



Anatolian Teacher High Schools: Advantages, Limitations and Suggestions for Improvement*

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study was to investigate the advantages and limitations of Anatolian Teacher High Schools (ATHSs) and the improvements needed to increase the quality of education in these schools. The research design of the study comprised a nation-wide survey. Data were collected from a sample of 2925 participants including students, teachers, parents and the graduates by questionnaires containing multiple choice and open-ended questions. The quantitative data were analyzed via descriptive statistics, and the qualitative data were analyzed via content analysis. Results indicated that ATHSs are advantageous schools. The admission of only selected students to those schools and the additional score given to the graduates in University Entrance Exam (UEE) are the most important advantages. However, some improvements are needed to increase the quality of education in these schools.

Keywords: Anatolian Teacher High Schools, teacher education, school effectiveness.

* Bu çalışma, AÖL'lerin Amaçlarına Hizmet Etme Bakımından Etkililiği konulu doktora tezinin bir bölümü olarak yapılmıştır

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ÖZET

Eğitim sisteminin üç temel ögesi öğrenci, öğretmen ve eğitim programları olarak kabul edilmektedir. Eğitimin amaçlarına üst düzeyde ulaşabilmesi bu üç temel öğenin niteliklerine ve bunlar arasındaki uyuma bağlıdır. Fakat bu üç temel öğeden öğretmenin diğerlerini etkileme gücü daha fazla bulunmaktadır.

Nitelikli öğretmen yetiştirmek için gelişmiş ve gelişmekte olan birçok ülke öğretmenin kalitesini arttırmaya yönelik reform çalışmalarına ara vermeksizin devam etmektedir (Baskan, 2001). Ülkemiz de bu ülkelerden biridir.

Nitelikli öğretmen yetiştirme adına, ülkemiz çeşitli aşamalardan geçmiştir; 1982 yılında öğretmen yetiştirme sorumluluğunun üniversitelere devredilmesi ve temel eğitimin sekiz yıla çıkarılmasına bağlı olarak 1998’de öğretmen yetiştiren programların yeniden düzenlenmesi, ülkemizde öğretmen yetiştirmede niteliği artırma anlamında verilebilecek en yeni örneklerdir.

Ancak, öğretmen yetiştirmede niteliği artırma çalışmaları yüksek öğretim düzeyinde yapılan çalışmalarla sınırlı değildir. Diğer ülkelerden farklı olarak ortaöğretim düzeyinde yürütülen çalışmalar da vardır. Bunlardan en önemlisi Anadolu Öğretmen Liseleridir.

Anadolu Öğretmen Liseleri yabancı dil öğretimi ağırlıklı, paralı-parasız yatılı veya gündüzlü orta öğretim kurumları olarak tanımlanmakta ve temel amaçları özetle aşağıdaki şekilde ifade edilmektedir:

1. Öğretmen yetiştiren yüksek öğretim kurumlarına öğrenci hazırlamak,
2. Öğrencilerine;
 - a. Öğretmenlik ruhunu aşılama ve öğretmenlik mesleğini sevdirmek,
 - b. Öğretmenlik mesleğinin gerektirdiği bilgi, beceri, tutum ve davranışları kazandırmaktır.

Her geçen yıl sayılarındaki artış toplumun AÖL'lere olan talebinin arttığının bir göstergesidir.

Öte yandan toplumun nitelikli öğretmen talebi karşısında öğretmenlik mesleğini tercih eden adayların niteliğinin arttırılmasına yönelik çalışmaların son derece önemli olduğu günümüzde AÖL'lerdeki eğitimin niteliğini ve bu okulları tercih eden öğrenci niteliğini arttırmaya yönelik çalışmalar büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmada aşağıdaki iki soruya cevap aranmıştır:

1. AÖL'lerin avantajları ve sınırlılıkları nelerdir?
2. AÖL'lerdeki eğitimin niteliğini arttırmaya yönelik öneriler nelerdir?

Yöntem: Bu araştırma, tarama modeline göre tasarlanmıştır. Araştırmada nitel ve nicel veriler toplanmıştır. Verileri toplamak için açık ve kapalı uçlu sorulardan oluşan ve her bir grup için ayrı geliştirilen anketler örnekleme oluşturan 1026 AÖL öğrencisi, 877 veli, 612 öğretmen, 259 üniversiteye girememiş mezun ve 151 öğretmen yetiştiren programlara devam eden mezun olmak üzere toplam 2925 kişiye uygulanmıştır. Nicel veriler betimsel istatistiklerle, nitel veriler ise içerik analizine tabi tutularak çözümlenmiştir.

Bulgular, Yorum ve Öneriler: Bulgular; AÖL'lerin avantajlı okullar olduğunu göstermiştir. Öğrencilerin bu okullara seçilerek alınması, mezunlara ÖSS'de ek puan verilmesi ve mezunların ÖSS'de öğretmenlik dışındaki meslekleri tercih etmeleri durumunda puanlarının genel lise mezunlarının puanlarının hesaplandığı şekilde hesaplanmasının en önemli avantajları olduğunu göstermiştir. Diğer taraftan, “sanat ve spor alanlarında sınıf açılmaması” “velilerle işbirliği ve iletişimin yeterli olmaması” ve “ÖSS'de eğitim dersleri ile ilgili soruların sorulmaması” öne çıkan sınırlılıkları olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu okullardaki eğitimin niteliğinin artırılması için; öğretmenler ve yönetim, öğrenciler, programlar, yönlendirme ve rehberlik hizmetleri, yatılı okullardaki yaşam koşulları ve yardımcı personel alanlarında iyileştirmelere ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır



Anadolu Öğretmen Liseleri: Avantajları, Sınırlılıkları ve Gelişme için Öneriler*

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ÖZ: Bu çalışmanın amacı Anadolu Öğretmen Liselerinin (AÖL) avantajlarını, sınırlılıklarını ve bu okullardaki eğitimin niteliğini arttırmak için yapılması gerekenleri belirlemektir. Tarama modeline göre kurgulanmış araştırmada öğrenci, öğretmen, veli ve mezunları kapsayan 2925 kişilik bir örneklemeden, çoktan seçmeli ve açık uçlu sorulardan oluşan anketler yoluyla veriler toplanmıştır. Nicel veriler betimsel istatistiklerle, nitel veriler ise içerik analizine tabi tutularak çözümlenmiştir. Bulgular AÖL'lerin avantajlı okullar olduğunu göstermiştir. Öğrencilerin bu okullara seçilerek alınması ve mezunlarına ÖSS'de ek puan verilmesi en önemli avantajlarıdır. Ancak, bu okullardaki eğitimin niteliğinin artırılması için bazı iyileştirmelere ihtiyaç vardır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Anadolu Öğretmen Liseleri, öğretmen yetiştirme, okul etkililiği

INTRODUCTION

In the late 1990s, the companies throughout the private sector have learned that the most important asset of any organization is not its physical

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resources but its employees. Finding the right people, provides the improvement of organizational performance thus, declines need for remedial programs. Similarly, finding the right teachers for highly demanding schools is the first step in improving the quality of education (Gordon, 1999).

Teachers are a primary component for educational excellence and the need to attract highly capable individuals into the teaching profession is clear. In response to this need, numerous reform efforts, including programs, plans, implementations, and evaluations have emerged in an attempt to professionalize teaching and make the career more rewarding (Lynn, 2002).

When education is taken as a system, teacher, student and educational programs are accepted as the three primary components of the system. Achieving the highest level of success in education depends on the quality and harmony of these primary components. However, the teacher component has a greater influence on the other two. Therefore, “the teacher” is accepted as the most important component of the education system (Karagözoğlu, 1987).

On the basis of the World Conferences in Jamtien in 1990 and in Dackar in 2000, Coultas and Lewin (2000) stated that teacher is one of the main factors for the achievement and sustainability of education. Consequently, teacher education is critical for gaining universal access to effective education in developing countries.

Countries, which are aware of the importance of quality in education, are always searching for new ways of improving teacher education so as to provide for the changing needs of society. As one of these countries, Turkey is also seeking better means of educating teachers. The transfer of responsibility of teacher training to universities in 1982 and the reorganization of teacher training programs from two or three years to four-year undergraduate programs in 1989 are the two major developments in teacher training in Turkey (Şimşek and Yıldırım, 2001). As a requirement of changing needs of Turkish educational system reconstruction of teacher training programs as four-year undergraduate or five or five and half year graduate programs depending on the fields of specialization is the latest development in teacher training.

In addition, in order to train qualified teachers at higher education level, there are also some efforts contributing to teacher training at secondary education level. Anatolian Teacher High Schools (ATHSs) are the most remarkable examples of these efforts. ATHSs are four year (one year of English preparatory class and three years of academic education) secondary

schools and their purposes were stated in the Official Gazette (dated 20th October 2000, numbered 24206) as:

- 1.To prepare students for teacher training higher education institutions,
- 2.To help students enjoy teaching as a profession,
- 3.To provide students with the qualifications needed for the teaching profession,
- 4.To provide students with a general culture at secondary education level,
- 5.To provide students with the conscience of contribution to the economic, social and cultural development of the country,
- 6.To provide students with sufficient foreign language education to help them follow the developments in the world,
- 7.To provide a modern educational environment in which students can develop a sense of self-esteem, self-control and responsibility, through which they can learn that each individual is a different and unique value and that this can contribute to joint achievement in teamwork.

ATHSs' program is parallel to the program implemented in Foreign Language-Weighted General High Schools moreover; there are courses to promote desire and interest towards the teaching profession. The schools are in various forms; boarding with scholarship, boarding without scholarship, and day-time.

From 1989 to 2005 in different years, various numbers of ATHSs joined the Turkish education system, since demand for these schools has been increasing every successive year (Tican-Başaran, 2004). While they were 18 in 1989, in the 2004-2005 academic year they reached 124 in number. However this growing demand of society is not enough to decide about the effectiveness of ATHSs, because description of effectiveness of a school requires further evidences. According to definition developed by Quality in Education Center (QIE) (at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland) "effective schools" are those which evaluate their progress by using a reference point or benchmark and achieve their goals at or above the expected benchmark. Determining the effectiveness of a school requires a process of evaluation. Evaluation of effectiveness of ATHSs in this sense was conducted in the studies of Tican-Başaran (2004) and Tican-Başaran and Aksu (2005).

In addition, Davies and Ellison (1995) suggested “the client, customer or stakeholder satisfaction” as the alternative measure of school effectiveness. They think that besides standard tests, information on stakeholder satisfaction or stakeholder perceptions about the school also provide valuable perspective for the measure of school effectiveness. As the key client or stakeholder, Davies and Ellison referred to students (including the graduates), teachers, administrators, parents and non-teaching staff. In this study, students studying in ATHSs, parents sending their children to ATHSs, teachers working in ATHSs, and the graduates who could enter teacher training programs and who could not enter an higher education program are taken as stakeholders of ATHSs. In this respect, knowing the perceptions and the expectations of the stakeholders about the ATHSs would provide valuable contributions to the “Project of Restructuring the Secondary Education” which is being conducted by the Ministry of National Education (MONE).

On the other side, as a result of growing demand of the society for high quality of teachers in schools, the MONE is carrying out studies to increase the quality of student input into ATHSs. Those outcomes of these studies will not only increase the quality of student input into ATHSs, but also that of the student input into teacher training programs. For that reason, declaring the advantages and limitations of these schools -to students and their parents, teachers, school administrators and to educational policy makers- is very important for the admission of high quality students and for the improvement of the quality of education in these schools.

On the basis of above-mentioned background, this study aims to investigate the advantages and limitations of ATHSs and the improvements that are required to increase the quality of education in these schools, on the basis of its stakeholders’ perceptions. For this purpose the following sub-questions will be answered:

1. What are the advantages and limitations of ATHSs from the viewpoint of the stakeholders?
2. What are the stakeholders’ suggestions to increase the quality of education in ATHSs?

METHOD

This study was originally conducted as a doctoral thesis named “Effectiveness of Anatolian Teacher High Schools in Terms of Serving Their Intended Purpose”. In this article, only the advantages and limitations of ATHSs and the suggestions to increase the quality of education in ATHSs

were concerned. For that reason, in this part, related to the methodology of the above thesis study, only the parts related to concerns of this article are presented.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of this study included teachers (including school administrators) working at ATHS's, students attending ATHSs in the 2002-2003 academic year, their parents, the graduates who were studying in teacher training programs and the graduates who could not enter any higher education program (off-university graduates).

Since the groups of interest were unmanageably large, equal sized stratified random sample selection (for the groups; teachers, students, parents and off-university graduates) and equal sized cluster sample selection (to take sample of the graduates studying in teacher training programs) were conducted.

On the basis of UEE scores (raw and placement scores) of their graduates, from among 66 ATHSs a representative sample of 33 schools were included in the study by considering the boarding conditions, residence, the distribution among regions, the year of establishment and the number of students and teachers. Equal number of participants were selected randomly from each school. Hence, from each school 32 students, 32 parents, 20 teachers two of whom were school administrators, and 10 off-university graduates, were selected. On this base, 94 subjects ($32+32+20+10=94$) from each school totally 3102 subjects from 33 schools ($94 \times 33=3102$) were selected.

In order to select the graduates of ATHSs who were placed in teacher training programs, data related to university placement scores of 4612 graduates in 2002 was analyzed. Results showed that, Primary Science, Social Sciences, Classroom Teaching, Turkish, Primary and Secondary Mathematics, English Language, and Turkish Language and Literature Education programs were the first eight teacher training programs that were preferred by the graduates of ATHSs. In addition, it was found that Gazi University was the university to which the ATHS graduates entered in higher percentage (11.1% of 2002 graduates of ATHS) as compared to other universities. When the results related to placement rate of ATHS graduates into teacher training programs were examined, it was found that the placement rates of ATHS graduates into the above programs were very similar to the placement rates of ATHSs graduates into the teacher training programs throughout Turkey. On this base, from each program (mentioned

above) in Gazi Faculty of Education 20 ATHS graduates, totally from eight programs 160 subjects were selected randomly.

Number of subjects in each group in the sample is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of Subjects in Overall Sample of the Study

Subjects of the Study	Number of Data Collection Instruments that was Sent	Number of Returned, Valid Instruments
Students	1056	1026
Parents	1056	877
Teachers (including administrators)	660	612
Off-university graduates	330	259
Graduates studying in teacher training programs	160	151
Total	3262	2925

According to Table 1, collecting data from 3262 subjects was aimed, and, when the returned data collection instruments were examined 2925 (90 %) of them were found valid for this study.

Development of Data Collection Instruments

For each group of subjects in the study, questionnaires were developed. Student Questionnaire, Teacher Questionnaire, Parent Questionnaire, Off-University Graduate Questionnaire and Graduate Questionnaire (for the graduates studying in teacher training programs) were the instruments, administered to the subjects of the study.

While developing the questionnaires six steps were mainly taken:

1. Review of literature and determination of variables/main dimensions that is going to be covered.
2. Carrying out interview with the subjects from the sample.
3. Forming the draft of the instruments.
4. Taking the expert judgments.
5. Pilot testing.
6. Finalizing the instruments for the actual administration.

The process of developing the questionnaires started with a survey of local and foreign research studies conducted on ATHSs. On the basis of

review of literature, the variables that were going to be covered were determined, then, semi structured interview forms including the variables were prepared. Interviews with the subjects aimed at increasing the content validity of the instruments. On the basis of further information gathered from the interviews, draft instruments for the various subjects were made ready for pilot-testing and expert judgments.

The instruments developed to collect data from students, teachers, parents and off-university graduates were piloted in Ankara Hasan Ali Yücel ATHS and Hasanoğlan Atatürk ATHS. The instrument developed to collect data from the graduates studying in teacher training programs was piloted in METU Faculty of Education.

The final forms of each instrument included the items related to “subjects’ opinions about the ATHSs”. In the question asking the advantages of ATHSs subjects were given 33 items and in the question asking the limitations of ATHSs they were given 20 items. Subjects were free to choose more than one item and they were free to write further advantages and limitations. In addition, an open ended question asking the suggestions to improve the quality of education in ATHSs was included.

During the data collection process, the Educational Research and Development Directorate (ERDD) of the Ministry of National Education (MONE) provided assistance as partial requirement of ERDD Support Program for Educational Researches.

Analysis of Data

Descriptive statistics and content analysis were conducted in the analysis of data.

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS and SUGGESTIONS

Results Concerning the Advantages of ATHSs

The results concerning the advantages of ATHSs are presented in Table 2 and Table 3. In Table 2 the advantages having mean percentage of 50 or more than 50 for all groups are given.

Table 2. Advantages of ATHSs

Advantages	Subjects of the Study						Mean % for all Groups
	ATHS student	Teacher	Parents	Off- Uni. Gradu.*	Gradu. in TTPs**		
Admission of only selected students	f	852	552	722	205	125	2456
	%	83.0	90.2	82.3	79.2	83.9	84.0
Additional score given to the graduates of ATHSs in the UEE	f	896	510	688	201	121	2416
	%	87.3	83.3	78.4	77.6	81.2	82.7
Graduates being able to choose professions other than teaching	f	641	377	496	120	80	1714
	%	62.5	61.6	56.6	46.3	53.7	58.6
Guarantee of finding a job as a teacher	f	631	336	524	134	81	1706
	%	61.5	54.9	59.7	51.7	54.4	58.4
Good foreign language (English) education	f	583	360	531	134	80	1688
	%	56.8	58.8	60.5	51.7	53.7	57.7
Scholarship provided during university	f	635	299	454	141	73	1602
	%	61.9	48.9	51.8	54.4	49.0	54.8
Small class size	f	504	430	488	96	73	1591
	%	49.1	70.3	55.6	37.1	49.0	54.4
High motivation for students to enter university	f	534	333	473	129	88	1557
	%	52.0	54.4	53.9	49.8	59.1	53.3

*: Off-University Graduates

** : Graduates Studying in Teacher Training Programs

When the mean percentages for all groups in Table 2 are examined, ATHSs can be considered as advantageous schools among secondary education institutions. According to data gathered from the participants, although the agreement rate of groups slightly differs, the most important advantage of ATHSs is the admission of only the selected students to these schools. The participants, especially the teachers believe that, since the students in these schools were selected among the students who passed Secondary Education Institutions Entrance Exam, which is a standardized exam, these students have a high learning capacity.

The second most important advantage of ATHSs is the additional score allocated to the graduates in UEE if they prefer teacher training programs

among their first five choices, and this is seen as the most important advantage for the students studying in ATHSs.

Another advantage of ATHSs is the guarantee of finding a job if the graduates become teachers. ATHSs are seen as the first and safe step to enter a profession since the unemployment rate is 8.9 % in Turkey (SIS; 2003) it is no wonder that students and their parents see this factor as an advantage of ATHSs.

The other important advantage of ATHSs is the opportunity provided to the graduates if they prefer programs other than teaching. In this case, their UEE scores are calculated in the way general high school graduates' scores are calculated. Hence, they are free to choose the programs that they want to enter. Interestingly, this is not seen as an advantage of ATHSs by off-university graduates. This might be due to their negative experience in the UEE.

The other important advantage of ATHSs is a high quality of English language education. It is very interesting that, the percentages of the parents and the teachers who consider this as an advantage are higher than the percentage of students. This result may be related to the graduates who entered English Language Teaching Departments of prestigious universities in Turkey. For example in the English Language Teaching Departments of METU and Bosphorus University almost all of the students are ATHS graduates.

Another advantage of ATHSs for the students studying in ATHSs is that graduates are provided with a scholarship if they prefer teacher-training programs among their first five choices in UEE. But this is not perceived as an advantage by the graduates studying in teacher training programs. In the open-ended part of the related question they have reported that *the allocated amount was not sufficient and was not paid regularly*. This particular finding is parallel to what Karamustafa (1996) found. However, scholarships are vitally important in the sense that they may be turned into the main incentive for attracting the students to teacher training programs, as in the case of Chinese teacher education (Su et al., 2001; 2002). The number and quality of students who prefer teacher-training programs have increased as a result of allocation of larger amount of scholarship money to prospective teachers in China. These findings point out that, scholarship might also be used as an incentive for attracting the high quality students to ATHSs.

The small class size in ATHSs is the other advantage of ATHSs. High mean percentage for this item is due to the high agreement rate of the teachers and the parents; it is the third most important advantage of ATHSs

for the teachers and the sixth most important advantage for the parents. However, it is observed that it is not a main concern of the majority of the graduates and students in ATHSs. This may be due to the experiences of teachers and the parents about the effects of class size on quality of education.

Encouragement of the students for UEE is the other advantage of ATHSs that was stated by all groups, except for off-university graduates. Less positive opinion of the off-university graduates about this advantage is an expected result considering their negative experience in UEE.

In addition to the above advantages, there are other advantages having 50 % or more than 50 % of agreement for at least one group of subjects. These are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Other Advantages of ATHSs

Advantages	Subjects of the Study						Mean % for all Groups
	ATHS student	Teacher	Parents	Off- Uni. Gradu.*	Gradu. in TTPs*		
The students majority of whom want to become teacher	f	555	324	425	133	61	1498
	%	54.1	52.9	48.5	51.4	40.9	51.2
The school atmosphere that prepares students for the teaching profession	f	521	279	436	112	90	1438
	%	50.8	45.6	49.7	43.2	60.4	49.2
The priority provided to ATHS graduated teachers for teacher appointments to ATHSs	f	626	278	306	128	71	1409
	%	61.0	45.4	34.9	49.4	47.7	48.2
Students mingle with students with different cultural background	f	545	286	379	106	84	1400
	%	53.1	46.7	43.2	40.9	56.4	47.9
Warm student-teacher relationships	f	476	313	386	125	88	1388
	%	46.4	51.1	44.0	48.3	59.1	47.5
Conditions that render students to learn to become self-sufficient	f	494	275	368	98	77	1312
	%	48.1	44.9	42.0	37.8	51.7	44.9
Conditions that render students to learn to live within a community	f	434	271	352	90	77	1224
	%	42.3	44.3	40.1	34.7	51.7	41.9
Opportunities of government sponsored education provided to children of low income families	f	372	320	290	92	69	1143
	%	36.3	52.3	33.1	35.5	46.3	39.1
Fewer discipline problems	f	323	315	314	80	63	1095
	%	31.5	51.5	35.8	30.9	42.3	37.5

*: Off-University Graduates

** : Graduates Studying in Teacher Training Programs

According to the results in Table 3, the advantage “the majority of students who want to become teachers” was selected by more than half of the students, teachers and off-university graduates. The percentages of the parents and the graduates studying in teacher training programs thinking this is an advantage were lower than 50 %. The graduates studying in teacher training programs do not seem to think that the majority of students coming to ATHSs do not plan to become teachers in the future. This is an important finding to take the attention of decision makers on reviewing the current student selection procedure and reviewing the purposes and status of these schools.

Although the graduates studying in teacher training programs see “the school atmosphere in which students are prepared for teaching profession” (60.4 %) as an advantage none of the groups chose the items; “the opportunity provided to learn the teaching profession” and “enable students to like the teaching profession” as an advantage. It is observed that students and teachers do not see these as the advantages of ATHSs in terms of preparing the students for teacher training programs. Çubukçu (1997) and Karamustafa (1996) found similar findings concerning the functions of ATHSs. Therefore, the activities that develop a liking for the teaching profession in these schools should be reconsidered.

“The priority given to the graduates, in teacher appointments to ATHSs”, was stated as an advantage of ATHSs by 61.0 % of the students in ATHSs. However, the percentage of graduates studying in teacher training programs, who see this as an advantage, is not high because according to their explanations in the open-ended part of the question, *this priority is valid for only the graduates studying at teacher training programs that train teacher candidates for secondary education.*

“Fewer discipline problems” was stated only by 51.5 % of teachers as an advantage of ATHSs. However, this was not a main concern of the students and the parents.

“Warm student-teacher relationships” is stated as an advantage by the teachers (51.1 %) and graduates studying in the Faculty of Education (59.1 %). In the open-ended part of the question, some prospective teachers stated that: *“There is good rapport between students and teachers and their relationship is built on sincerity and respect. For this reason, I want to teach in an ATHS when I graduate from the faculty of education”.*

“Conditions that render students to learn to become self-sufficient” (51.7 %) and “to live within a community” (51.7 %) and “students mingling with students with different cultural backgrounds” (53.1 %) are the other advantages of ATHSs, according to the graduates studying in teacher training programs. These graduates might have had the chance of making comparisons between themselves and their classmates who graduated from other high schools.

The fact that low percentage of parents seeing the above factors as advantages may be related to the poor participation of parents in formal education in Turkey (EARGED, 2000). This is more evident in boarding ATHSs. The results gathered from the teachers also support this finding. According to teachers, one of the top issues in ATHSs is the lack of collaboration and communication between teachers and parents.

Another interesting finding is that although government sponsored boarding education is regarded as an advantage by teachers, it is not seen as an advantage from the viewpoint of students and their parents, since most of the parents participated in the study are parents of day time students and come from upper middle class families, who can afford their children’s school expenses (Tican-Başaran, 2004). Contrary to the finding mentioned above, some of the studies related to ATHSs reported the importance of boarding facilities for the students coming from families with low socio economic status (Pehlivan, 1993).

In conclusion, when the participants’ list of advantages is examined, the most determinant advantages are related to the University Entrance Exam and additional score allocated to ATHS graduates rather than educational facilities of these schools. However, the teachers and parents consider the issues related to the learning environment for example; small class sizes, fewer discipline problems more than the students.

Results Concerning the Limitations of ATHSs

Results related to the limitations of ATHSs are presented in Table 4.

The results in Table 4 showed that, ATHSs do not have severe limitations. However, if the present situation of ATHSs is taken for granted, it would not be possible to increase the quality of education in these schools. For this reason, in this section, the limitations that have relatively high agreement rate (more than 20 %) are examined with the purpose of providing a base for the efforts to increase the quality of education in ATHSs.

Table 4. *The Limitations of ATHSs*

Limitations		Subjects of the Study					Mean % for all Groups
		ATHS student	Teacher	Parents	Off- Uni. Gradu.	FES.	
Inability of school administration to offer classes in sport and art related fields	f	259	212	158	73	41	743
	%	25.2	34.6	18.0	28.2	27.5	25.4
Lack of collaboration between parents and teachers	f	165	321	144	28	41	699
	%	16.1	52.5	16.4	10.8	27.5	23.9
No questions related to teaching profession in the UEE	f	157	231	187	53	47	675
	%	15.3	37.7	21.3	20.5	31.5	23.1
Preferring teacher training programs in the UEE under the pressure of not being placed in a program	f	218	163	206	48	29	664
	%	21.2	26.6	23.5	18.5	19.5	22.7
Lack of communication between the parents and the teachers	f	198	268	135	21	35	657
	%	19.3	43.8	15.4	8.1	23.5	22.5
Low quality of foods	f	265	106	158	46	40	615
	%	25.8	17.3	18.0	17.8	26.8	21.0
Location of school in a small town	f	282	124	125	45	35	611
	%	27.5	20.3	14.3	17.4	23.5	20.9
Being away from the family	f	183	252	93	24	37	589
	%	17.8	41.2	10.6	9.3	24.8	20.2
Preferring teacher training programs in the UEE under the pressure of not being able to find a job in the future	f	198	144	167	45	26	580
	%	19.3	23.5	19.0	17.4	17.4	19.8
Insufficiency of qualifications of teachers	f	251	93	121	69	24	558
	%	24.5	15.2	13.8	26.6	16.1	19.1
No chance of being employed as a semi-professional like the vocational high school graduates	f	102	74	95	167	14	452
	%	9.9	12.1	10.8	64.5	9.4	15.5
Being assigned to proctoring duties/ to supervise boarding students in the evenings	f		142	-	-	-	142
	%		23.2	-	-	-	23.2

According to data gathered from the participants of the study, although the agreement rates of the groups for different limitations differ, one of the limitations of ATHSs is “the inability of the school administrations to offer classes for sports and arts (music and drawing) fields”. This is an important

finding for the revision of the fields that are going to be offered to the students. The inadequacy of cooperation and communication between teachers and the parents is the other limitation of ATHSs. Although, it is an issue in all types of schools in Turkey (EARGED, 2000), it is seen as an important issue especially in boarding schools. Consequently, it is a significant finding related to the construction of effective school-family cooperation which can also increase the quality of education in ATHSs.

“Non existence of questions related to the educational courses in the UEE” (23.1 %) is the other limitation of ATHSs. This was seen as an important issue especially by the teachers and the graduates studying in teacher training programs. Related to this issue in the open ended part of the question, teachers indicated that, *content of the UEE effects the interests of the students to any course. Students tend to study only the courses from which more questions are asked in UEE. Since no questions related to the teaching profession courses are asked in UEE they have difficulties in motivating students toward these courses.* The teachers pointed out that an important reason of the students to maintain their interest in these courses is the fact that their achievement in these courses will influence their graduation GPA. This is important since their graduation GPA is used in the calculation of their graduation score, which is used in the calculation of the extra points specifically granted to ATHSs in the UEE. Therefore, the high grades of senior students in these courses do not necessarily imply that students have developed a genuine interest in the courses related to teaching profession. This information is important because it can assist in increasing the students' interests towards the teaching profession courses, which serve to fulfill the aims of these schools. Similarly, students studying in ATHSs (particularly seniors) complain about the time they spend for preparing assignments of these courses. They believe they have little time left for getting ready for the UEE and thus at a disadvantageous position compared to the students in general high schools. Some students stated that they see these courses as useless since no questions come up in the UEE.

The fact that some graduates select teacher-training programs only with the aim of “not being outside of the tertiary education” or “students preferring teacher training programs under the pressure of not being able to find a job if they prefer other professions” are the other limitations of these schools.

Other than above, “the quality and quantity of teachers and administrators” was stated as an important issue in ATHSs especially. The quality of the teachers is the main concern of the students in ATHSs. Related to this issue, in the open ended part of the related question, students stated

that *since they are selected students they wanted teachers who are also selected.*

“Low quality of foods and the location of the schools” are the other limitations of ATHSs. In the open ended part they stated that *since ATHSs are given limited amount of money, school administration tend to buy cheap foods like grains. Even if the foods are of high quality the meals are not cooked with care, because the cooks are not professional cooks. As a result of inadequate number of subordinate staff sometimes janitors do the cooking.*

Some ATHSs are in villages and in small towns. Students studying at ATHSs, stated that living in a small town is a disadvantage for their social development. Some students reported that *they could not meet some of their social needs and they feel they are deprived of these. Also, they feel that in small towns, they are less accepted socially and are regarded as outsiders.* These answers suggest that the residential areas where ATHSs are located should be reexamined.

In addition, according to off-university graduates; “the graduates not being considered as semiprofessionals” is the other important limitation of ATHSs, because it is very difficult to find a job for off-university graduates since there is no defined employment area for them.

Moreover, teachers’ having to supervise the dormitories is the other limitation of ATHSs. Teachers are reluctant to be dormitory supervisors at nights in boarding ATHSs, because it is a very tiring job that negatively affects their teaching performance throughout the following day. Furthermore, they are not paid for this extra duty. For this reason, many of the teachers suggest that this job should be given to someone who is not a teacher but has sufficient qualifications to take the responsibility.

Results Concerning the Suggestions to Improve the Quality of Education in ATHSs

Although the agreement rate of the participants related to the suggestions to improve the quality of education in ATHSs is not high, following suggestions have been considered valuable in terms of making improvements in ATHSs in line with the expectations of their clients.

The data related to suggestions were collected by an open ended question. The qualitative data obtained from different groups in the study were analyzed by content analysis procedures. Consequently, the suggestions have been presented without statistical details.

At the end of the content analysis, many suggestions were obtained and it was seen that they were clustered in the following categories:

1. Suggestions related to the teachers and administrators in ATHSs.
2. Suggestions related to the students in ATHSs.
3. Suggestions related to the curricula in ATHSs.
4. Suggestions related to the guidance and counseling services in ATHSs.
5. Suggestions related to the boarding facilities in ATHSs.
6. Suggestions related to the subordinate staff (janitors, cooks, cleaners, etc.) in ATHSs.
7. Suggestions related to other aspects of ATHSs.

Suggestions Related to the Teachers and the Administrators in ATHSs

According to the analysis of the suggestions attained from all of the groups in the study, the quality of the teachers is one of the most important issues. Consequently, one of the most important suggestions related to the quality of education in ATHSs was that the teachers to be appointed to the ATHSs be selected based on objective criteria. The teachers to be appointed to ATHSs should be subjected to a selective examination, including items related to subject matter, educational sciences, experience and some affective characteristics that a teacher should possess. The participants also suggested that the teachers working in ATHSs should continue to develop themselves professionally, either by attending in-service training courses or through postgraduate studies, and the teachers' professional development can be maintained above a certain level by subjecting teachers to periodical proficiency examinations, through which they can promote.

It was also suggested that, like the teachers, the administrators should also be selectively appointed and should be trained in the field of educational administration. In order to attract more qualified administrators and teachers to ATHSs and to increase the motivation of the current administrators and teachers, they should be given extra economic incentives because as the administrators currently working in these schools pointed out, the responsibility and work load in these schools is far more than in other schools and they do not get paid for extra duties they are obligated to fulfill.

Suggestions Related to the Students in ATHSs

According to both the teachers and the students in ATHSs, only those students who want to become teachers should be admitted to these schools.

For this purpose, the current selection system should be revised, so as to include items, which can measure the students' attitudes toward teaching profession. This suggestion coincides with the suggestions reported in the study conducted by Pehlivan (1993).

Another suggestion was that, the students should be strongly motivated to choose professions according to their interests, rather than choosing the teaching profession with the anxiety of not being able to find a job after graduation or not being able to be placed in a program at university.

Suggestions Related to the Curricula of ATHSs

The most commonly agreed upon suggestion by all the groups, related to the curricula of the ATHSs, was that the sports and arts fields should be provided for the students who are interested in these fields and that the prerequisites for offering these fields should be revised so that the facilities can be provided with more ease. Thus, students will also be prevented from choosing fields that they are not actually interested in.

Another common suggestion was that the weekly class hours should be decreased and the duration of the class hour should be reduced. The stakeholders all agreed that the students spend too much time in class and that they do not have enough spare time for social activities and for preparation for the UEE. Related to this issue, parents reported that the program of ATHSs is overloaded, for this reason their children do not have time for other activities necessary for their social development.

The inclusion of items related to the educational courses in the UEE, was also a common suggestion. It is believed that such an implementation would increase the motivation of the students towards the courses related to teaching. Parallel to this, another suggestion was that the extra score given to students who prefer teacher training programs in the UEE should be based on the students achievement in the items related to the contents of the educational courses, not in general.

Suggestions Related to the Guidance and Counseling Service in ATHSs

According to the participants of this study an adequate guidance and counseling service provided by experts is a must for improving the quality of the education in these schools. This is especially important in the ATHSs with boarding facilities.

Suggestions Related to the Boarding Facilities of ATHSs

Under this topic, majority of the suggestions made by the participants were related to the quality of food provided to the boarding students. It has

been emphasized that the food should be of high quality and should be prepared in hygienic conditions by professional chefs.

It was also pointed out that the budgets allocated to the boarding facilities and the cafeterias in ATHSs should be increased. Another important suggestion was that the students, who want to enter ATHSs, should be encouraged to choose ATHSs within their own provinces or in neighboring provinces. This is expected to overcome some of the problems students experience due to being away from their families.

The duty of supervising the dormitories is a factor that negatively affects teachers' performances. Therefore, someone other than the teachers should be given these duties or if they have to be carried out by the teachers, they should be paid over time for doing so. As a matter of fact, the teachers suggested that the dormitories and the cafeterias should be privatized so that they would not have to deal with issues other than teaching.

Suggestions Related to the Subordinate Staff in ATHSs

The suggestions related to the subordinate staff were generally related to those responsible for the dormitories and the cafeterias. According to the teachers and students in ATHSs, priority should be given to overcoming the lack of subordinate staff. Just as the teachers and administrators, the subordinate staff should also be hired selectively. Another important suggestion related to the subordinate staff was that a medical doctor and a nurse were required, especially in boarding ATHSs and those which are far from the city centers.

Suggestions Related to Other Aspects of ATHSs

In addition to all of the above suggestions, there were also some other suggestions which may be considered. One suggestion was that the goals and the advantages of ATHSs and their differences from the vocational and general high schools should be well announced. Another was related to the improvement of the physical conditions of the ATHSs. It was also suggested that the social activities in these schools should be increased. In this respect ATHSs should organize social events for reunion so that the graduates can keep in touch with their friends and teachers.

Regarding the off-university graduates it was suggested that, they could be employed as 1) deputy teachers in primary schools, 2) educators in Public Education Centers, and 3) extra studies teachers. In addition, they suggested to be employed as dormitory supervisors in boarding ATHSs since the teachers are reluctant to take on the responsibility of supervising the students in the dormitories in the evenings.

Finally, the requirement for improving the cooperation between the teachers and the parents was also pointed out. For this purpose, “the school-family cooperation model” developed in EARGED in 2000 can be suggested to be implemented in these schools.

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