals should be appointed based on merit, selected according to specific criteria and principles, and subjected to routine evaluations throughout their service to measure their performance. School administration should possess characteristics such as being informative, sharing-

oriented, fair, adaptive to changes, capable of coordinating division of labor and duties effectively, able to foresee and solve problems, competent and knowledgeable, encouraging teamwork, responsive to staff needs, prioritizing employee satisfaction, leading the creation of more democratic learning environments, open to innovation, ready to generate different ideas, emotions, and concepts, able to utilize available resources efficiently without waste, and capable of going beyond routine behaviors. School principals should be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding instructional leadership.

In relation to the teacher dimension, teachers should maintain high expectations for students and be persuasive that students can succeed. They should be supported in their professional development and plan and use academic learning time effectively and efficiently. They should embrace the school climate jointly created by school stakeholders and remember that they are teachers of all students, not only successful and active ones. They should act in a student-centered way and, in addition to academic achievement, prepare activities in artistic, sports, cultural, and scientific fields according to students' interests and needs. They should be open to change and criticism, allow students to express themselves, work voluntarily and willingly while fulfilling their duties, create more free and human rights–respecting learning environments, possess strong empathy, trust the institution they work for, adapt to today's technologies and changes, organize extra developmental activities for students outside standard learning settings, genuinely make every effort, be devoted, guide students toward critical thinking, serve as a bridge between parents and students, and possess objective and fair characteristics.

In relation to the student dimension, students should be provided with guidance services to help them understand what is expected of them and to believe that they can succeed. Learning should be carried out in a cooperative environment distant from competition, and their expectations regarding achievement should be kept high. They should be encouraged regarding responsibility and taking on tasks and strengthened with alternative choices. Their correct and successful behaviors should be rewarded, and positive reinforcements should be applied to ensure continuity and to set an example for other students. Students should be evaluated frequently and systematically and should possess characteristics such as being orderly, rule-abiding, respectful, completing their work on time, curious, investigative, peaceful, and cooperative.

In relation to the school program and the teaching-learning process dimension; emphasis should be placed on activities designed to support students' academic, social, artistic, cultural, sports, and individual development, and the expectations and needs of students and parents should be prioritized in teaching-learning processes. Teaching-learning environments should possess features that facilitate effective teaching and learning and should be supported by educational technologies. Schools should have a strong physical structure capable of ensuring educational effectiveness. Collaboration among teachers, administrators, and students must be established in the school. It should not be forgotten that success in an effective school is the joint product of coordinated and effective efforts by students, parents, administrators, teachers, etc. Schools should focus on quality and equity. Many effectiveness models have been developed so far, and some of their assumptions differ from one another. Perhaps a synthesis of these models may lead to a more accurate definition of effectiveness. The teaching-learning environment should possess characteristics where flexible and disciplined settings coexist, more universal goals exist, students can think more freely, talents are discovered, students gain preliminary life experiences, order is present, student expectations are prioritized, employees and students are happy, the school is hungry for success, non-repetitive, structured according to specific criteria rather than randomly, trust-building, containing transparent processes, and responsive to needs.

In relation to the school culture and environmental dimension; an open school climate in which effective communication and interactions exist should be established, and opportunities should be provided for everyone to participate in decision-making processes on matters that concern them.

In relation to the school environment and parents dimension; attention should be given to school–environment relations, efforts should be planned to ensure that schools receive greater support from society, and environmental education activities should be organized to ensure school–parent closeness and harmony. Guidance activities should be conducted to ensure that parents are aware of what the school

expects from them and take responsibility accordingly. Encouraging activities, meetings, and events should be planned to increase parents' visits to the school, and their participation in decisions concerning the school and teaching-learning processes should be ensured.

The recommendations for further research in this field can be listed as follows: This study was conducted in the Muratpasa district of Antalya province. Effective school research should be carried out within a project, with a larger budget, over a longer period, in a more comprehensive manner, and with a larger team, and should also be conducted in other provinces for comparison. Because when the literature is examined, it is seen that more such research is conducted in metropolitan cities; however, in some smaller cities, no research has been conducted. Each dimension of effective schools should be addressed individually, and studies should be conducted both separately and together. Since there is an insufficient number of studies on school effectiveness and student achievement, this topic can be explored in particular. Effective school research has mostly been conducted quantitatively, and qualitative studies have been based on the views of administrators and teachers; therefore, it can be made more comprehensive by including parents and students as well. Effectiveness is a concept with a strong qualitative dimension; thus, more qualitative research can be conducted.

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No conflicts of interest are declared by the author.

Author Contribution

Corresponding author Özlem Güngören Pazzanese: Conceptualization, data refinement, research, methodology, original drafting, review, and editing

Süleyman Karataş: Supervision, writing-reviewing and editing

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In the writing process of the study titled **" School administrators' views on effective school development: A case study**", scientific, ethical and citation rules were followed; It is committed by the author of this study that no falsification has been done on the data collected. It accepts that "Journal of Action Qualitative &; Mixed Methods Research and Editor" has no responsibility for all ethical violations that may be encountered, that all responsibility belongs to the authors and that the study has not been submitted to any other academic publication environment for evaluation.

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Data Availability Statement

Anonymized data from this study can be used upon request ozlemgungorenelt@gmail.com