

Views of Assessment and Evaluation Experts on Assessment and Evaluation Units in Schools*

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ABSTRACT

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In this study, it was aimed to reveal the views of assessment and evaluation experts on assessment and evaluation units in schools. Participants were selected from the schools where the assessment and evaluation unit is located and from among the schools that the researchers could easily contact. In this context, seven assessment and evaluation experts were selected from schools where the unit existed as participants. In order to seek answers to the research problems, expert opinions were obtained through a semi-structured interview form and by interview technique. According to the results of the research, assessment and evaluation experts stated that traditional and complementary assessment and evaluation approaches are mostly used together in schools. According to another result, it was stated that an assessment and evaluation unit affected the behaviors of teachers, administrators, and parents positively. In teacher-administrator and teacher-parent relations, that this department provides objective data with unbiased evaluation provides an objective perspective on transferring shortcomings. In addition, it was concluded that the coordinated and harmonious relationship of this unit with other departments (such as the curriculum development unit and counseling unit) positively affects the school climate as it increases the quality of the school education policy and ensures that all educational activities are carried out systematically. In line with the results of the research, it is recommended that assessment and evaluation units be established in schools to coordinate with Assessment and Evaluation Centers.



Okullarda Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Biriminin Bulunmasına Yönelik Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Uzman Görüşleri

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ÖZET

Bu çalışmada, okullarda Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Biriminin Bulunması ile ilgili Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Uzmanlarının Görüşlerinin ortaya konması amaçlanmıştır. Katılımcıları oluştururken Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Biriminin bulunduğu okullar göz önünde bulundularak araştırmacıların ulaşabileceği okullar arasından seçim yapılmıştır. Bu doğrultuda yedi ölçme ve değerlendirme uzmanı katılımcıları oluşturmaktadır. Araştırma problemlerine yanıt aramak üzere yarı yapılandırılmış bir görüşme formu ile görüşme tekniğiyle uzman görüşleri alınmıştır. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre, Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Uzmanları okullarda çoğunlukla geleneksel ve tamamlayıcı ölçme ve değerlendirme yaklaşımlarını bir arada kullandığını ifade etmişlerdir. Bir diğer sonuca göre, Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Biriminin bulunmasının öğretmen, yönetici ve veli davranışlarını genellikle olumlu yönde etkilediği ifade edilmiştir. Öğretmen-yönetici ve öğretmen-veli ilişkilerinde bu birimin tarafsız değerlendirme ile objektif bir veri sağlaması, eksikliklerin aktarılması konusunda nesnel bir bakış açısı sağlamaktadır. Ayrıca Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Biriminin diğer birimlerle (Program Geliştirme Birimi, Rehberlik Birimi gibi) ilişkisinin koordineli ve uyumlu olması; okul eğitim politikasının niteliğini arttırdığı ve tüm eğitsel faaliyetlerin sistematik bir şekilde gerçekleşmesini sağladığı için okul iklimini olumlu yönde etkilediği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları doğrultusunda Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Merkezleri ile koordineli olarak çalışacak Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Birimlerinin okullarda bulunması konusunda adımlar atılması önerilmiştir.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a system that regulates and develops individual behaviors. Making reliable and valid decisions about students, who are the most crucial input of this system, is one of the most important aims of the educational process. In this context, in the education system, not only the output process that controls the desired behaviors in students but also the student behaviors as input and the educational and training activities carried out throughout the process should be considered. Therefore, there should be a structure that controls all these processes (Baykul, 2000). The control of this intertwined system emphasizes the concepts of assessment and evaluation.

There are many measurement methods to measure the readiness of students, who are the most important inputs of learning activities, the efficiency of teaching activities for them, and the adequacy of the learning outcomes obtained at the end of the process. Therefore, it is also important that the measurement process, which is defined as quantifying the qualities in the simplest terms, is made correctly. The concepts of validity and reliability emerge at this point. Because accurate measurements are possible with valid and reliable measurement results.

Validity is defined as the meaningfulness and appropriateness of the inferences obtained from the measurement results, and it is stated that the purpose of the test must first be realized in order to comment on validity (Wainer, 2000). Reliability, in basic terms, is the degree of freedom of measurement results from random errors (Turgut & Baykul, 2012). Both validity and reliability features are necessary for the measurement results to be accurate, and both of them are related to each other. However, they are too different to be confused with each other. For example, if the KR-20 reliability coefficient of the measurement results obtained in a multiple-choice test measuring students' physics achievement is 0.95, we can say that the reliability of the measurement results is high. If most of the Physics items in the test require mathematical skills, it shows that these measurement results have another purpose and that their validity is reduced. Therefore, while we can say that the measurement results are reliable, we cannot say that they are valid.

The validity and reliability of measurement results should be determined for accurate assessment and evaluation. This makes it necessary to have knowledge about assessment and evaluation. Accurate measurement results will enable making the right decisions about them. This situation is related to the concept of evaluation. Evaluation takes place after the measurement and is the comparison of the measurement results with a criterion and deciding about the student. Evaluation cannot be done without measurement results and criteria (Tan, 2014, p. 49). Therefore, the correct evaluation depends on valid and reliable measurement results and the selection of the appropriate criteria. In this context, it is important that teachers are supported by experts in the field on issues such as the appropriate use of measurement and evaluation tools, testing their validity and reliability, and choosing appropriate criteria for evaluation.

In addition, the support of experts in planning the teaching process in schools, examining student behaviors in terms of psychomotor, affective, and cognitive aspects, determining the tools and instruments to be used in measuring and evaluating student development during the teaching process, using feedback correctly in the learning-teaching process, and providing support services related to the deficiencies identified are also important in improving the quality of the education process in schools (Özalp & Kaymakçı, 2022; Özar, 2013). Measurement and assessment tools should not only be considered as achievement tests but also the tools such as in-class teacher observations, in-class applications, performance tasks, projects, questionnaires, scales, and inventories should be included. In addition, assessment should not be limited only to students. Activities aimed at determining teacher competence and whether the curriculum adopted are

functioning properly can also be added to the scope of measurement activities (Tan, 2012). In this framework, it is useful to emphasize once again the importance of having support units that will contribute to teachers in the field of assessment and evaluation. The studies in the literature also show the necessity of this support. In the studies examining teachers' perceptions towards assessment and evaluation (Bıçak & Çakan, 2004; Çetin & Göçebe Yüceer, 2023; Gelbal & Kelecioğlu, 2007; Güven, 2001; Peker & Acar, 2024; Yanpar, 1992), it was concluded that teachers consider themselves inadequate in a large part of this field, and the majority of them use assessment tools that they consider themselves adequate. In the study conducted by Anıl and Acar (2008), it was stated that classroom teachers did not have sufficient knowledge, especially about complementary measurement tools. They found the evaluation process complex due to a lack of knowledge, and they needed assessment and evaluation experts. In another study, pre-service teachers' proficiency levels in assessment and evaluation were found to be at a medium level, and in the qualitative aspect of the study, the most frequently preferred measurement tools were multiple-choice tests and true/false tests (Sabancı & Yazıcı, 2017). The reason pre-service teachers do not prefer complementary assessment and evaluation tools is shown as the lack of information about the purposes of use, application, and scoring of these tools, similar to many studies (Çalışkan, 2010; Gelbal & Kelecioğlu, 2007). In addition, in another study, it was stated that teachers were inadequate in preparing open-ended questions that would activate students' higher-order thinking skills (Yıldırım Suna, Güzel & Benzer, 2023). When preparing questions, it is important to be competent in terms of field knowledge, measurement and evaluation knowledge, as well as defining the outcomes well (Yıldız, 2021).

In order to overcome these problems in formal education and increase the quality of education, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) initiated the "Project for Monitoring, Research, and Development of Assessment and Evaluation Practices" and established Assessment and Evaluation Centers (AEC) in each province in Türkiye (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, [MEB], 2017). With this project, MoNE aimed to improve the assessment and evaluation processes in each province, to provide feedback to students and teachers by determining the level of acquisition of learning outcomes, to enable teachers to conduct more qualified exams by using the Item Bank software, and to develop the capacity to organize common exams in each province (MEB, 2017). Within the framework of these objectives, it can be said that AECs aim to increase the quality of assessment and evaluation processes in schools. The responsibilities of AECs are presented as follows:

- Organizing trainings on issues such as item writing guidelines, development of measurement tools that provide valid and reliable measurements,
- Providing the organization of the common exam in the province or district,
- Planning complementary courses in line with the results of the common exam,
- Managing the data analysis process for measurement results,
- Supporting the organization of large-scale achievement tests such as PISA, TIMSS, and ABIDE,
- Implementation of questionnaires to determine the factors that affect student academic success,
- Providing feedback to parents, teachers, school and provincial administrators in line with measurement results (see: <https://odm.meb.gov.tr/>).

It is seen that MoNE is trying to make assessment and evaluation activities in schools more qualified by controlling them together with the AEC. At this point, it is important to have support units in schools that can cooperate with AEC. One of these support units, assessment and evaluation unit (AEU), makes the assessment and evaluation process more systematic, controllable and qualified by coordinating with AEC. In this way, teachers can measure students' learning outcomes by making accurate measurements through valid and reliable measurement tools or item banks in co-operation with AEU and AEC. In addition, the AEU can evaluate the appropriateness of all measurement tools, selected teaching methods, and the curriculums used in education and training within the school. It is thought that addressing the duties and necessity of these units, which are only available in some private schools today, from the perspective of assessment and evaluation experts in schools where AEU are available, will contribute to understanding the importance of the unit. In this direction, this study aimed to present the opinions of assessment and evaluation experts on the existence of assessment and evaluation units in primary schools. In line with this general purpose, the following sub-problems were identified in order to provide important information to primary school administrators and the Ministry of National Education, and also to determine the necessity of the AEU for all schools:

1. What are the opinions of assessment and evaluation experts in the schools where the AEU is in place about the necessity of AEU?
2.
 - a. What are the opinions about the assessment and evaluation activities implemented by the schools?
 - b. What are the opinions about the assessment and evaluation activities that schools should implement?
3.
 - a. What are the opinions about the effect of AEU on individual teacher, student, parent, administrator behaviors?
 - b. What are the opinions about the effect of AEU on teacher-student, teacher-parent, teacher-administrator, student-parent and coterie?
 - c. What are the opinions about the effect of the interaction between the AEU and other units in the school (counseling service, curriculum development) on the school climate?

METHOD

Research Design

In this study, in-depth research was conducted by collecting extensive and comprehensive data about assessment and evaluation units. The research is a case study in the sense that it deals with a current and limited phenomenon within the real-life framework and investigates it in depth and presents the results of the situation (Creswell, 2002; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

Participants

The participants of the study were seven assessment and evaluation experts working in the assessment and evaluation units of four private primary schools in Ankara. Three of the assessment and evaluation experts have 5 or fewer years of professional experience, three have 5-10 years of

professional experience, and one has more than 10 years of professional experience. In selecting the participants, schools with assessment and evaluation units were taken as criteria, and assessment and evaluation experts working in these schools were selected. Accordingly, seven assessment and evaluation experts constitute the study group, and the experts were coded as U1, U2, ... U7 for direct references.

Research Instrument and Processes

In this study, interview, one of the data collection methods, was used both based on the purpose of the research and considering that it is a more powerful technique to express the views, experiences and feelings of individuals (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

A semi-structured interview form was developed to seek answers to the research problems. The interview form, which was prepared and tested by the researchers, was audio-recorded with the permission of the participants and applied to the assessment and evaluation experts after the interviews were organized and prepared.

While developing the interview form, semi-structured questions were prepared in accordance with the purpose of the research. While preparing the questions, first, a confidence-building introduction to the interview was prepared and care was taken to use a simple language. In addition, it was paid attention that the questions consisted of a single statement, directions were avoided and a presentation from general to specific was followed. Then, the prepared questions were presented to 5 experts who completed their PhD in the field of assessment and evaluation and their opinions were taken. Based on the expert opinions, a form was developed and a pilot study was conducted with an assessment and evaluation expert. As a result of the pilot study, necessary revisions were made and the final interview form was developed.

During the interview, the researchers changed the question flow in some cases according to the participant responses. The researchers took care to ensure that the participants could express themselves comfortably. They used reinforcements to encourage and give feedback to the participants when necessary. In addition, the researchers took care to control the interview process in terms of time and topic, and finally the interviews on these bases were about 20 minutes long.

Data Analysis

The process followed while analyzing the data obtained from the assessment and evaluation experts through interviews is as follows: First, the talks recorded by video or audio recording during the interview were translated into written text by the researchers. After the talks were translated into written text, they were numbered according to the order of speech and transferred to the Nvivo for content analysis. The reason content analysis was preferred instead of descriptive analysis in the study was to interpret the data in a deeper way. In addition, there was no predetermined theme or category structure. Within the framework of this basic purpose, the steps followed in the content analysis were as follows: The researchers read and coded the data translated into written form. Coding was done by extracting meaning from the data. In the coding process, which constitutes the first stage of content analysis, the researchers divided the information into meaningful parts after reviewing it and tried to find out what it means conceptually for each part. In the second stage, based on the codes developed in the first stage, themes that can organize these codes under a specific conceptual framework were developed. In other words, the collected data were categorized through codes (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). For this step, first, the codes that can be categorized under similar or the same category were brought together. Then, different themes that can keep these codes together were determined. At the last stage, the aim is to prepare the data for interpretation by organizing them in accordance with the codes and themes. For this

purpose, the data were organized according to the codes and themes and made ready for interpretation.

Credibility and Transferability

Validity in qualitative research differentiating from the traditional definition in quantitative research means that the researcher observes the phenomenon or situation as it is, in its natural state, as unbiased as possible (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In order to achieve this, the researcher should support the data obtained by additional methods, such as variation and participant approval. Although there are few studies presenting validity evidence because of the difficulty of collecting evidence for validity in qualitative research, validity should be in the first place since it is a determining role of reliability. Lincoln and Guba (1985, as cited in Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013) suggested the terms "credibility" and "transferability" instead of validity and reliability, considering the purpose of validity and reliability studies in qualitative research.

Credibility, which corresponds to internal validity, requires the research process and results to be explicit, consistent, and acceptable to other researchers. Transferability can be considered the concept of "generalization" in quantitative research. In this context, the researchers took care to be flexible in the study. The researchers collected detailed, in-depth information by conducting face-to-face interviews with the participants. The researchers transcribed the interviews. In addition, giving direct quotations of the participants' opinions in the findings and results section is also within the validity studies.

As part of the reliability studies, the participants were clearly defined according to the qualifications appropriate for the purpose of the study. In addition, processes such as the purpose of the study, settings, method used, and data analysis were explained in detail.

In the study, Krippendorff's alpha coefficient was calculated to examine the inter-rater reliability. Krippendorff's alpha coefficient was calculated by using the formula $\alpha = 1 - (Do / De)$ based on the coding performed by two raters. In the formula, Do is the observed disagreement and De is the observed disagreement measurement in case of chance. The Krippendorff's α coefficient was found to be 0.81. All disagreements were reviewed together by the two coding researchers, and final common decisions were made.

FINDINGS

After the data collected in the study were divided into units, they were grouped under 13 categories. There are 11 sub-categories in three of these 13 categories. Considering the relationships between categories and subcategories, three general themes were determined. The themes and categories are given in Figure 1, while subcategories are given in Figure 2.

Figure 1
Themes and Categories

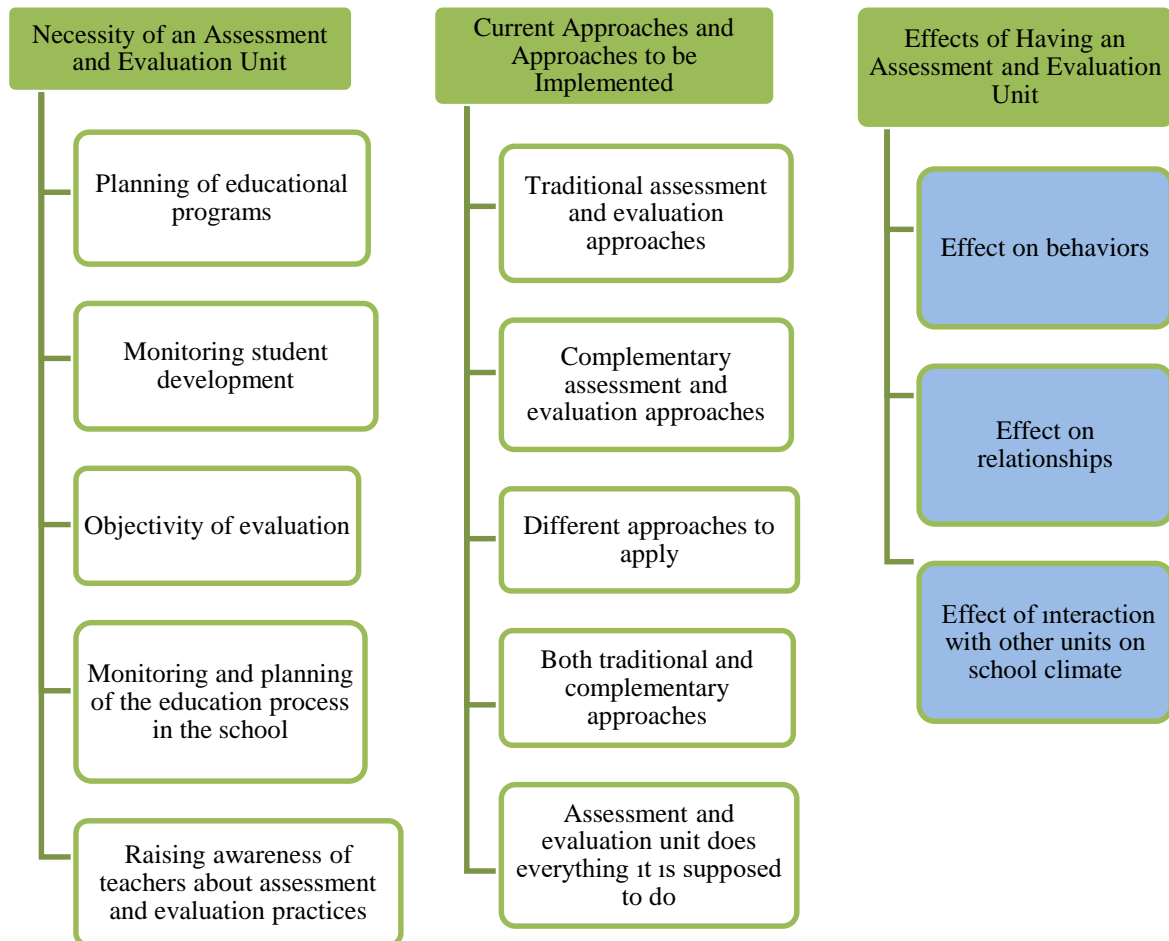
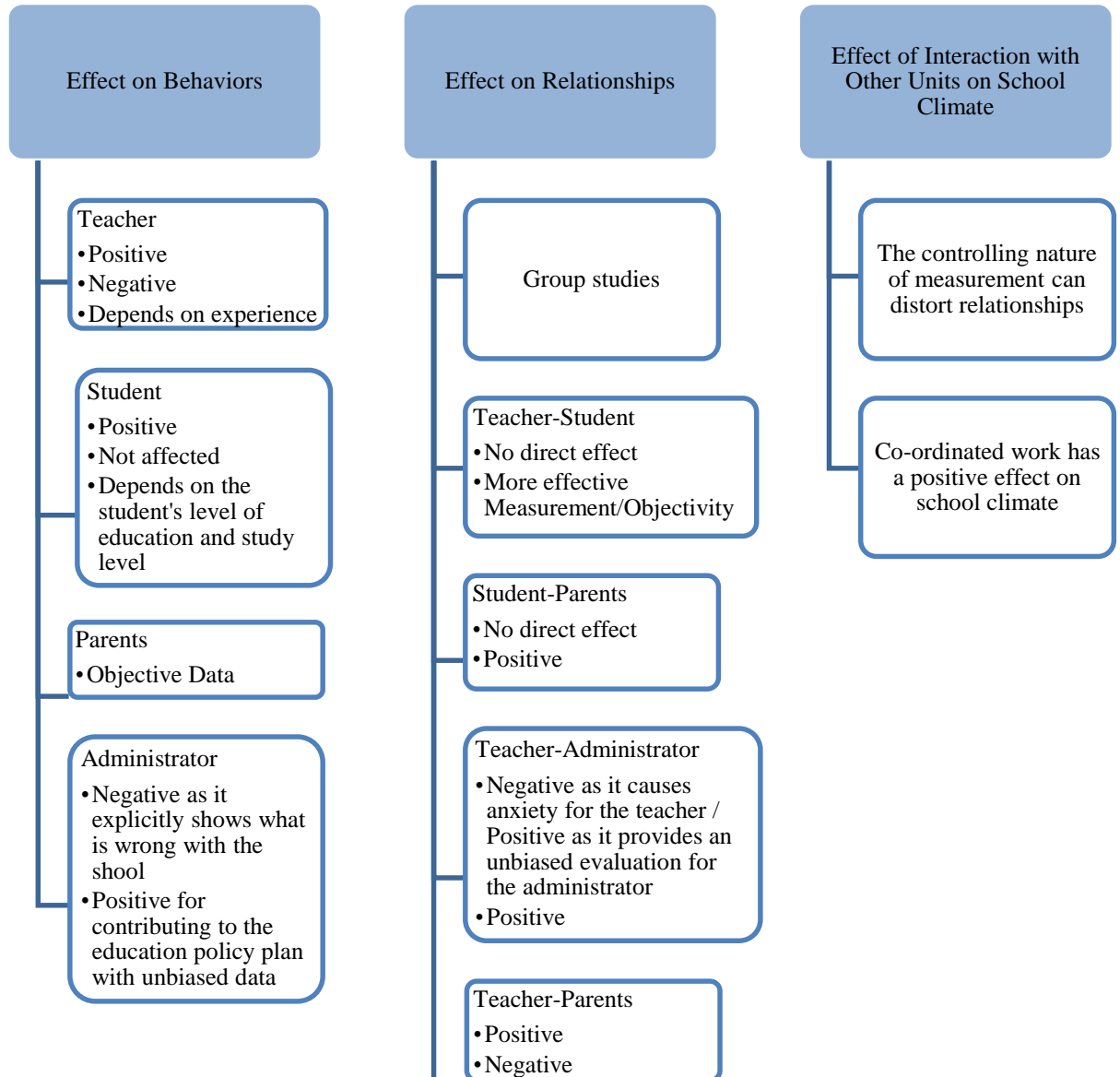


Figure 2
Categories and Subcategories



The findings and interpretations obtained from the research questions are given in order. The answers given by the participants to the question are stated with reference numbers according to the codes formed.

Findings Related to the First Sub-Problem

The assessment and evaluation experts were first asked, "What are your opinions about the necessity of the assessment and evaluation unit?". The number of references according to the codes

formed from the answers given by seven assessment and evaluation experts working in different private schools is given in Table 1.

Table 1

Number of References of Expert Opinions on the Necessity of Assessment and Evaluation Unit

Theme	Units	Resources	References
Necessity of assessment and evaluation unit	Objectivity of the assessment	4	5
	Planning of educational programs	1	2
	Monitoring the education process at school	5	5
	Monitoring student development	2	3
	Raising awareness of teachers about assessment and evaluation practices	5	5

Table 1 illustrates the most emphasized ideas of the assessment and evaluation experts about the necessity of an assessment and evaluation unit: "objectivity of the assessment," "raising awareness of teachers about assessment and evaluation practices," and "monitoring the educational process in the school." These units are followed by "monitoring student development" and "planning of educational programs," respectively.

The content analysis revealed that one of the most important benefits of having a unit in a school is the objectivity of the assessment and evaluation activities carried out in the school, according to the experts. In this regard, one of the experts, U2, stated: "There is a difference between the evaluation criteria in the exams conducted by the unit and conducted by the teacher; if there was no unit, there would be situations such as not being able to identify missing learning outcomes." In this context, it can be mentioned that the unit provides data that is obtained in a more objective way, away from subjectivity.

One of the most important benefits of having a unit in schools was considered to be the monitoring of the educational process in the school. As stated by Tan (2012), the education system is a process with inputs and outputs. It is necessary to have a unit that completely monitors and programs this process. This requires the necessity of the AEU.

One of the most frequently referred ideas about the necessity of the AEU is that the unit raises teachers' awareness about assessment and evaluation. The statements of U6 who expressed these thoughts are: "Assessment and evaluation is actually a very critical activity... Of course, every teacher must have some knowledge and experience in assessment and evaluation to determine student achievement. This necessitates the existence of assessment and evaluation."

As Özar (2013) states, one of the most important tasks of the unit is to complete teachers' deficiencies in assessment and evaluation, to examine the assessment and evaluation approaches they use in the classroom, and to inform teachers about complementary assessment and evaluation methods or latest developments when necessary. This will be a process that indirectly affects student achievement.

"Planning education programs" and "monitoring student development" are the views that are less frequently referred to by the experts. Some of the expert opinions giving these responses are: "The unit contributes to planning and improving the quality of educational and learning activities in the school. Therefore, it is necessary." (U4), "In order for teachers to complete the learning deficiencies of students,

these deficiencies must first be identified, and the unit has a very crucial role here..." (U7). Based on these responses, the necessity of assessment and evaluation in schools was also mentioned as a benefit for students. In fact, the planning of educational programs may also indirectly affect student achievement and be of equal importance. The fact that there is not much difference between the references shows this.

Findings Related to the Second Sub-Problem

In the second sub-problem, measurement and evaluation experts were asked, "What are your opinions about the assessment and evaluation approaches used in schools?". The number of references according to the codes formed from the answers given by the experts is given in Table 2.

Table 2

Number of References of Expert Opinions on Current Assessment and Evaluation Approaches in Schools according to Units

Theme	Units	Resources	References
Current approaches of the assessment and evaluation unit	Both traditional and complementary assessment and evaluation approaches	5	5
	Traditional assessment and evaluation approaches	4	4
	Complementary assessment and evaluation approaches	1	2

After the responses about the assessment and evaluation approaches carried out by the schools, the question "What do you think are the assessment and evaluation approaches that schools should implement?" was asked. The frequencies of the answers to this question according to the units are given in Table 3. Since the questions complemented each other under the second sub-problem, the tables are given first and the explanations were made by considering both tables (Table 2 and Table 3).

Table 3

Number of References of Expert Opinions on Assessment and Evaluation Approaches that should be applied in Schools according to Units

Theme	Units	Resources	References
Assessment and evaluation approaches that schools should apply	Both traditional and complementary assessment and evaluation approaches	2	3
	Traditional assessment and evaluation approaches	1	1
	Complementary assessment and evaluation approaches	1	2

Table 2 reveals that traditional and complementary assessment and evaluation approaches are mostly used together in schools. However, the number of references stating that traditional assessment and evaluation approaches are mostly used in their schools is quite close to this number. The number of references stating that they use a complementary assessment and evaluation approach in their schools is the lowest.

As seen in Table 2, complementary assessment and evaluation approaches are less preferred. This may be due to the lack of time, financial and technical background of the school, lack of adequate knowledge about these approaches, or the existence of an exam-oriented education system. An expert opinion on this issue is: "If only we were not an exam-anxious society, open-ended questions and other

activities aimed at measuring high-level thinking skills like reading comprehension and writing skills could have been done..." (U3). However, another expert stated: "...There is no assessment and evaluation approach that an assessment and evaluation unit can apply independently of the teacher. Whichever approach the teacher applies in assessing student achievement is adopted..." (U6). In this answer, it was seen that teachers should have enough knowledge about assessment and evaluation approaches. In addition, as mentioned above, exam anxiety, especially in private schools, is an important risk factor for institutions to adopt traditional assessment and evaluation approaches. Another expert opinion supports this claim: "...Due to the legislation, performance evaluation approaches are prioritized by the school administration" (U4).

An analysis of the assessment and evaluation approaches that should be employed in educational settings (Table 3) revealed the necessity of integrating complementary and traditional assessment strategies. The methods in the complementary approach can measure the outcomes and students' analyzing and reasoning skills more effectively and in depth (Şaşmaz-Ören & Tatar, 2007). In this context, it is natural and desirable to use both approaches together. Some views of the experts on this issue are: "...Students' levels of readiness and the points they have reached can be observed. For this purpose, not only tests using multiple-choice items but also performance tasks, projects, portfolios, and unrestricted open-ended items should be used" (U5); "...Both traditional assessment and evaluation methods and complementary methods should be used together" (U7). The experts stated that multiple-choice items would be inadequate in measuring students' high-level skills and that open-ended questions should be asked together with these. Performance tasks were the most frequently mentioned measurement tool in the subcategory of complementary methods. As can be seen from Table 3, the opinion that traditional assessment and evaluation approaches should be applied has a relatively small number of references. Therefore, it can be said that traditional measurement and evaluation approaches alone will not be sufficient in schools.

Findings Related to the Third Sub-Problem

In the third sub-problem, assessment and evaluation experts were first asked, "What are your opinions about the effects of AEU on teacher, student, parent and administrator behaviors?". Frequencies for the answers to this question are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequencies of the Effects of Assessment and Evaluation Unit on Teacher, Student, Parent and Administrator Behaviors

Theme	Category	Subcategory	Units	Resources	References	
Effects of having an assessment and evaluation unit	Effect on behaviors	Teacher	Positive	6	7	
			Negative	4	5	
			Depends on experience	1	1	
		Student	Positive	2	2	
			Not affected	3	3	
			Depends on the student's level of education and study level	2	2	
			Parent	Parent	2	2
				Objective Data	5	5
			Administrato	Negative as it explicitly shows what is wrong with the school	3	3

r	Positive for contributing to the education policy plan with unbiased data	6	6
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According to Table 4, six experts stated that AEU in schools has a positive effect on teacher behaviors, and they mentioned this in seven different points. Some of the related opinions are: "Positive. We facilitate the work of our teachers and ensure objectivity with expert support" (U6); "... we can say that it helps because we provide information about new measurement approaches" (U2). Another opinion is: "When scoring an exam after administering it, the teacher realizes that the scoring process is more qualified if the rubric of the exam is prepared by an assessment and evaluation expert, and more reliable results are obtained "(U1).

On the other hand, four experts stated that the effect of the existence of SIBs in schools on teacher behaviors was negative, and they mentioned this at five different points. The related opinions are: "It causes anxiety in teachers. Since the assessment and evaluation unit can evaluate everyone in the process, it also considers the exams made by the teachers, and this situation sometimes causes anxiety for the teachers" (U2); "Sometimes being exposed to criticism can create tension" (U3); "There is a perception in teachers as if we are teaching because they do not know" (U7).

There is only one expert who stated that the effect of the existence of an assessment and evaluation unit in schools on teacher behaviors would vary according to the experience of the teacher. According to this expert opinion, it was stated that teachers with more experience may show resistance to innovative methods or constructive corrections in some cases. It was found that the existence of an assessment and evaluation unit would have the most positive effect on teacher behavior. Negative effect follows positive effect, and the frequency difference between these two units is very small. Only one expert emphasized that the positive or negative effect on behavior would vary according to the experience of the teachers.

An evaluation of Table 4 indicated that the presence of an assessment and evaluation unit was perceived as having a beneficial impact on student behaviors by two experts. One expert: "It is positive because it provides objective assessment" (U6). Three experts stated that the existence of the unit would not affect student behavior. Examples of these opinions are: "Students may not be directly affected by the existence of an assessment and evaluation unit" (U2), "Students have knowledge that there is an assessment and evaluation unit, but they do not have very detailed information about what this unit does." (U1). Two experts stated that the effect of the existence of the unit on student behaviors would depend on the education level and study level of the students. A sample opinion on this subject is: "It affects the students in primary school, especially positively. They pay attention to the exams organized by the unit" (U3). When summarized according to the frequencies, the experts mostly gave the opinion that the existence of the unit would not directly affect student behavior. This was followed by the opinions that the unit would have a positive effect or that its effect on student behavior would vary depending on the education level and study level of the student. The frequency difference between the number of opinions that the unit has no direct effect on student behavior and the frequency difference in this unit is quite small.

An examination of the frequencies of expert opinions regarding the impact of AEU presence in schools on parental behaviors revealed that two experts had expressed general opinions. One of these opinions is: "Parents research everything when choosing a school for their children, so of course it has a positive effect on parents. Even if there is a problem or disruption in the unit at the school, the parent cannot know about it because it is not reflected outside" (U1). In addition, according to Table 4, there are five experts who state that the presence of this unit has an effect on parent behavior in terms of objective data. One expert opinion is: "There were parents who objected to exams or questions. However, with the existence of the unit, unbiased data can now be presented to the parents. For example,

if a comment is made about an exam, objections disappear because it is an exam of which validity and reliability have been determined" (U2). Experts generally stated that the existence of the unit would positively affect parents' behavior in terms of objective and reliable data.

Lastly, when the expert opinions about the effect of the existence of AEU in schools on administrator behaviors were examined, three experts stated that it had a negative effect. One opinion is as follows: "We are neither members of the school nor not. Sometimes we are even traitors who reveal the failure of the school" (U6). On the other hand, there are six experts who stated that the existence of the unit has a positive effect on administrator behaviors. One of these opinions is: "Administrators want to make evaluations. What should be done for a deficient outcome? The unit provides this information. Therefore, it is positive" (U2). In this context, the most common opinion for administrator behaviors is that the existence of an assessment and evaluation unit has a positive effect. The frequency indicating that this effect is negative is half of the frequency indicating that it is positive.

As a result, when all the opinions were examined, it was observed that the existence of the AEU in schools affected the behaviors of teachers, administrators, and parents most positively, while it did not directly affect the behaviors of students. However, teachers were the most directly affected by the existence of the unit. After teachers, it was seen that the behaviors of administrators and parents were affected, respectively.

In the other part of the third sub-problem, the assessment and evaluation experts were asked, "What are your opinions about the effect of the AEU on teacher-student, teacher-parent and teacher-administrator, student-parent and group work?". The frequencies of the answers to this question are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Frequencies of the Effects of Assessment and Evaluation Unit on Teacher-Student, Teacher-Parent, Teacher-Administrator, Student-Parent Relations and Group Works

Theme	Category	Subcategory	Units	Resources	References
Effects of having an assessment and evaluation unit	Effect on relations	Teacher-Student	No direct effect	2	2
			More qualified measurement/Objective Assessment	5	5
		Teacher-Parents	Positive	5	5
			Negative	3	3
		Teacher-Administrator	Negative as it causes anxiety for the teacher / Positive as it provides unbiased evaluation for the administrator	7	7
			Positive	1	1
			No direct effect	4	4
		Student-Parents	Positive	2	2
		Group Works		7	7

First, in examining the effect of the existence of the unit on the teacher-student relationship, as reflected in Table 5, two experts indicated that no direct effect could be discerned. One opinion related to this is: "We cannot contact the students directly. The student cannot make an inference such as "There is an assessment and evaluation unit in our school; the assessment and evaluation unit corrects the exams applied by my teacher, so I like or dislike my teacher very much" (U1). In addition, there were five expert opinions stating that the existence of the unit had a positive effect on the teacher-student

relationship in the context of more qualified measurement and unbiased evaluation. Some of the related opinions are: "Objective measurement tool and evaluation as a result, so it is positive" (U6), "If the teacher can benefit from the assessment and evaluation unit well enough, it is beneficial for the student" (U3). In line with the statements of the experts, it has been revealed that the existence of AEU in schools affects the teacher-student relationship most positively.

An examination of the frequencies of the effect of the existence of the AEU on the teacher-parent relationship, as illustrated in Table 5, revealed that five experts asserted that it had a positive impact on the relationship. One opinion related to this is: "The teacher can use the data of the AEU while talking to the parent, so he/she can be more effective in motivating the parent. The parent may also trust the assessment and evaluation activities more" (U2). Three experts mentioned that the existence of the AEU had a negative effect on the teacher-parent relationship. Based on the statements and frequencies of the experts, it was found out that the existence of AEU had the most positive effect on the teacher-parent relationship. However, there is not a major difference between the frequencies of positive and negative opinions.

In examining the effect of the existence of the AEU on the teacher-administrator relationship as reflected in Table 5, seven experts stated that while administrators supported the unit because of the perceived objectivity of its evaluations, teachers expressed greater concern. Some opinions related to this are: "It is a problem when the administrator evaluates the results not as student development but as teacher performance" (U6), "The administrator who splits between the parent and the teacher can put more pressure on the teacher" (U7). Only one expert stated that the existence of AEU would positively affect the teacher-administrator relationship. Considering the opinions of the experts, it was found that the existence of AEU would mostly affect the teacher-administrator relationship negatively, as it is a situation that causes anxiety for the teacher.

Upon examination of the frequencies of the effect of AEU on the student-parent relationship in Table 5, it was observed that four experts asserted that it would not exert a direct influence. One opinion related to this is: "For the parent, their child is always perfect in every situation. Nothing can disrupt this" (U5). In addition, there were two experts who stated that the existence of the unit would positively affect the student-parent relationship. One expert opinion supporting this idea is: "Parents can see the learning deficiencies of students with reliable data, so it is positive" (U2). Considering the opinions of the experts, it was seen that the opinions that the existence of AEU would not directly affect the student-parent relationship were more common.

Upon examination of the frequencies related to the effect of the existence of AEU on group work, as presented in Table 5, each of the experts indicated that the presence of AEU had a positive impact on the group dynamics. The answers of some experts supporting this view are: "The unit informs what the learning deficiencies of the students are and accordingly plans and programs can be made" (U2), "Teachers talk not only about how to teach the lesson but also how to make an evaluation in the class" (U7).

As a result, when the effect of the existence of AEU on the relationships was examined, the most common opinion was that the effect would be positive. In the teacher-administrator relationship, the most common opinion was that it would be negative for the teacher. In the context of student-parent relations, the most common opinion was that the existence of this unit did not have a direct effect.

Findings Related to the Fourth Sub-Problem

In the fourth sub-problem, Assessment and Evaluation experts were asked about their opinions on the effect of the interaction between AEU and other units in the school (school counseling service,

research and development unit) on school climate. The frequencies of the expert opinions are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Frequencies of Expert Opinions about the Effect of Interaction of AEU and Other Units on School Climate.

Theme	Category	Subcategory	Units	Resources
Effects of having an assessment and evaluation unit	Effect of interaction with other units	The controlling nature of measurement can distort relationships	2	2
		Co-ordinated work has a positive effect on school climate	6	6

According to Table 6, six experts stated that the interaction of AESU with other units positively affected the school climate due to coordinated work. One expert response supporting this view is: "In our school, we work together as curriculum development, assessment and evaluation experts and teachers. We are good collaborators. We also work in partnership and co-operation with the school guidance service in some projects." (U6). Two experts stated that the interaction of AEU with other units may negatively affect the school climate because of its controlling nature. One expert supported this view: "AEU is involved in the process not only in exams for students but also in activities such as projects carried out in the school and wants to raise the standard. Therefore, it may cause anxiety in other units from time to time" (U3). Consequently, the most common opinion among the experts was that the interaction between the units positively affected the school climate. Some experts think that measurement has a negative effect on the school environment because it has a realistic and controlling nature. However, the frequency difference between positive and negative views is large and in favor of the positive view.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

Education is a system that includes teachers, students, administrators, and parents. In order to ensure the good process of this system, it is necessary for all individuals in the process to fulfill their duties and responsibilities. However, it is important for individuals to get support from each other when necessary and to work in coordination to ensure the efficiency of the process.

Assessment and evaluation activities at school directly or indirectly affect all inputs and outputs in this process. In this regard, educators should have the necessary qualifications in the field of assessment and evaluation to evaluate the students in the system correctly with valid and reliable measurements. However, studies in the literature show that teachers or pre-service teachers have limited knowledge about the correct application of assessment and evaluation activities and have problems at this point (Acar & Anıl, 2009; Çakan, 2004; Gelbal & Kelecioğlu, 2007; Gerek, 2006; Gözütok et al., 2005; Kabapınar & Ataman, 2010; Kilmen & Çıkrıkçı Demirtaşlı, 2009; Kuran & Kanatlı, 2009; Şenel Çoruhlu et al., 2009; Yapıcı & Demirdelen, 2007; Yaşar et al., 2005). Therefore, it is necessary to

improve the assessment and evaluation activities carried out in schools and classrooms and to provide the necessary support when needed. The unit that will provide this support is undoubtedly AEU.

Valuable opinions were obtained about the necessity of the unit and its effects on the school climate and teachers, administrators, parents, and students by interviewing assessment and evaluation experts in primary schools with AEU in this study. The general conclusions obtained from these opinions are as follows: One of the most important benefits of having a unit in a school is that the assessment and evaluation activities carried out in the school are objective. Another important factor that makes the unit necessary is to provide the necessary support to ensure that teachers' assessment and evaluation activities are qualified. As stated by Özar (2013), one of the most important tasks of the unit is to complete the deficiencies of teachers in assessment and evaluation, to examine the assessment and evaluation approaches they apply in the classroom, and to inform teachers about complementary assessment and evaluation methods or current developments when necessary. As stated by Özar (2013), one of the most important tasks of the unit is to complete the deficiencies of teachers in assessment and evaluation, to examine the assessment and evaluation approaches they apply in the classroom, and to inform teachers about complementary measurement and evaluation methods or current developments when necessary. This is a chain process that indirectly affects student achievement, and accurate monitoring of student development has also been found to be a factor that requires the existence of a unit.

According to the results of the research, assessment and evaluation units mostly use traditional and complementary assessment and evaluation approaches together in schools. However, the fact that the teaching policies in private schools are exam-oriented makes traditional measurement methods indispensable. It has been one of the particularly emphasized ideas that school policies should focus more on complementary assessment methods, especially using assessment tools such as performance tasks and projects to measure high-level mental skills. The studies in the literature have recommended the foundation of assessment and evaluation units as well as seminars and in-service trainings in order to make teachers' perceptions of using complementary assessment and evaluation methods adequate (Kılıç, 2020).

According to another important result, it was concluded that while the existence of an assessment and evaluation unit positively affects teacher, administrator, and parent behavior in general, it did not directly affect student behaviors. However, the teacher's cooperation with the assessment and evaluation unit increases the quality of assessment and evaluation, and this is reflected in the methods he/she applies in the classroom. Therefore, it is obvious that the unit will contribute to the student indirectly.

The existence of the unit also contributes positively to group studies and teacher-student, teacher-parent, and teacher-administrator behaviors. AEU provides support in preparing annual training programs and identifying deficiencies in group studies. The fact that this unit provides objective data with unbiased evaluation in teacher-administrator and teacher-parent relations provides an objective perspective while giving feedback on deficiencies. On the other hand, the fact that it causes anxiety in teachers in the teacher-administrator relationship can be considered a negative result compared to other results. It can be said that administrators should carry out measurement and evaluation processes to improve the processes instead of using them as a system of rewarding/punishing teachers at this point. In addition, the relationship between AEU and other units (school counseling service, research and development unit) should be coordinated and harmonious. It has been concluded that it positively affects the school climate as it increases the quality of school education policy and ensures that all educational activities are carried out systematically.

SUGGESTIONS

The research results and related studies show that AEU should exist in all schools. The

effectiveness of an education program requires continuous monitoring of the program and providing feedback at regular intervals. Assessment and evaluation fulfill this role and ensures that the problems in the process are identified, and precautions are taken (Kılıç, 2020). There is a need to have a support unit in every school that can contribute to teachers so that recognition, monitoring, and evaluation activities for students can be carried out with appropriate measurement tools, objective assessment and evaluation can be carried out, teachers can also focus on complementary measurement and evaluation, and measurement results can be examined in terms of validity and reliability.

In addition, the education system was affected by situations such as earthquakes and global pandemics earlier and met with the distance education process. Considering that global crises can always affect education, it is very important to have an assessment and evaluation unit in schools in order to measure and evaluate student achievement in a valid and reliable way and to make accurate decisions in distance education designs (Öğütölmüş et al., 2022). Therefore, it is recommended that the Ministry of National Education take steps to ensure that there are AEU in every school that will work in cooperation with the AEC. In this context, it is obvious that more experts in the field of assessment and evaluation need to be trained in Turkey. This is possible by reopening undergraduate programs in the field of measurement and evaluation or by increasing the number of graduate programs. In addition, it is thought that assessment and evaluation bachelor graduates who currently work in guidance units in schools can be assigned to AEU units. Finally, in this research, the opinions of assessment and evaluation experts about assessment and evaluation units were examined. Other studies can examine the opinions of other stakeholders, such as students, teachers, parents, and administrators, about assessment and evaluation units.

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Approved by Aksaray University Human Research Ethics Committee with protocol number E-34183927-020-00000945670.

Author Contributions

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