



## VIEWS OF TURKISH TEACHERS ON EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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**Abstract:** Extracurricular activities are educational applications for students outside the school curriculum that require specific knowledge, skills, and behaviors as well as continuity of participation. Because student experiences inside the classroom are organized according to the educator's or institution's instructional goals, which themselves are tightly standardized by a higher authority, it must be accepted that there are some points in student learning and personal development which in-class activities are not able to reach. Consequently, the best and most effective way to reach them is through extracurricular activities. This study aims to reveal views on extracurricular activities of Turkish teachers involved with them at secondary schools. To this end, Turkish teachers put forward their views on the application, content, conceptualization, and problems of extracurricular activities. The research group consisted of 20 Turkish teachers working in the cities of Adana, Kahramanmaraş, Osmaniye, Kastamonu, Erzurum, Urfa, and Adıyaman. In the study, data were collected by means of semi-structured interview questions and analyzed by use of the content analysis method. As a result of the analyses, a variety of information was gathered about the thoughts of Turkish teachers relating to extracurricular activities, including problems and recommended solutions. Some comments, which are based upon the research findings and relevant to Turkish teachers involved with extracurricular activities, are presented at the conclusion of the study.

**Key words:** Extracurricular activities, Turkish teacher, secondary school

### 1. Introduction

Thanks to the individual endeavors of Turkish teachers, who hold important roles in the country's educational system, extracurricular activities stir interest and excitement among students and encourage the acquisition of knowledge and behavior among them. Extracurricular activities enhance the educational aspect of schools and provide students with many experiences related to life outside the classroom. "They are out-of-class activities for students to learn about their environment, society, and life, which do not influence the students' in-class activities directly but enable the students to apply what they learn in class. They allow students to spend their free time properly and to develop personal characteristics as a whole. In general these activities, which are applied in school, around school, or outside the school, are called out-of-class extracurricular activities" (Köse, 2013: p.342). Extracurricular activities facilitate the application of student knowledge acquired at the cognitive level and help them get appropriately acclimated to life and its future expectations.

Although possessing their own distinct set of features, extracurricular activities are governed by the rules of the school, which also directs them. According to Tezcan (1980: p.176) extracurricular activities take place both at the school and outside of it. Although these activities operate with the school administration's knowledge and under teacher supervision, they take place outside of normal school hours and without any parental supervision. Schools and families are expected to demonstrate a systematic and unified effort to help students develop the desired behaviors and habits.

The fundamental objectives of extracurricular activities include developing students in fields that interest them; using free time effectively; understanding and executing tasks and responsibilities;

learning democratic behaviors and practices; contributing to social and environmental causes; and supporting in-class activities (Holland & Andre, 1987; Gifford & Dean, 1990; Holloway, 2000). Extracurricular activities are important in various aspects, such as the use of what students learn in lessons; the development of an awareness of society; the encouragement of self-expression; and the feeling of responsibility.

It is obvious that there are certain points in a student's development that in-class activities will not be able to address, even though lessons are formed based on specific curricula and according to the levels and preferences of the students. The best and most effective way of reaching these points is available through extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities include special days and weeks; student clubs; community service; competitions; theater and drama; sports; music and art; publishing; library; folk dancing; and trips (Şenel, 1994: p.8; Tekişik & Karabıyık, 1994: p.79; Binbaşıoğlu, 2000: p.10; MEB, 2005: p.1-2). The application field of extracurricular activities was specified by creating a definition and narrowing its scope in the 2005 Regulations of the Turkish Education System. According to this, the main aim of extracurricular activities is to regulate methods and principles so as to develop students self-esteem and responsibility; form new realms of interest; and provide students with necessary scientific, social, artistic, and athletic skills through student clubs and social service works, especially in public and private K-12 schools (MEB, 2005: p.1). Through these activities, students learn about rules and certain aspects of social life and gain insights from history. Moreover, students get the qualifications of taking on roles within the group, practicing good communication with others, and discovering their own skills and abilities. As outlined in the Regulations of Extracurricular Activities, participation in extracurricular activities teaches students to:

- a) respect human rights and democracy.
- b) learn about themselves, specify individual goals, and develop their own skills for their own benefit as well as society as a whole;
- c) behave conscientiously in order to protect the environment;
- d) trust themselves and their surrounding environment;
- e) acquire habits of studying in a planned way and spending free time effectively and beneficially;
- f) be an entrepreneur and continue this successfully, adapting to new situations;
- g) stop extravagant behavior and live economically;
- h) respect individual differences, tolerate differing views, thoughts, beliefs, understandings, and cultural values;
- i) carry out their duties eagerly and take on responsibilities;
- j) deal with social problems, both by themselves and through cooperation with others; develop projects and execute them to address social problems;
- k) make students acquire the behaviors and skills to work eagerly and take on responsibilities within the group in order to complete the tasks done in the group (MEB, 2005: 2-3).

Extracurricular activities are important for the personal growth and development of students, connecting what students learn at school to their actual lives. According to Bilen (1990: 118), if the behaviors learned through instructional activities are not reinforced and applied in other settings, it is almost impossible to make these behaviors permanent. When outside of school hours, the student should be identifying connections between what he/she has learned to everyday life, thus realizing the practical significance of their education. There is a strong relationship with extracurricular and in-class activities – the extracurricular activities may supplement planned in-class activities, and as such, apart from teachers, the role of the school administration, parents, and peers is great.

Although out-of-class activities in the Turkish education system are not the desired type, there do exist extracurricular activities that can be done according to regulations and implemented by the schools' own resources. However, such extracurricular activities are hardly carried out in conscious fashion, with proper planning or according to a predetermined program. In order to properly organize these activities, schools must know the possibilities available for extracurricular activities, what their content is, and what resources and opportunities can be provided to support them. If the out-of-class activities are specified systematically in a regular and planned way, and if they are applied parallel to the in-class

activities, they will both support the development of students and increase the success of teaching and learning (Köse, 2013: p.337).

Turkish teachers are responsible for organizing extracurricular activities at secondary schools, taking an especially big role in planning and running them to achieve stated aims. However, such responsibility certainly brings some difficulties. This study presents the views of secondary school Turkish teachers pertaining to the content and application of extracurricular activities, as well as related problems.

### **Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study is to determine the views on extracurricular activities of Turkish secondary school teachers taking part in them. With this aim, Turkish teachers state the views pertaining to the application, content, denomination, and problems of extracurricular activities.

### **Limitations**

This research is limited to:

- 1- The Turkish teachers who work at state schools in the cities of Adana, Kahramanmaraş, Adıyaman, Erzurum, Kastamonu, Urfa, and Osmaniye.
- 2- The questions available in the data collection tool.

## **2. Methodology**

The research is qualitative as the main aim is to find out the views of Turkish teachers on social activities. In this research, we used the interview qualitative data collection method. "The interview is a type of verbal communication. It provides in-depth information about the research subject." (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008: p.40). In data collection process, semi-structured interview questions were employed. The already prepared semi-structured interview questions were rearranged after the views of three experts in Turkish education field were taken into consideration. The participants are 20 Turkish teachers working in state schools in Adana, Kahramanmaraş, Adıyaman, Erzurum, Kastamonu, Urfa, and Osmaniye, all chosen by means of an easily accessible sampling method. The oral data of teachers at first was captured by an audio recorder and then transferred to a computer and transcribed. The answers to the questions as well as the notes taken from the other teachers were codified by the researcher after reading a few times. After the codifying was complete and themes for subsuming the codes were determined, the researcher compared the codes and themes. Afterwards, the convenience between the codes was taken into consideration, and the data were analyzed by means of content analysis method.

### **Participants**

Participants consisted of 20 Turkish teachers who work in state schools in the cities of Adana, Kahramanmaraş, Osmaniye, Kastamonu, Erzurum, Urfa, Adıyaman. Participation was on a voluntary basis.

### **Data Collection Tools**

In the study, data were collected via a semi-structured interview questionnaire prepared by the researcher in consultation with a specialist.

### **Collection and Analysis of Data**

The data gathered from the interviews were analyzed by means of the content analysis method. The researcher examined the data a few times. Codes were designated according to themes under which they were subsumed. Next, using the same data, another researcher's coding and themes were compared. Afterwards, the convenience between the codes was considered. The counted convenience percentage was 82% for the sake of internal validity. Quotations from people who participated in the research serve as examples to explain the codes and reliability of the research.

### 3. Findings

A total of 20 Turkish teachers were interviewed in order to determine their views on the social activities at secondary schools. The teachers were coded by the letter “K” and a number (K1, K2, K3, K4...). Quotations are presented as they were given without correction.

Quotations, codes, and frequencies from answers of the Turkish teachers to the question “**How would you define the concept of extracurricular activities in one sentence?**” were given in Table 1.

**Table 1.** *Defining the Concept of Extracurricular Activities*

Codes	F	Quotations From Remarks of Teachers
They are the activities in which students develop and express themselves.	112	<i>The students get know about themselves, their self-identity and adequacy. (K.18)</i>
They are the activities that make students socialize and have relationships with their social surroundings.	88	<i>Any kind of activity done to socialize students. (K.6)</i>
They are out-of-school education activities.	44	<i>All the social and cultural activities done out of class. (K.2)</i>
They are activities for relaxation and entertainment.	44	<i>Make classical teaching and learning life more enjoyable. (K.15)</i>
They are activities regulating the behaviors of the students.	33	<i>They are activities regulating student's behavior and have social themes. (K.20)</i>
They are activities increasing the students' knowledge and cultural level.	11	<i>They are the activities to increase knowledge and cultural level of the students. (K.16)</i>
They are everything that makes life meaningful.	11	<i>Most things making life more meaningful. (K.19)</i>
They are activities that teachers don't want to do.	11	<i>An activity text downloaded from the internet and signed by the school administration. (K.1)</i>

\*Because an instructor can comment more than once with this open-ended question, numbers on the table correspond to the number of views.

When Table 1 is analyzed, a great majority of Turkish teachers see extracurricular activities as “the activities in which students develop and express themselves’.” The remark of interviewee K-13 is notable:

*“Any kind of group study which make students interpersonally active in relationships and in the development of self-expression skills.” (K.13)*

Some of the Turkish teachers define extracurricular activities as “the activities ensuring students socialize”:

*“The extracurricular activities are entirely planned activities in which the individual, the smallest part of the society, is happier and more sensitive to the solutions to social problems by means of making him be aware of his competence.” (K.8)*

Four teachers define extracurricular activities as “out-of-class activities” while another four teachers define these activities as “the activities for relaxation and entertainment.” Three teachers, however, define social activities as “the activities regulating student behaviors.”

Other teachers see extracurricular activities as “the activities done to increase the knowledge and cultural levels of the students,” “the activities making life meaningful,” and “the activities that teachers do without eagerness.”

Quotations, codes and frequencies from answers of the Turkish teachers to the question “**What comes to mind at the mention of extracurricular activities in secondary schools?**” were given in Table 2.

**Table 2.** *Characterization of Extracurricular Activities at Secondary Schools*

<b>Codes</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Quotations From Remarks of Teachers</b>
Performance activities (theater, drama, year-end plays)	9	<i>Theater activities (...)</i> (K.6)
Poetry readings	5	<i>(...) poetry readings (...)</i> (K.19)
Competitions (poetry competitions, academic bowls, etc.)	5	<i>Competitions (...)</i> (K.5)
The activities done during special days and weeks	4	<i>(...) both the activities done in the special days and weeks and various celebrations, exhibitions and works realized by the students come to my mind.</i> (K.4)
Various sports activities (basketball, volleyball, etc.)	4	<i>(...) volleyball, basketball (...)</i> (K.3)
Club activities	3	<i>Club activities realized at schools (...)</i> (K.7)
Works of prose and poem writing	2	<i>The works of prose and poem writing.</i> (K.10)
Trip activities	2	<i>(...) trip activities</i> (K.6)
Folk dances	2	<i>(...) folk dances (...)</i> (K.14)
Obligatory works and chores	2	<i>The activities that we do obligatorily but we get good productions as a result of them.</i> (K.17)
No response	2	-
Debate	1	<i>(...) debates (...)</i> (K.12)
Chorus	1	<i>(...) chorus (...)</i> (K.3)
Exhibition	1	<i>(...) exhibition (...)</i> (K.3)
Publications	1	<i>(...) publications (...)</i> (K.4)
Chess	1	<i>(...) chess (...)</i> (K.13)
Any activity promoting a chaotic environment	1	<i>The chaotic environment of an hour over two weeks.</i> (K-1)
Musical shows	1	<i>(...) musical shows (...)</i> (K.14)
Library works	1	<i>(...) library works (...)</i> (K.14)
Everything pertaining to life	1	<i>(...) a lot of things pertaining to life.</i> (K.19)

\*Because an instructor can comment more than once with this open-ended question, numbers on the table correspond to the number of views.

When Table 2 is analyzed, the first extracurricular activity coming to mind of a great majority of Turkish teachers is “performance activities.” Theater includes drama, sketches, and year-end plays. Five teachers see “poetry readings” while another five teachers see “competitions” as the extracurricular activities done at schools. Four teachers define “the activities done in the special days and weeks” and another four teachers define “various sports activities” as extracurricular activities.

Other teachers characterize such activities as “the works of prose and poem writing, trip activities, folk dances, debates, chorus, exhibition, musical shows, library works” in the scope of social activities. A teacher uses the expression ‘everything about life’ to describe extracurricular activities while another characterizes them as ‘all the activities causing a chaotic environment.’

Quotations, codes, and frequencies from answers of the Turkish teachers to the question “**Which department takes on the biggest role in extracurricular activities at secondary schools?**” were given in Table 3.

**Table 3.** *Department Taking on Biggest Role in Extracurricular Activities*

<b>Codes</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Quotations From Remarks of Teachers</b>
Turkish teacher	18	<i>I can say that Turkish teachers take the biggest role. (K.4)</i>
Physical Education teacher	4	<i>Depending on the time of year and the type of activities, the most responsibility belongs to Turkish teachers followed by Physical Education and Music. (K.8)</i>
Music teacher	3	<i>Depending on the time of year and the type of activities, the most responsibility belongs to Turkish teachers followed by Physical Education and Music. (K.8)</i>
Social Studies teacher	3	<i>Turkish, Social Studies. (K.19)</i>
Art teacher	1	<i>(...) painting (...) (K.14)</i>

\*Because an instructor can comment more than once with this open-ended question, numbers on the table correspond to the number of views.

When Table 3 is analyzed, most of the Turkish teachers agree that their own position plays the biggest role in extracurricular activities. Physical Education is chosen by four teachers, while Music and Social Studies are each preferred by three.

Quotations, codes and frequencies from answers of the Turkish teachers to the question “**What is the most challenging extracurricular activity you take part in?**” were given in Table 4.

**Table 4.** *Most Challenging Extracurricular Activity for a Turkish Teacher*

<b>Codes</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Quotations From Remarks of Teachers</b>
The memorization and celebration of special days and weeks (presentation, preparation of the program, etc.)	9	<i>I think arranging several tasks immediately, like the Works of 19<sup>th</sup> of May that significant and broad participation, is a challenge to me. (K.4)</i>
Theater and drama activities	7	<i>theater, drama (K.19)</i>
Competitions (composition and poetry competitions)	3	<i>(...) the mission of both getting the students prepared and testing the Works in poetry and composition competitions (...) (K.7)</i>

Poetry reading and competitions	2	<i>Poetry competitions.</i> (K.11)
No response	2	-
School magazine	1	<i>(...) school magazine (...)</i> (K.8)
School website	1	<i>(...) school website (...)</i> (K.8)
Trip activities	1	<i>Out-of-class trip activities.</i> (K.14)

\*Because an instructor can comment more than once with this open-ended question, numbers on the table correspond to the number of views.

When Table 4 is analyzed, most of the Turkish teachers state they mostly have difficulty in the memorization and celebration of special days and weeks. A significant portion of Turkish teachers express they have difficulty in theater and drama activities. Three teachers state they have difficulty in competitions, while two teachers note poetry reading and competition activities. Other teachers state difficulty in “arranging the school magazine, school website, and trips.” Two teachers provide no view on the topic.

Quotations, codes and frequencies of the answers of the Turkish teachers to the question “**What are the elements and situations that create challenges for you in extracurricular activities?**” were represented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** *Elements and Situations Creating Challenges in Extracurricular Activities*

<b>Codes</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Quotations From Remarks of Teachers</b>
The insufficiency of the physical equipment and resources of schools (materials, hall inefficiency, number of students)	9	<i>The insufficiency of the physical environment at schools (...)</i> (K.6)
The negative effect of administrations, protocol, and official rules	5	<i>The process of obtaining permission from the administration, in my opinion.</i> (K.15)
Reluctance of students and low level of readiness	5	<i>(...) the low level of readiness of students</i> (K.6)
Scheduling outside lesson hours	4	<i>(...) being outside normal lesson time (especially for the students) (...)</i> (K.8)
Seeing Turkish teachers as the responsible ones	3	<i>Turkish teachers are viewed as the responsible ones in each social activity.</i> (K.2)
Teachers’ lack of interest	3	<i>(...) the teachers’ lack of interest, the irresponsibility of the administrators (...)</i> (K.3)
Parents not allowing student participation in such activities	2	<i>(...) parents directing children to private courses for exams.</i> (K.9)
Shortage or insufficiency of the budget for the activities	2	<i>Lack of financial support (...)</i> (K.14)
Random selection of students for the activities	1	<i>Random selection of students for the activities.</i> (K.1)
Making activities obligatory	1	<i>Social activities are used in secondary schools because they are obligatory.</i> (K.4)

Repeating the same activities each year	1	<i>I think the same activities with the same content and similar kind of presentation every year is quite negative. The teachers might get bored after a while. (K.4)</i>
Insufficient knowledge and experience with the activity	1	<i>My lack of knowledge and experience in that activity field. (K.5)</i>
Participation of incompetent students in the activities	1	<i>(...) the obligation of working with the students who have lack of interest and skills to produce something in the end. (K.12)</i>
Turkish teachers lack of time for these activities due to personal lives	1	<i>Turkish teachers being obliged to do these activities during the rest of the lesson time or in their own free time. (K.12)</i>

\*Because an instructor can comment more than once with this open-ended question, numbers on the table correspond to the number of views.

When Table 5 is analyzed, it is seen that the insufficiency of the physical environment and opportunities at schools challenge most of the Turkish teachers. While five teachers state the negative effect of administrations, protocol and official rules, another five state that student reluctance and the low level of readiness make the extracurricular activities difficult to carry out. Four teachers express that scheduling extracurricular activities outside normal lesson time challenges them. Three teachers state that Turkish teachers are seen as the responsible ones in each extracurricular activity while the other three teachers complain about the teachers' lack of interest.

Other teachers state that they had difficulty with extracurricular activities for the following reasons "parents not wishing to send students to such activities; the insufficiency of the budget; the teachers' random selection of students for the activities; activities being obligatory; presentation of the same activities each year; insufficient knowledge and experience with the activity; participation of incompetent students in the activities; Turkish teachers not being able to dedicate time to these activities because of their personal lives."

Quotations, codes and frequencies of the answers of the Turkish teachers to the question "In which extracurricular activities do you enjoy participating most?" were given in Table 6.

**Table 6.** *Extracurricular Activities Enjoyed Most by Turkish Teachers*

<b>Codes</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Quotations From Remarks of Teachers</b>
Theater, drama, play, sketch activities	6	<i>I like to do theater works. (K.11)</i>
Poetry reading (poem selection)	6	<i>I can say that the best activity I like is theater or poetry reading. (K.4)</i>
Tribe activities	4	<i>Trip activities. (K.6)</i>
Memorization and celebration of special days and weeks	3	<i>Having the students prepare to read a poem for the special days and weeks (K.3)</i>
Cinema activities	1	<i>Cinema activities. (K.20)</i>
Library works	1	<i>Library works. (K.2)</i>
Creative writing	1	<i>I like activities that cause students to produce original work (creative writing, drama etc.). (K.4)</i>



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No response	1	-
All the literature activities	1	<i>All literature activities.</i> (K.14)

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\*Because an instructor can comment more than once with this open-ended question, numbers on the table correspond to the number of views.

When Table 6 is analyzed, a portion of the Turkish teachers state they liked theater, drama, play, and sketch activities most while an equal number prefer poetry reading activities. Four teachers choose trip activities while three say they like memorization and celebration of special days and weeks.

Other teachers state that they like activities such as ‘cinema, theater works, creative writing.’

Quotations, codes and frequencies from answers of the Turkish teachers to the question “**If you experience enthusiasm during an extracurricular activity, what is the main reason for it?**” were given in Table 7.

**Table 7.** *Main Reason for Turkish Teachers’ Enthusiasm for Extracurricular Activities*

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<b>Codes</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Quotations From Remarks of Teachers</b>
I prefer it as a group activity rather than an individual one.	12	<i>I like the activities more that we prepare and present with the students cheerfully. The main reason of this is that I believe social activities should be done voluntarily and eagerly rather than obligatorily.</i> (K.4)
The eagerness of the students	3	<i>The eagerness of the students.</i> (K.3)
Being beneficial and enjoyable for students	3	<i>I think that it is more beneficial and enjoyable for the students.</i> (K.11)
Being competent in the activity field	1	<i>My being competent in this field.</i> (K.6)
Adequate support from the school administration	1	<i>The school administration’s provides enough support.</i> (K.9)
Ideal physical conditions	1	<i>The eagerness of the students and the convenience of the physical conditions.</i> (K.16)

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\*Because an instructor can comment more than once with this open-ended question, numbers on the table correspond to the number of views.

When Table 7 is analyzed, a large majority of Turkish teachers have enthusiasm for an extracurricular activity when it was something meant to be done socially rather than individually. This also encourages students to perform the activities eagerly. Three teachers relate enthusiasm to the students’ eagerness while another three connect it to activities being beneficial and enjoyable for the students.

Other teachers relate enthusiasm for extracurricular activities to factors such as “their being competent in this field; the sufficient support of the school administration; and the convenience of the physical conditions.”

Quotations, codes and frequencies of the answers of the Turkish teachers to the question “**What solutions would you recommend for the problems you face while engaged in extracurricular activities?**” were given in Table 8.

**Table 8.** *Recommendations for Problems Faced While Engaged in Extracurricular Activities*

<b>Codes</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Quotations From Remarks of Teachers</b>
Providing adequate equipment, materials and physical space	9	<i>There must certainly be enough physical equipment for the activities. (K.13)</i>
Dispelling belief that Turkish teachers' are the only responsible and attendant teachers for all activities	6	<i>School administrators overload the Turkish teachers while distributing tasks. This causes Turkish teachers to be tired and bored, so they neglect what they can't do. There must be a fair task distribution among teachers. (K.12)</i>
Administration's support for teachers in task distribution, permission, time, and physical conditions	6	<i>Problems are caused by the school administration's belief that such activities are a mere formality requiring completion of paperwork. This causes the teachers not to be eager. The administrators' awareness must be raised. (K.12)</i>
Increase in financial opportunities, allocating budget for activities	5	<i>Financial shortcomings may be overcome by means of the activities being arranged at school. (K.17)</i>
Making extracurricular activities voluntarily rather than obligatorily	3	<i>The social activities at schools shouldn't be obligatorily. Teachers and students should volunteer for these activities. (K.1)</i>
Selection of a variety of interesting and current activities	2	<i>Ceremony, celebration and memorization programs are boring and don't get the attention of the students. In order to change this, more students should be appointed to come up with ideas and focus on shows and presentation that are attention-getting with audio and visuals. (K.12)</i>
Independent extracurricular activities based on subjects or fields outside the curriculum	2	<i>Being part of an independent branch of extracurricular activities at schools. (K.2)</i>
Complete cooperation among administration, parents, students, and teachers	2	<i>Managing cooperation between teachers and administrators. (K.3)</i>
Giving the teachers tasks according to their interests	1	<i>To take part in the activities I am interested in. (K.5)</i>
Raising the awareness of parents	1	<i>There are parents who see the extracurricular activities as time consuming. Such parents should be informed. (K.12)</i>
Decreasing official correspondences and documentation	1	<i>Paperwork for extracurricular activities should be reduced. (K.15)</i>
No response	1	-

\*Because an instructor can comment more than once with this open-ended question, numbers on the table correspond to the number of views.

When Table 8 is analyzed, a large majority of Turkish teachers agree that the best solution to the problems facing extracurricular activities is "providing adequate equipment, materials and physical space." A segment of Turkish teachers state that the belief extracurricular activities are their

responsibility need to be dispelled. A portion of Turkish teachers as well state that “the school administration’s support for the teachers in task distribution, permission, time, and physical conditions” is needed. Five teachers support the idea of “increasing the financial opportunities and allocating budget for the activities.” Three teachers express that extracurricular activities should be voluntarily and not obligatory.

Other teachers say that problems facing extracurricular activities can be solved through the “selection of a variety of interesting and current activities; independent extracurricular activities based on subjects or fields outside the curriculum; complete cooperation among administration, parents, students, and teachers; giving the teachers tasks according to their interests; raising the awareness of parents; and decreasing official correspondences and documentation.”

### 3. Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study, the views of secondary school Turkish teachers pertaining to the content, application, and problems of social activities were presented. Based on the results of the qualitative study, a large majority of Turkish teachers taking roles in extracurricular activities at secondary schools define them as opportunities in which students develop and express themselves. “Writing a composition or a poem to celebrate special days or weeks is among the desired behaviors of the students. Thanks to the self-esteem attained by students taking part in such activities, they will continue developing such types of behavior and deal with more important activities for the rest of their educational lives and be very successful” (Göçer, 2004: p.132). Through extracurricular activities, students transform available knowledge into behaviors, allowing their unique characteristics and qualities to emerge as a result.

Almost all the participants agreed that Turkish teachers have the biggest workloads when it comes to extracurricular activities. This demonstrates that out-of-class activities are the responsibility of Turkish teachers and that they hold the most important positions within them. Turkish teachers see such activities as conducive to student-centered learning. When extracurricular activities were mentioned, the first things that came to mind for Turkish teachers were theater and drama. Poetry reading, competitions, the celebration and memorization of special days and weeks followed this. Furthermore, the most desired activities were theater and drama, which they did eagerly because they enjoy doing such activities themselves.

The majority of the teachers interviewed expressed that they had difficulty mostly with activities of celebration and memorization of special days and weeks. Inadequate physical equipment and resources (materials, space, number of the students) at schools, as well as administrative bureaucracy and protocol are other challenges for students. It is understood that physical conditions and equipment are not at the appropriate level in our country, in which there are many special days to celebrate. Pehlivan, Esen and Dönmez (1993), Ekici, Bayrakdar and Uğur (2009) see the biggest obstacle to out-of-class activities as the lack of space and equipment. Apart from students’ interest and willingness, there must be dedicated places where these activities can safely take place. At the very least, there must be a school garden, sports fields, auditorium, library, and reading room. Developed countries consider both out-of-class activities and the necessary in-class activities to provide background. For example, each student in Japan has to select an extracurricular activity after the fourth class in addition to working on it at school for two hours after formal lessons (Güvenç, 1992: p.294).

In the study, administrations and official rules are seen as having a negative effect on extracurricular activities. In order for the activities to reach their goals, in a broad sense these activities should be organized properly. The first phase of organization is to think about these activities as teaching and learning activities. Organizing the activity is the responsibility of school administration, which likewise controls the operation. The teacher then works with students to conduct planning of activities and subsequently guides them while they carry them out. The students distribute tasks and conduct all work themselves. At the end of the academic year, the students produce a report of all the activities accomplished, which is reviewed by the teacher and provided to the school administration for analysis and final approval (Hesapçioğlu, 1994: p.346-347).

Among the views of Turkish teachers interviewed, three factors are dominant as to the solutions to the problems faced in extracurricular activities. One of them is the improvement and arrangement of the equipment, materials, and physical space. Lack of dedicated and convenient spaces coupled with inadequate materials make planning and execution of extracurricular activities rather difficult, and Turkish teachers believe addressing these issues is critical. Moreover, the expectation that Turkish teachers should be the only ones responsible for extracurricular activities must be overcome. Turkish teachers feel overloaded by this major responsibility. Furthermore, in order for the activities to be done quickly and effectively, the school administration must support the teachers when distributing tasks, granting permissions, and managing space and scheduling issues.

As a result, it is recommended the following suggestions for extracurricular activities be taken into consideration:

1-Materials and physical conditions of schools should be taken into consideration when extracurricular activities are being planned.

2-When school buildings are constructed, multi-functional halls available for various activities should be taken into consideration.

3-Schools should actively promote the idea that all the teachers, not just the Turkish teachers, take part in extracurricular activities, with responsibilities being distributed voluntarily.

4-The school administration should provide Turkish teachers with the necessary support to arrange and conduct extracurricular activities. The administration should take an active role in solving the problems, instead of simply being an authority.

5-The Ministry of National Education should allocate a budget for extracurricular activities.

6-It is important for both teachers and students that the activities are current and interesting.

7-The activities should be conducted in cooperation with the administration, parents, teachers, and students.

8-Turkish teachers should have knowledge and experience about conducting extracurricular activities. In-service courses or seminars should be arranged for the teachers with this aim. At the same time, the Ministry of National Education should prepare brochures, guidance booklets, and materials related to extracurricular activities for Turkish teachers.

10-It is thought that scientific studies related to extracurricular activities should be expanded and that apart from these studies, different studies in which student views are included should be conducted.

11-When transforming knowledge into application, Turkish teachers shouldn't limit themselves to the class atmosphere at schools. They should make extracurricular activities an important part of Turkish teaching.

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