

**Identifying the
administrator and
teacher competencies
according to the views
of primary school
administrators**

IDENTIFYING THE ADMINISTRATOR AND TEACHER COMPETENCIES ACCORDING TO THE VIEWS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

IDENTIFICANDO LAS COMPETENCIAS DE ADMINISTRADOR Y MAESTRO DE ACUERDO CON LAS OPINIONES DE LOS ADMINISTRADORES DE LA ESCUELA PRIMARIA

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted with the primary school administrators in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the school administrators in Turkey; and it aimed to determine the views of school administrators regarding administrative processes. Case study method was adopted from qualitative research designs and participants were selected through snowball sampling from primary school administrators. Thus, the participants of the study consisted of 10 headmasters working in the primary schools of TRNC and 10 headmasters working in the primary schools of Turkey in the 2017-2018 academic year. Participants were asked open-ended and semi-structured questions in face-to-face interviews. The interviews were also audio-recorded. The collected data were analyzed through qualitative data analysis methods and analyzed data are presented through themes. When the responses of school administrators to the interview question are reviewed; it is observed teachers should be hard-working and successful and school climate should be enabling for organizational administrative processes are emphasized by the administrators.

KEYWORDS: Teacher, Administrator, Efficiency.

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RESUMEN



Este estudio se realizó con los administradores de escuelas primarias en la República Turca del Norte de Chipre y los administradores de escuelas en Turquía; y su objetivo era determinar las opiniones de los administradores escolares con respecto a los procesos administrativos. El método de estudio de caso se adoptó a partir de diseños de investigación cualitativos y los participantes se seleccionaron a través de muestras de bola de nieve de los administradores de la escuela primaria. Así, los participantes del estudio consistieron en 10 directores que trabajaban en las escuelas primarias de TRNC y 10 directores que trabajaban en las escuelas primarias de Turquía en el año académico 2017-2018. A los participantes se les hicieron preguntas abiertas y preguntas semiestructuradas en entrevistas cara a cara. Las entrevistas también fueron grabadas en audio. Los datos recopilados se analizaron a través de métodos de análisis de datos cualitativos y los datos analizados se presentan a través de temas. Cuando se revisan las respuestas de los administradores escolares a la pregunta de la entrevista; Se observa que los docentes deben ser trabajadores y exitosos, y los administradores deben enfatizar los procesos administrativos de la organización.

PALABRAS CLAVE: profesor, administrador, eficiencia.

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INTRODUCTION

Efficient school administrators of effective school management are perceived as paying attention to creating a positive atmosphere, and their decisions are acknowledged as more appropriate than of their colleagues. Having strong education leaders is the common characteristic of efficient schools (Gümüseli, 2014). Administrator is the school manager who organizes, influences, guides, makes accurate effective division of labor, coordinates and supervises his/her colleagues towards the objectives of a school with well-known and practices management processes (Gürsel, 1993). School administration is the implementation of educational administration in a more limited setting (Erdoğan, 2000). Schools are at the basis of education system. School administration examines the regulations, methods and skills regarding effective working of schools towards their objectives (İlgar, 1996). School is an organization which produces; gifts and distributes knowledge (Çelik, 2002). Education administrators, as leaders of schools, have important roles in affecting school's performance level. Based on the fact that a good school has a good administrator, school headmaster is responsible for showing significant leadership behaviors such as identifying where the school and instruction is at and decide the point it should reach. School administrator should possess sufficient equipment, knowledge and skills to fulfill his duties, responsibilities and authority because the two most important factors influencing school's education quality are administrator and teacher (Öznacar & Erdağ, 2018; İlseven & Baştaş, 2018). States are creating educational systems, programs and policies; they should design to meet the needs of the globalizing world. Training created to respond to the needs of the systems and policies, society and age, and they should be checked regularly to determine their degree of accessibility (Be-yoglu, 2017; Dana & Sabzi, 2013).

An administrator scholar without educational knowledge cannot be recognized as a good education administrator (Bursalioğlu, 2008; Öznacar, Kızıl & Yılmaz, 2018). Today, schools account for a major part of educational process. The primary duty of school administration is to keep the school alive for educational purposes (Öznacar & Yılmaz, 2017). School administration can be investigated under different categories such as pre-school education, primary school education and secondary school education. The knowledge and implementation of administrative principles are fundamentally the same in all educational institutions. The need for today's conditions should be the systematic working of administrative processes (decision-making, planning, organizing, communicating, coordinating, influencing, evaluating) in schools (Öznacar, 2018). 'An administrator who achieves perfect results in guiding and coordinating organizational staff uses various manipulation methods. A widely used one, yet losing its appeal day-by-day and is emphasized less, is using authority' (Aydın, 2014). School administrators should do the right thing and avoid making mistakes regarding administrative duties (Öznacar, 2018). School administrators' ability of efficient use of human and material sources for educational purposes is closely associated with his/her competence in this regard (Ensari and Gündüz, 2006). All organizations have a need for decision-making. All administrators have to make organizational decisions with all members of the organizations (Aydın, 2014). Those who determine educational policies and plans at the highest level and interpret them at average level are educational administrators. Also, those who implement these and feedback the system are primary school administrators (Açıkalin, 2016). In light of these, the aim of this study is to investigate the views of primary school headmasters working in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (T.R.N.C.) and Turkey regarding administrative processes.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In order to succeed in school management, considering the importance of this issue, this study is significant in collecting information about the views of primary school administrators regarding administrative processes (planning, decision-making, coordination, communication, organizing, influence and evaluation) in primary schools. In every or-

organization, decision-making, planning, organizing, communicating, coordinating and evaluating is compulsory (Aydın, 2014). Primary school principals and vice principals not receiving sufficient in-service training regarding educational administration and administrative processes makes people think that they are not competent in administration. For the school administrator to be efficient and effective, s/he should possess many personal performance standards and enable working together for programs and people complementing the school in order to achieve the pre-determined and expected outcomes (Karlı, 2006).

This study puts forward how principals and vice principals working in primary schools evaluate themselves in administrative processes. It is believed that the study findings will contribute to the works to be conducted by the Ministry of Education towards enhancing the competencies of principals and vice principals of primary schools in administrative processes through pre-service and in-service programs.

AIM OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted with the school administrators working in the primary schools of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Turkey; and it aimed to identify the views of administrators towards administrative processes. In this regard, the study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the views of school administrators regarding what they should do to enhance school vision?
2. What are the views of school administrators regarding what should be done for school and education?

RELATED STUDIES

There are many studies available in the relevant literature regarding what characteristics a successful school administrator should possess. In his study, Gümüşeli (2001) found that school administrators should prepare plans and program to shape the school's future, revise and update school's organizational structure according to the needs and expectations of the changing society, prepare school's learning activities in accordance with learning

and teaching principles, centralize student success, and organize school's achievements. In a study conducted to determine the level of activities with duties and responsibilities by the school administrator working in a primary school, it was found by Çelikten (2004) that school principal takes over roles such as educational leader, mediator, teacher and problem-solver. In another study on school principals' behaviors, Hallinger & Murphy (1986) highlighted the significance of school administrator in effective communication, establishing an open and reasonable discipline policy, organizing education, having a positive impact on student behavior and success, increasing schools' academic success, form a mutual vision, and sharing power. Griffin (1993) conducted another study to determine the factors affecting teacher leadership behaviors and found that the most common duties realized by the administrators include, within the frame of teacher leadership, providing opportunities for teacher to improve their professional skills, enabling school achieving objectives, and rewarding and encouraging students' learning. Kowalski (2005), in his study titled "problem-solving teams and improving organizational performance in schools", emphasized the significance of teams with effective team work and communicative collaboration as well as achieving pre-determined objectives and duties. In the study titled, "perceptions and expectations of primary school teachers regarding organizational skills", Ertopçu (1998) found that teacher evaluate the organizational skills shown by the administrators at low level.

METHODOLOGY

PARTICIPANTS:

A total of 20 school principals working in the primary school in Famagusta TRNC (50 %) and Ankara, Turkey (50 %) participated in the study.

RESEARCH DESIGN:

This study, as it investigates the views of school administrators regarding the teaching of leadership behaviors, adopts a qualitative research design. Qualitative research involves analysis of data collection instruments such as interviews, observations, document analysis in their natural setting (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). Qualitative case study model

was created in the study. Case study examines all factors of a case as a whole and in detail; and focuses on how they affect the case. Interview technique is known as a widely used strategy that states perspectives of participants about an issue and enables detailed investigation of these perspectives (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). The study was completed by using semi-structured interview technique. Participants were not guided in any way and allowed to express their ideas freely.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT:

The data for this study were collected through semi-structured interview form. In this technique, the questions to be asked were prepared beforehand. The questions were formulated as a result of the review of relevant literature. Firstly, 11 open-ended questions were formulated. The researcher is able to add sub-questions to the initial questions when necessary and make the study more comprehensible (Türnüklü, 2000). The questions prepared for the school administrators and the teachers were presented to expert opinion and required changes were made. Upon expert feedback, the questions were implemented to three teachers. The main interviews were conducted after receiving reliable data from the three teachers.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY:

The duration of the interviews with teachers and principals were prolonged in this study to increase persuasiveness. This persuasiveness was attempted to be increased by the consistency check of the data. It was tried to collect reliable data by checking that findings were in parallel with the conceptual framework. Persuasiveness was also increased by providing direct quotes from the interviews with the principals and teachers. In order to increase the internal reliability of the study, researchers and a faculty member with qualitative research experience coded the data and compared them in terms of consistency. For external reliability, researchers mentioned the details of research participants and research context. Also, raw data was kept in order to allow room for comparison with future studies. Miles and Huberman's (1994) formula was used for the reliability of the study and it was calculated as 89%. The calculated reliability score of 90% or above showed that

the study is reliable. Themes were formed as a result of the overlapping codes.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS:

The data for the study was collected through semi-structured interviews and the collected data was analyzed by using content analysis. Data is the method used for categorizing the content each text with words (Stemler, 2001). Each participant was given a number and interview documents were formed. Then, collected data was divided into parts based on the scope of the study and they were coded according to the concepts stated in the parts. Data were reviewed according to the research questions and conceptual framework and then finalized. This list functioned as the key while organizing the data, and themes were formed after dividing the codes in different categories. NVIVO 11.0 qualitative data analysis software was used for grouping and coding of the collected data. With NVIVO 11.0 software, comprehensive content were easily grouped, complex information was simply organized, so data were managed as a whole. This section explains the participants' responses in a clear and simple manner. Interview notes are given in quotation marks and italic form as direct quotes. Coding system was created as Administrator (A1, A2...). The data presented in this section were collected from the interpretations by the researcher.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

VIEWS OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS REGARDING TEACHERS' EFFICIENCY:

As part of the study, 10 primary school administrator from Turkey and 10 school headmasters from TRNC were asked: "What are your views on the efficiency of the teachers in your school?" and the themes and ratios are presented in Table 1. (See Annexes)

Findings Regarding the View on Hard-working and Successful:

The table shows that 40% of the primary schools administrators in Turkey believe that their teachers' are hard-working and successful. This rate went up to 60% in the participants from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

Findings Regarding the View on High-level Efficiency:

The findings indicate that 30% of the school administrators in Turkey state that the teachers' efficiency in their schools is at a high level. The rate of school administrators reached 50% in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

Findings Regarding the View on Devoted-Self-sacrificing-Motivated:

As can be seen from the Table, 30% of the school administrators in Turkey believe that their teachers' efficiency is devoted-self-sacrificing-motivated. In case of participants from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, this rate is 60%.

Findings Regarding the View on Not Open to Change:

The results showed that 30% of the administrators in Turkey believe that the teachers' efficiency is negatively affected by change and they are not open to change. Similarly, the rate for the participants in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was also 30%.

Views on What School Administrator Should Do for School and Education:

The study aimed to identify the views of primary school administrators on what school principals should do. The first question of the study asked the 10 primary school administrators from Turkey and 10 school principals from TRNC "What do you think school administrator should do for school and education?". The thematic analysis of participants' responses is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. What Headmaster Should Do for School and Education. (See Annexes)

Findings Regarding the View on School Principal Should Motivate:

As it can be seen from the Table, both 40% of the school administrators from Turkey; and 40% of the administrators from TRNC stated that 'school administrators should motivate the staff' and this led to an even case.

One of the school administrators said: 'should motivate the staff, provide opportuni-

ties for teacher in terms of professional development, should adapt to the system easily by benefitting from equal opportunities' Turkey (A:3).

Another participant stated: 'school administrator should prepare a well-planned vision for the development of the school. He should be a leader to achieve this goal. Should realize coordinated works by motivating the teachers and the parents.' TRNC (A:2).

Findings Regarding the View on School Principal Should Provide Peaceful, Social, Physical Setting:

As can be seen from Table 3, according to the evaluation of school principals in Turkey, 40% of them believe that school principals themselves should provide a peaceful, social, physical setting. This rate increased to 60% in case of the participants from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

One of the school administrators stated his opinion as: 'for school and education, the school administrator should first of all organize works (socio-cultural) to increase the level of education in his school and create a peaceful and happy working environment for the teachers, should involve all teachers in administration.' Turkey (A:1).

Another administrator shared his views as: 'should continuously improve himself for his school and education, should adopt new information and new methods. Should create peaceful, social, physical educational settings to help children gain problem-solving skills' TRNC (A:8).

Findings Regarding the View on School Administrator Should Pay Attention to Implementing Curricular Plans:

As presented in the Table, according to the school principals in Turkey, 30% of them think that they should pay attention to the implementation of curricular plans. This rate went up to 60% in case of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

A school administrator said the following: 'our duty as school principal is to follow the directions of the Ministry and take action in that route. I implement the Ministry's instructions within certain rules by organizing

school works, practicing current regulations, following by-laws' Turkey (A:10).

Another school administrator stated that 'he should pay attention to following rules and implementing the curricular plans for the school and education. He should pay the utmost attention to both the interior and exterior of the school building. He should pay attention to the correspondence with the Ministry, parent-teacher-children relations. Should communicate with teachers, monitor, and be transparent' TRNC (A:4).

Findings Regarding the View on School Administrator Should Establish Parent-Teacher-Child Relation:

As the Table presents, according to the self-evaluation of the principals in Turkey, 70% of them believe that school principals should establish parent-teacher-child relations. This rate was 40% for the school principals in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

One of the administrators from Turkey stated that 'should pay attention to establishing harmony between student, parent and teacher, be decisive and solution-oriented' Turkey (A:1).

A school administrator from TRNC said the following: 'he should be innovative regarding educational, instructional and physical infrastructure of the school. Also, should motivate teachers to improve teaching. Most importantly, should be able to enable contributions from students' parents and school's environment. So, should provide all kinds of funds for the development of the school in all aspects' TRNC (A:4).

Findings Regarding the View on School Administrator Should Have the Skills to Help School Achieve its Objectives:

As presented in the Table, the self-assessment of the principals in Turkey revealed that 30% of them believe that school administrator should have the skills to help the school achieve its objectives. This rate for this item was also 30% in case of TRNC participants.

A school administrator from Turkey said: 'Should have creative ideas to help school achieve its goals, should do research, and

should be a rule-breaker when necessary. Success should not be expected if there is no objectives' Turkey (A:2).

A school principal from TRNC stated: 'Should make a difference to succeed in helping the school reach its goals, and help the school to achieve pre-determine objectives. Thus, should know educational management processes well and implement them effectively' TRNC (A:2)

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE FINDINGS OF THE CURRENT STUDY AND OTHER STUDIES

Half of the participants from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and more than half of the participants from Turkey agreed that school administrator believe in the need for parent-teacher-student-environment cooperation to improve school's vision. In parallel to this finding, one of the serving leadership characteristics primary school administrator should possess for low voluntary action is team work/collaboration. Çelik (2001) stated in his study on decision-making in effective schools, school administrators should involve the staff in the process and maintain collaboration. Again, Ünal and Çelik (2013) underlined that school administrator should reflect team spirit within their schools. It was concluded that a team spirit should be formed to increase efficiency and sharing. School administrators from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus showed more agreement than those in Turkey on the view that 'school principal should have ability for empathy'. In line with this finding, another finding of the study showed that school administrator, as a leader, should have the potential for empathy. Additionally, Özdemir and Sezgin (2002) emphasized that school administrator should establish empathy with his staff as an educational leader and understand these. For this reason, they indicate that it is significant for school principals to establish healthy empathetic relations. Şimşek and Altinkurt (2009) found that school administrators' skills for empathy are moderate in communication skills studies. The study highlighted that school principals should establish high levels of empathy with their staff.

CONCLUSIONS

According to another finding, half of the administrators in Turkey and more than half of the participants from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus stated that they believe in the need for collaboration between parent-teacher-student-environment to improve school vision. In another theme, less than half of the participants from Turkey and more than half of the participants from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus stated their view regarding the need for effective use of technology by the school administrator for improving school vision. Again, according to more participants from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus than those from Turkey, it is important to have teamwork to improve school vision. In another theme, equal number of participants from Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus stated their belief in the need for internalizing Ataturk's principles and revolutions for improving school vision.

Yet another finding indicated that less than half of the participants from Turkey and more than half of the participants from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus consider teachers as hard-working and successful regarding their efficiency. According to another theme, less than half of the participants from Turkey and exactly half of the participants from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus consider the efficiency of the teachers at a high level. In regards to another theme, less than half of the participants from Turkey and more than half of the participants from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus consider their teachers are devoted-self-sacrificing-motivated. Yet in another theme, equal rate of participants from Turkey and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus believe that the efficiency of the teachers in their schools would be affected negatively by change so they are not open to change.



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ANNEXES

THEME	ADMINISTRATOR			
	Turkey		TRNC	
	N	%	n	%
Hard-working and successful	4	40	6	60
High level efficiency	3	30	5	50
Devoted – self-sacrificing – motivated	3	30	6	60
Not open to change	3	30	3	30

Table 1. About School Teachers' Efficiency

THEME	ADMINISTRATOR			
	Turkey		TRNC	
	N	%	n	%
Should motivate staff	4	40	4	40
Should provide peaceful, social, physical setting	4	40	6	60
Should pay attention to the implementation of the curriculum	3	30	6	60
Should establish parent-teacher-child relations	7	70	4	40
Should help his school reach the goals	3	30	3	30

Table 2. What Headmaster Should Do for School and Education