



School Principals' Views on Selecting, Training and Appointment of Administrator for Schools: A Case Study *

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to reveal the opinions of school principals regarding the selection, training and appointment of school administrators. For this purpose, this study was conducted in a qualitative research design and case study model. The study group was 30 school principals. Data were collected via the focus group interviewing technique and a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers based on the experts' opinion. The data obtained through the semi-structured interviewing form were analyzed using inductive content analysis technique. The data obtained from the focus group interview were analysed using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. The main themes were 'selecting administrator', 'training administrator', and 'administrator appointing'. 14 sub-themes were determined related to these main themes. School principals state that the proficiency, exam and interview scores should be taken into consideration in the selection of administrators for schools. School principals state that school administrators should be trained on the basis of pre-service training, in-service training, post-graduate degree, and on-the-job training practices. According to school principals, the principles of impartiality and justice should be taken into account in appointing administrators to schools and objective criteria should be determined. On the other hand, professional experience, professional competence, education, administrative skills and personal characteristics should be considered.

Keywords

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Introduction

In the 21st century, a rapid change and transformation is observed in all areas of the life. It is unthinkable that schools, which have the most important effect on shaping social life according to the new values, remain outside of this change. In this process, school principals are expected to have leadership skills that include competencies such as making fast and effective decisions, generating effective solutions to problems and meeting expectations from the school. As an open social system, schools that are affected by the changes and developments in their environment should be managed in accordance with the expectations. In this context, it is important to put into practice an effective and sustainable system regarding the selection, training and appointment of school administrators.

The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is criticized for failing to create a functional model in selecting and training administrators for schools (Akçadağ, 2014; Işık, 2003, Recepoğlu & Kılınc, 2014; Seçkin, 2019; Selvi et al., 2019; Sezer, 2016). In Turkey, starting from the first years of the Republic until today, many legal regulations regarding the appointment of administrator to the schools were made, and different applications were put into practices. However, it cannot be said that an effective and sustainable model related to school principals' choosing, training and appointment is available yet (Seçkin, 2019). In Turkey, general thought on school management is 'school leadership is not an area of expertise and having served as a teacher in certain period of time is sufficient to manage school' (Bursalioğlu, 2005). Although the latest regulations (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Eğitim Kurumlarına Yönetici Atama Yönetmeliği, 2018) on selection and appointment of administrators include the principle of 'the appointments should be based on career and merit (competence)' it is seen that the professional and management experiences were not taken into consideration, and the exam and interview scores were taken as the basis. Exam score and interview score cannot be expected to fully reveal administrative competencies. In fact, the most important thing is to determine the candidates who are the most adequate in terms of management skills and who can manage the school in the most effective way (Kılınc, Koşar, Er, & Koşar, 2017). Disregarding of the school leadership features such as transformative leadership, crisis management, problem solving, teamwork, strategic planning and communication skills in the appointing process of school administrators, reveals that school administration is not seen as a specialty (Ağaoğlu, Altınkurt, Yılmaz, & Karaköse, 2012; Helvacı & Aydoğan, 2011; Işık, 2003). However, principals with leadership management characteristics play an important role in the success of schools with their ability to develop a shared vision, create an effective school climate and school culture (Balyer, 2012). Because in schools with effective administrators, students can learn in a shorter time, the resources of school are used more effectively and efficiently, and parents' interest in the school increases (Babaoğlu, Nalbant, & Çelik, 2017). Moreover, in schools with effective administrators, self-evaluation and self-control mechanisms operate, thus the need for external control reduces, the school's climate improves with a flexible management approach, school staffs exhibit a positive attitude towards to change, the continuity in educational actions is ensured, and the problem solving becomes easier (Selvi et al., 2019).

When the literature is examined, it is seen that the policies of the MoNE for selecting, training and assigning administrators to educational institutions are not found sufficient by school administrators. In addition, the regulations are criticized for frequently changing and not meeting the need (Aktepe, 2014; Aydın-Baş & Şentürk, 2017; Özmen & Kömürlü, 2010; Sezer, 2016). Because the Regulation on Administrator Appointment and Relocation to the Education Institutions of the MoNE, published in the Official Gazette No. 25343 dated January 2004, remained in force for only 39 months. Then, ten different regulations with dated April 2007, April 2008, August 2009, February 2013, August 2013, June 2014, October 2015, April 2017, and June 2018 have been published. In these regulations, the selection exam has been compulsory in selecting of schools administrators, sometimes an interview has been adopted after the selection exam, sometimes the time spent in school administration, and the opinions of the stakeholders, postgraduate degree in school management, and previous achievements in school management have been considered together. However, these regulations have been criticized by school administrators due to the ambiguous of work descriptions, lack of gradual progress in

management, assignment without personnel cadre, insufficiency in-service training possibilities, heavy responsibilities, and lack of authority (Aydın-Baş, 2016).

In Turkey, since the school management is not seen as an expertise field, it was found unnecessary to train the individuals who will be appointed to schools as the administrators in a special program (Demirtaş, 2008). In fact, school administration should be accepted as a profession (Akbaşlı & Balıkçı, 2013). Because in the world, school administration is accepted as a profession, and it is seen that very meticulous practice is done in selection and training of school administrators (Balyer & Gündüz, 2011; Chapman, 2005; Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007; Peterson, 2002; Süngü, 2012). In the USA, pre-service training (on the job training, workshops, mentoring, etc.), in-service training, and mentoring process are used in training of school administrators. Similarly, in UK and France, pre-service and in-service trainings are used together to train school administrators (Balyer & Gündüz, 2011; Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005; Süngü, 2012). In the UK, these trainings are carried out more systematically, in stages and modular form (Balyer & Gündüz, 2011, Çorbacı, 2005).

Previous studies, focused more on the training of school principals in different countries, and to develop a model proposal on selection and training of school administrators in Turkey (e.g., Altın & Vatanartıran, 2014; Balyer & Gündüz, 2011; Cemaloğlu, 2005; Çelenk, 2003; Çorbacı, 2005; Ereş, 2009; Işık, 2003; Selvi et al., 2019; Sezer, 2016; Şimşek, 2004). Some of these studies focused on the problems encountered in selecting and appointing of school administrators (Akçadağ, 2014; Can, 2014; Demirtaş & Özer, 2014; Helvacı & Aydoğan, 2011; Karip & Köksal, 1999; Korkmaz, 2005; Okçu, 2011; Özmen & Kömürlü, 2010; Turhan & Karabatak, 2015; Vergili, 2015). In a part of the studies, the regulations for appointment of administrators are examined (Aydın-Baş & Şentürk, 2017; Taş & Önder, 2012). However, the studies containing comprehensive findings on the selection, training and appointment of school principals based on the opinions of school principals who personally experienced this process are quite limited (Akçadağ, 2014; Can, 2014). Therefore, selecting, training and appointing of administrators for schools continues to be an important issue on the agenda. On the other hand, since the published regulations are prepared based on research findings, they cause new problems rather than producing solutions to the problem. In this study, it is envisaged that the findings obtained based on the opinions of the school administrators will contribute to the conduct of discussions on selection, training and appointment of the administrator candidates in a more accurate manner. In addition, the results of the research are expected to contribute positively to the decision-making processes of the top level managers of the MoNE. In this study, we aimed to reveal the opinions of the school principals regarding the selection, training and appointment of school administrators. For this purpose, in this research, the answer of the question '*What are the views of school principals about the selection, training and appointment of school administrators*' was sought.

Method

In this study, the researcher aimed to reveal the views of school administrators on selection, training and appointment of school administrators. For this purpose, this study was conducted in a qualitative research pattern and case study model. Case study is an empirical research method that operates on a current phenomenon within its real life framework and examines the cases in many ways, systematically and deeply (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In other words, the case study allows researchers to closely examine real-life events in a specific context, and to conduct an in-depth study and research to reveal the holistic and meaningful characteristics of these events, through the data they obtain from the source (Creswell, 2015; Fidel, 1984; Yin, 2003; Zainal, 2007). In this research, a single nested pattern was used. In a single case, there can often be more than one sub-unit or topic. In this case, it is applied more than one analysis unit. The distinction here is that the researcher in a case study, treats the relevant situation as a holistic and single unit or refers to more than one sub-unit that may be in a situation. In the first case, the holistic single state pattern is used, while in the second case, the nested multi-state pattern is used (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). School principals have the opportunity to monitor and observe the process of 'choosing, training and assigning managers to schools' in the best way. The selection, training and appointment of school administrators was considered as an important situation

for educational organizations, and this study was carried out in the interlocking single case study model because they are intertwined issues.

Study Group

The study group consisted of 30 school administrators. The study group was determined using criterion sampling technique, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods. The criterion sampling technique is used to identify a study group that has sufficient experience and knowledge of the researched subject and is believed to best meet the objectives of the research when the researcher aims to analyze a situation, event or phenomenon in depth (Neuman & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2014). In determining the participants, the criteria include being a school principal, participating in the executive selection exam and interview for being appointed as a school principal, working as a school principal for at least eight years, and having served as an administrator in at least two different schools were sought. Since it was assumed that they would have sufficient information about the processes of selecting, training and assigning administrators to schools, the criterion still working as a school administrator was sought for the participants. In order to guarantee consultation with school administrators who personally experienced how this process works the criteria of participating in the selection exam and interview were sought for the participants. The reason for the prerequisite of working as a principal for at least eight years is that the participants are assumed to have experience in the re-assignment process as school principal. The reason of the criterion to work as an administrator in at least two different schools is that it is assumed that they have knowledge about the appointment process to an institution outside of the school where they work. The number of male participants was 25, and female participants was 5. The average age of the participants was 45.1, and the average of professional seniority was 18.1 years. In addition, the average of managerial seniority was 11.3 years. The number of participants who work in primary schools was 13, in secondary schools was 10, in vocational high schools was three and in academic high schools was four.

Data Collection Tool

The data were collected through the semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers, taking the opinions of the school principals and education experts. The semi-structured interview form consisted of two parts. In the first part, there were five factual questions aiming to determine the gender, age, professional seniority, management seniority and the school type in which they work. There were three open-ended questions in the second part of the interview form. Open-ended questions were as follows: (1) Which criteria should be taken into consideration when choosing an administrator (school principal, vice principal) for schools? (2) According to you, how should school administrators (school principal, vice principal) be trained? (3) According to you, which criteria should be taken into consideration when assigning administrators (school principal, vice principal) to schools? Five school administrators were piloted. In line with the opinions and suggestions from these piloting group, a question was removed and two questions were changed, and then, the interview form was finalized.

Data Collection

Data was collected in dates from July 2019 to September 2019. During this period, it was possible to continue the meetings with the school administrators in a calmer environment due to the interruption of education and training. In data collection phase, firstly, a list of school principals was created. The first and second researcher contacted each school principal and gave information them about the purpose of the study. Then, interviews were conducted with the participants. Each interviewing lasted approximately 30-35 minutes. The participants expressed their opinions in writing on the semi-structured interview form. In this process, only the questions from the participants were answered briefly and clearly in terms of objectively expressing the participant views in the semi-structured interview form, and they were not provided any guidance. At the end of the interview, the opinions were read out loud to each participants, and the confirmation of the participants was obtained by asking them if there was any view they wanted to add or remove. Focus group discussions were conducted on the determined themes with 12 school administrators who selected on a voluntary basis among the participants, and data and method triangulation were ensured in this way.

Focus Group Interviewing

Focus group discussions were held in order to reveal the opinions and suggestions of the participants in more detail about the appointment of administrators for schools. Focus group discussion is defined as a series of carefully planned guided discussions aimed at getting participants' views on a predetermined topic in a relatively friendly and safe environment (Çokluk, Yılmaz, & Oğuz, 2011). The focus group method is one of several tools that researchers can use to understand any phenomenon, to produce valid information for the development of the program, community or organization (Grudens-Schuck, Allen, & Larson, 2004). For this purpose: (i) the most frequently repeated codes were determined, (ii) 12 school principals were selected among the participants on a voluntary basis, (iii) two different groups of six people were determined. In a school, where one of the participants is in charge, a clean, bright and noise-free environment has been created in which groups that will participate in focus group meetings will feel safe, and (iv) focus group discussions were held with the participants on their suggestions for choosing, training and assigning managers to schools. These interviews continued for four weeks, once a week. Focus group interviews were recorded by first researcher with a voice-recorder.

Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, validity refers to the suitability of the data collection tool, the transactions performed during the research and the data obtained with the research pattern. Reliability gives information about the internal consistency of the study (Creswell, 2014). In the research, credibility and transferability were used to ensure validity, and consistency strategies were used to ensure reliability (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In the studies aiming to reveal the opinions of the participants about their life experiences, the method of approving the opinions expressed by the participants in order to increase the credibility can be used (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Ersoy, 2016). The opinions expressed by the participants in writing were re-expressed by the researcher and their approval was received, and a confirmation was obtained from the participant whether there is anything they want to add or remove. In order to ensure transferability, the sampling method chosen in determining the participants, how the data was collected and the data analysis process were described, in detail (Creswell, 2015). In this way, an enlightening information about how the data was obtained was presented to the potential audience after the publication phase of the study. First of all, a question set was created by the researchers for the semi-structured interview form that will be used as a data collection tool. In order to evaluate the created question set in terms of scope, understandability and clarity, the opinions of two experts were consulted. Semi-structured interview form was finalized according to the feedback from the experts (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The opinions expressed by the participants in the interview form were transferred to digital media. Then, the data was analyzed by the researcher and another academic who was an expert in qualitative research in the field of educational sciences, using the inductive content analysis technique. After the consensus on determined codes, each encoder categorized the data. In this process, the formula 'Reliability = Consensus / (Consensus + Disagreement) × 100' was applied to determine the reliability of coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 64). The similarity between the two encoders was calculated as $76 / (76 + 5) \times 100 = 93.80$. The coders came together again and reached a common conclusion about the categorical structure presented in the analysis of the data. The data obtained during the focus group interviews were grouped under the sub-themes, and the opinions related to the sub-themes were presented as direct quotations.

Data Analysis

The data, collected through the semi-structured interview form of the research and consisted of the opinions of all the participants were analyzed by inductive content analysis technique (Patton, 2014). In inductive content analysis, the themes and codes are determined and the meaning units are created based on the statements of the participants (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). In this approach, similar meaning units and concepts in the dataset are handled together and analyzed systematically (Creswell, 2015; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In this context, first of all, the opinions in each data set were discussed in detail, and the codes were created by the researcher and another academic expert in qualitative data analysis by determining the words and word groups in the most appropriate way for the purpose of

the research. In this process, the coders continued the coding process independently. Some of the codes are as follows: 'exam score, merit, seniority, professional knowledge, representation ability, communication skills'. After the coding process, the difference and similarity between the codes were examined (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The codes associated with each other were brought together and main themes were created. These main themes are as follows: (1) selecting administrators, (2) training administrators, and (3) administrator appointing. Sub-themes and codes were created as a result of inductive content analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The findings obtained via the focus group interviews from 12 participants selected on a voluntary basis among 30 participants were analyzed using descriptive analysis technique, the main theme and sub-themes were determined, and the findings were presented as direct statements of the participants.

Figure 1, includes the main theme and sub-themes determined as a result of inductive content analysis.

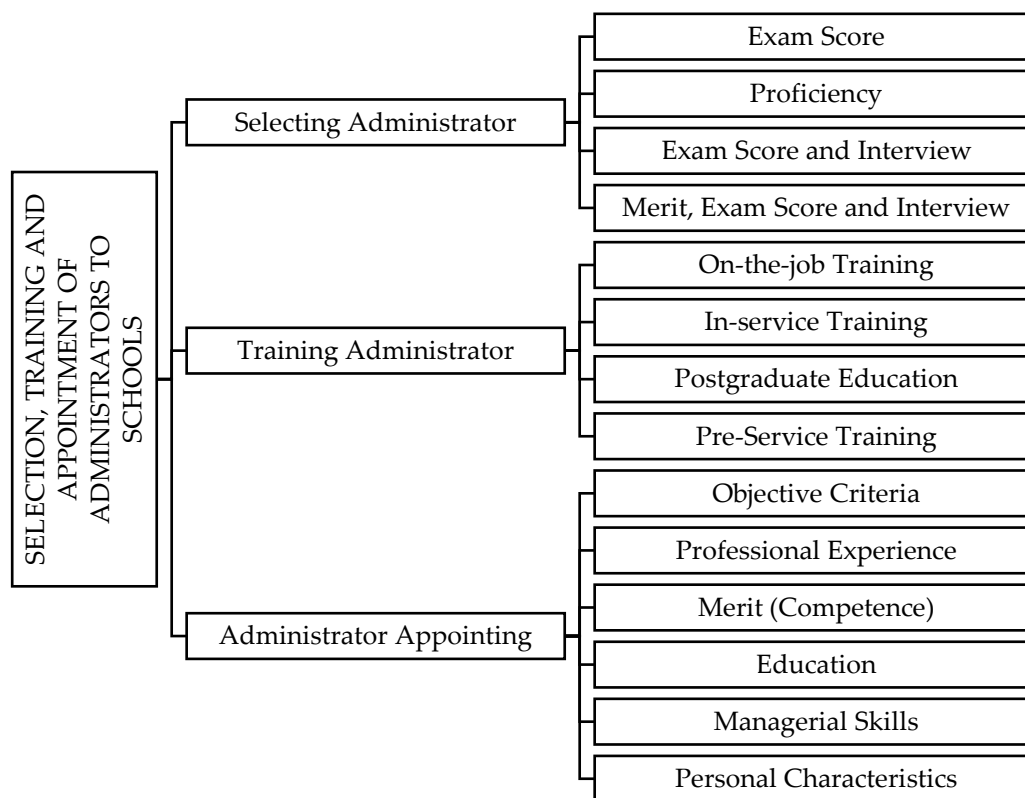


Figure 1. Main Themes and Sub-themes

Results

According to the results of inductive content analysis, three main themes and 14 sub-themes related to these main themes were determined. The main themes are (1) selecting administrators, (2) training administrators, and (3) appointing administrators. Sub-themes were created by considering the main themes. Later, codes related to sub-themes, which were determined as units of meaning, were created and the findings were presented in the form of tables. Four sub-themes and 20 codes related to these sub-themes were determined. Sub-themes were (1) exam score, (2) proficiency, (3) exam score and interview, and (4) exam score, interview and merit.

In Table 1, sub-themes and codes related to the 'selecting administrators' main theme were given.

Table 1. Sub-themes and Codes on the Selecting Administrators Main Theme (N = 30)

Sub-Theme	Codes	f
Exam Score	School administrators should be determined with the selection exam	10
	Candidates should be selected through an examination by OSYM	8
	Vice-managers should be selected with the exam score	6
	Candidates must get at least 70 points from the selection exam	2
	Those who get score 70 or above should be admitted to the managerial academy	1
Proficiency	School principals should be selected among capable administrators	5
	References for management should be considered	4
	Managers should be selected based on efficiency among assistant administrators	3
	Administrator candidates should be efficient	3
	In line with the opinions of stakeholders, efficiency should be taken as basis	2
	Administrators must have at least 5 years of teaching experience	2
	Merit candidates, and who are at peace with their country	1
	Administrator candidates must be selected through psychological tests	1
Exam Score and Interview	Selection exam and interview should be based on	5
	Firstly, there should be a selection exam and then a fair interview	3
	An exam measuring the qualifications of candidates, a fair interview	2
Exam Score, Interview and Competence	Exam score and fair interview	1
	60% of exam score, 20% of the interview, 20% of the Annex2 score	5
Exam Score, Interview and Competence	60% of the exam score, 30% of the interview, 10% of the civil service score	3
	Exam, interview and merit should be considered	1

In Table 1, the main codes in the exam score sub-theme are as follows: 'School administrators should be determined with the selection exam', 'candidates should be selected with the examination conducted by OSYM' and 'assistant principals should be selected with the exam score'. The main codes concerning the proficiency sub-theme are as follows: 'School principals should be selected among the capable administrators', 'references for management should be considered', and 'principals should be selected based on efficiency among assistant administrators' and 'administrator candidates should be efficient'. The main codes in the exam score and interview sub-theme are as follows: 'Selection exam and interview should be based on', 'selection exam, then a fair interview' and 'a selection exam that measures the qualifications of the candidates, a fair interview'. The main codes in the exam score, interview, and competence sub-theme are as follows: '60% of the selection exam score, 20% of the interview and 20% of the Annex2 score', '60% of the selection exam score, 30% of the interview, and 10% of civil service point'.

Below, direct statements on the main theme of 'selecting administrator' were given. The expression of 'participant' was abbreviated as P1, P2, P3, and so on. Some of the direct statements regarding the 'exam score' sub-theme are as follows:

'Those who want to be appointed as administrators to schools must first be taken the administrator selection exam and then undergo a comprehensive education' [P8]. 'Candidates for management should be selected through an examination by OSYM' [P3]. 'Teachers who want to be assistant principals must be successful in the administrator selection exam' [P1].

Below, the views regarding the 'proficiency' sub-theme were given:

'School principals should be selected among the current school principals considering their merits. Selected candidates, should be taken into in-service training considering the developments in school management, and should be re-assigned after these trainings' [P17]. 'School administrators should be selected fairly, taking into account the references required for school administration' [P4]. 'School principals should be selected among the assistant principals on the basis of competence' [P1]. 'Candidates for school administration should be selected on the basis of competency' [P13]. 'Competence should be taken as the basis in selection of administrators to schools, and the opinions of the stakeholders should be taken for this purpose' [P20].

Below, the views on the 'exam score and interview' sub-theme were given:

'The selection exam and interview should be taken as basis in the selection of administrators to schools' [P23]. 'I believe that school administrators should first be subjected to the executive selection exam and then they should be selected by being interviewed' [P12]. 'A selection exam measuring the qualifications of candidates, followed by a fair interviewing' [P19].

Below, the views on the sub-theme of 'exam score, interview and competence' were given:

'60% of the election exam score, 20% of the interview, 20% of the Annex2 score should be taken into consideration when choosing the school administrators' [P3]. '60% of the selection exam score, 30% of the interview, 10% of the civil service score should be based on' [P9].

In the research, four sub-themes and 19 codes related to these sub-themes were determined. Sub-themes are (1) on-the-job training, (2) in-service training, (3) postgraduate education, and (4) pre-service training.

In Table 2, sub-themes and codes related to the training administrator main theme were given.

Table 2. Sub-themes and Codes Related to the Training Administrator Main Theme (N=30)

Sub-Theme	Codes	f
On-the-Job Training	On-the-job training at school	4
	At least one year intern management under the mentorship of successful principals	4
	On-the-job practical training under the guidance of an experienced manager	3
	On-the-job training with the intern management application	3
	Practical training of prospective managers	2
	At least six months of on-the-job training with an experienced school principal	1
	On-the-job training as a trainee for at least 8 months	1
In-service Training	Long-term and comprehensive in-service training	5
	6 months theoretical and practical in-service training in school management	4
	At least one year theoretical and practical in-service training	3
	In-service training on leadership, teamwork, and communication skills	3
	In-service training through conferences and distance learning	2
	Regular local and central in-service training	1
Postgraduate Education	2 years of master's degree in education management field	4
	At least two years of graduate education based on theory and practice	2
	At least two years of management education at master's level	2
Pre-service Training	Pre-service training for at least one year at the Managerial Academy	3
	Comprehensive education on school management during undergraduate education	2
	At least 2 years of pre-service training in the company of an experienced school administrator	2

In Table 2, the main codes in on-the-job training sub-theme are as follows: 'On-the-job training at school', 'on-the-job practical training under the guidance of an experienced manager', 'on-the-job training with trainee management practice', and 'practice-based training of candidate managers'. The main codes in the in-service training sub-theme are as follows: 'Long-term and comprehensive in-service training', 'six-month theoretical and applied in-service training in school management', 'leadership, teamwork and communication skills training through in-service training'. The main codes in the postgraduate education sub-theme are as follows: 'Two-year master's education in education management field', and 'theory and practice-based master's education for not less than two years'. The main codes in the pre-service training sub-theme are as follows: 'Training at the Managerial Academy based on theory and practice for at least one year', 'comprehensive school management training in the undergraduate education processes', and 'at least 2 years of pre-service training in the company of an experienced school administrator'.

Below, direct statements on the 'training administrator' main theme were given. The direct statements regarding the 'on-the-job training' sub-theme are as follows:

'Management candidates should be trained with on-the-job training practices at school' [P10]. *'Candidates for school administration should work as a trainee administrator for at least one year, alongside experienced and successful school principals'* [P19]. *'Management candidates should be trained under the guidance of an experienced administrator and practically on the work'* [P21]. *'On-the-job training should be provided with the intern management practices'* [P12]. *'Management candidates should be trained based on practice'* [P5].

Below, the views on the 'in-service training' sub-theme are given:

'Candidates must receive a long and comprehensive in-service training' [P22]. *'Candidates should undergo six months of theoretical and practical in-service training in the field of school management'* [P7]. *'Management candidates should receive at least one year theoretical and practical in-service training'* [P11]. *'Leadership, teamwork, and communication skills training should be provided to management candidates through in-service training'* [P6].

Below the views regarding the 'master's education' sub-theme were given:

'Priority should be given to candidates who have a two-year master's degree in education management' [P14]. *'Management candidates should be given a master's degree in education management based on theory and practice for at least two years'* [P8].

Below, the views on the 'pre-service training' sub-theme were given:

'Managerial Academy should be established within the Ministry of National Education and those who pass the exam should be trained in theoretical and practical education for at least one year' [P24]. *'School management course should be given more comprehensively during undergraduate education'* [P26]. *'Candidates should be provided with an experienced manager for at least 2 years of pre-service training'* [P30].

In the research, six sub-themes and 44 codes related to these sub-themes were determined. Sub-themes are: (1) objective criteria, (2) professional experience, (3) merit (competence), (4) education, (5) managerial skills and (6) personal characteristics.

Table 3, contains sub-themes and codes related to the main theme of 'appointing administrator'.

Table 3. Sub-themes and Codes Related to the Appointing Administrator Main Theme (N = 30)

Sub Theme	Codes	f
Objective Criteria	Exam score should be based on	13
	The interview should be based on concrete and measurable criteria	8
	Unions or politicians should not be effective in the appointment process	7
	Be treated fairly, proponents should not be favoured	6
	References of colleagues should be considered	5
	Duty term in same school should be reorganized as a minimum of five years	3
	Opinion of the staff of the school where he/she works as vice- principal	2
Professional Experience	At least 4 years of management experience for school principal	8
	Have served as vice principal for at least five years for the school principal	7
	To work as a teacher for at least 5 years	4
	At least eight years professional seniority for school principal	3
	At least five years professional seniority for vice-principal	3
	At least four years of professional seniority in teaching	2
	Having worked as a teacher for at least 6 years	2
Having served as vice-principal for at least six years for the school principal	2	
Having completed at least ten years in their profession	1	

Table 3. Continued

Sub Theme	Codes	f
Merit (Competence)	Successes in the profession	9
	Representation capability	6
	Annex2 score	5
	General culture	4
	Professional knowledge	3
	Knowledge on education law and regulations	2
Education	Master or PhD degree in Educational Management	9
	Having a comprehensive theoretical and practical education	5
	Teaching knowledge	4
	Undergraduate education convenient for the school to be assigned	3
	On-the-job training experience	2
	In-service trainings	2
	Successfully complete the training at the Managerial Academy	1
	To be successful in the trainings continued after the exams	1
Administrative Skills	Communication skills	8
	Problem solving skills	5
	Effective strategic planning skills	5
	Social skills	3
	Conflict management skills	3
Personal Qualifications	Crisis management skills	2
	Leadership qualifications	7
	Being role-model with human characteristics	4
	Personal traits such as justice and compassion	3
	The level of internalizing moral values	3
	Entrepreneurship, self-confidence and courage	2
	Willingness to take responsibility	2
Psychological resilience	2	

In Table 3, the main codes under the 'objective criteria' sub-theme are as follows: 'exam score', 'interview based on concrete and measurable criteria', 'unions or politicians should not be effective in the appointment process', 'be treated fairly, proponents should not be favoured', and 'colleagues' references should be considered'. The main codes related to the professional experience sub-theme are as follows: 'At least four years of managerial experience', 'at least five years as vice principal for the school principal', 'at least five years professional seniority in teaching', and 'at least eight years professional seniority to be school principal'. The main codes in the merit (competence) sub-theme are as follows: 'Success in the profession', 'representation capability', 'Annex2 score' and 'general culture'. The main codes in the education sub-theme are as follows: 'Master's or doctorate degree in management', 'having a theoretical and applied comprehensive education', 'teaching knowledge' and 'undergraduate education compatible with the school wishing to be assigned'. The main codes in the managerial skills sub-theme are as follows: 'communication skills', 'problem solving skills', 'effective management skills', 'social skills' and 'conflict management skills'. The main codes in the sub-theme of personal qualifications are 'leadership qualifications', 'being role-model with human characteristics', 'personal traits such as justice and compassion', and 'the level of internalizing moral values'.

Below, direct statements regarding the main theme of 'appointment of manager' were presented. The direct statements regarding the 'objective criteria' sub-theme are as follows:

'In assigning administrators to schools, exam score should be taken as a basis' [P7]. 'Interviews should be done based on the concrete and measurable criteria' [P18]. 'Teachers' unions or politicians should not be effective in the appointing process of administrator for schools' [P17].

'During the appointment process of schools, senior administrators should be fair and the proponents should not be favoured' [P21]. 'During the appointment process, the references of colleagues should be considered' [P1].

Below, the direct statements on the 'professional experience' sub-theme were given:

'At least 4 years of management experience should be taken as basis for school principal' [P6]. 'For the school principal, the condition of being a vice- principal for at least five years should be sought' [P20]. 'Having worked as a teacher for at least 5 years should be sought' [P2]. 'At least eight years professional seniority should be taken as basis for school principal' [P28]. 'At least five years professional seniority should be taken as basis for vice-principal' [P30].

Below, the direct statements regarding the 'merit (competence)' sub-theme were given:

'School administrators should be appointed based on successes in the profession' [P14]. 'In the appointment of the school principal the representation capability should be taken as basis' [P2]. 'School administrators should be appointed to schools considering their Annex2 success in the profession' [P23]. 'School administrators should be appointed to schools considering their general culture level' [P4]. 'School administrators should be appointed to schools considering their professional knowledge (law and regulation knowledge)' [P6].

Below, the direct statements on the 'education' sub-theme were given:

'In appointment as a school administrators, the criterion of master or doctorate degree in education management should be sought' [P25]. 'The condition of having a comprehensive education based on theory and practice should be sought' [P3]. 'School administrators should be appointed among the candidates who know very well the teaching field' [P14]. 'The condition that convenient undergraduate education degree for the school to be assigned should be sought' [P30].

Below, the direct statements on the 'administrative skills' sub-theme were given:

'Schools administrators should be appointed among from candidate administrators with effective communication skills' [P26]. 'School administrators should be appointed among from candidate administrators with effective problem solving skills' [P5]. 'Effective strategic planning skills should be considered for school management' [P30]. 'School administrators should be appointed amongst from the candidates with good conflict management skills' [P17].

Below, the views of participants regarding the 'personal qualifications' sub-theme were given:

'Leadership characteristics of candidates should be considered' [P9]. 'In assigning as an administrator to a school, candidate administrators should have human characteristics that require to be a role-model both to students and their colleagues' [P14]. 'Personal characteristics such as justice and compassion should be taken into account in assigning as an administrator to a school' [P5]. 'The internalization level of moral values of the candidates should be taken into account in assignment of administrators to schools' [P6].

In this section, the descriptive analysis results of the data obtained during the focus group interviews with 12 participants were presented. In line with the opinions and suggestions of the school principals, based on the data obtained from the focus group interviews, three sub-themes and 14 codes were determined regarding the criteria that should be taken into account when appointing as administrators to schools.

The sub-themes and codes were given in Figure 2.

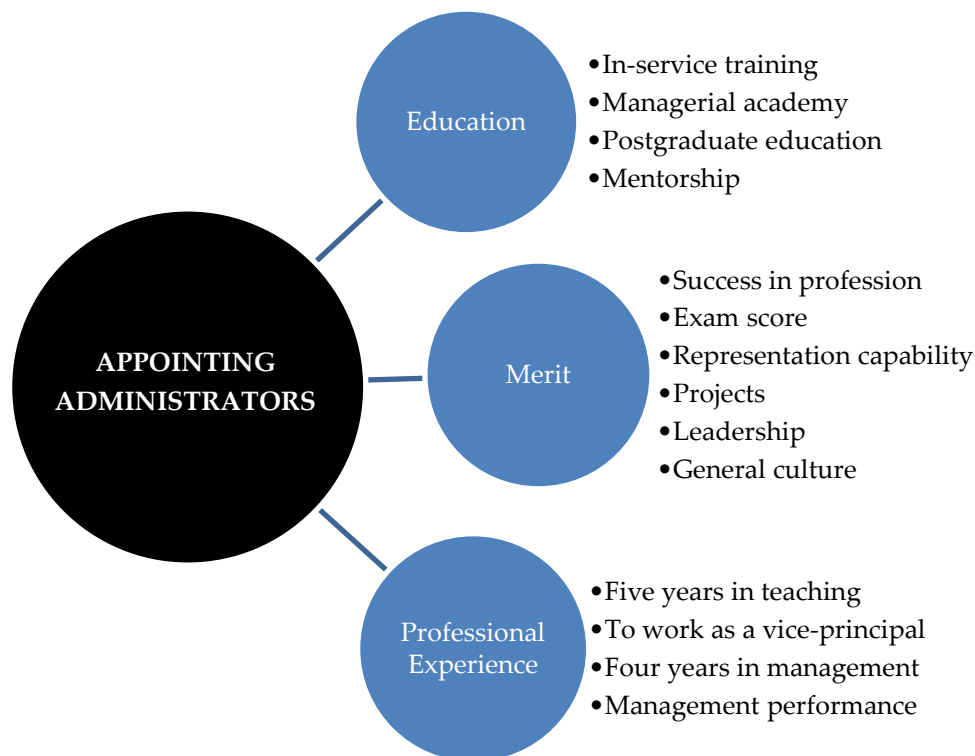


Figure 2. Sub-themes and Codes for Appointment of Administrators

Below, the views shared by the participants as a result of the focus group discussions were presented as direct quotations:

'In order to be appointed as the vice-principals to schools, candidates should be work as a teacher for at least five years. To be successful in the administrator selection exam and to have a minimum score of 80 must be determined as the criteria. Candidates should require hands-on training (mentoring system) as a vice-principal for at least one year alongside an experienced school principal' [P3].

'In order to be re-assigned as the school principal, the criterion of being successful in the administrator selection exam held by ÖSYM should be considered. In addition, to work as a school principal for at least four years, achievements in the school management, in-service trainings, leadership characteristics and representation ability should be taken into consideration' [P7].

'In order to be appointed as the school principal for the first time,, to be served as a vice-principal for at least four years, to be conducted projects or participated in a project as a teacher or vice-principal, the representation ability, and the level of general culture should be taken into consideration. Those with a postgraduate degree should be given priority' [P5].

'In order to be appointed as a school principal for the first time, the score taken from the administrator selection exam, professional achievements, and the training to be received at the Managerial Academy for at least one year based on theory and practice should be considered. Priority should be given to those possessing a postgraduate degree in education management' [P11].

'In order to be appointed as a vice- principal to schools to work as a teacher for five years, the scores obtained from the administrator selection exam, two years training based on theory and practice in education management should be determined as a criterion' [P8].

'To appointment as a school principal to serve as a vice- principal for at least five years , to be successful at the administrator selection exam, level of general culture, projects, communication skills, management performance and in-service trainings should be taken into account ' [P6].

'In order to be appointed as school principal again, the achievements in the previous school where is served as the principal, the projects, the leadership qualities, the management performance, the trainings and the score obtained from the administrator selection exam conducted by OSYM should be taken into consideration' [P10].

According to the results from the focus group interviewing, the participants expressed the criteria to be appointed as vice-principals to schools as follows: Teaching experience for a certain period of time, exam score from the administrator selection exam, educational projects, postgraduate education and experience of a certain period of time for school management under the supervision of experienced school principals (mentoring). Participants expressed the criteria for the appointment as a school principal for the first time as follows: Exam score, professional achievements, representation skills, educational projects, to work as a vice-principal for a certain period, management education based on theory and practice. Participants expressed the criteria to be re-appointed as school principals as follows: Management performance in the previous school, exam score from administrator selection exam held by OSYM, leadership characteristics, educational projects, and trainings.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this research, which aims to determine the opinions of the school administrators regarding the selection, training and appointment to schools, three main themes and 14 sub-themes were determined. The results revealed that exam scores, interview and proficiency should be taken into consideration in selecting the candidate administrators for schools. According to these results, vice-principals should be selected by an examination to be held by ÖSYM. School principals should be chosen considering their managerial competencies. In this context, opinions such as considering different references for management in addition to the exam score come to the fore. These results can be evaluated as the important findings in terms of revealing that the objective criteria should be prioritized, such as exam score and proficiency in selecting administrators for schools. On the other hand, the expressions of participants that the interview should be conducted fairly and impartially can be evaluated that they were in doubt about the reliability of the previous interview exams. Similar findings were found in previous studies. In the studies conducted by Altın and Vatanartrın (2014), AYTEKİN (2009), Balyer and Gündüz (2011), Cemaloğlu (2005), Işık (2003), participants state that school administrators should be selected by considering exam score, merit principles, administrative competences and humanitarian values. In the research of Özmen and Kömürlü (2010), the findings such as taking the exam score as the basis, reducing the weight of the non-objective criteria in the Annex2 document, taking career and merit into consideration draw attention.

The results of the research reveal that in the training of management candidates, on-the-job training, in-service training, post-graduate education and pre-service training practices will be appropriate. Another striking result of the research is the views on the training of the candidate managers under the supervision of experienced and successful school principals (mentorship), through on-the-job training. Similar findings are encountered in Chapman's (2005) study. In the mentioned study, it was found that the mentoring system and coaching practices are more useful in effectively training school principals. As mentioned frequently in previous studies, in this study, the participants stated that in-service training, pre-service and post-graduate training should be based on theory and practice, and these trainings should provide the necessary skills. Similarly, in the study conducted by Davis et al. (2005), it is stated that school principals should be trained based on theory and practice in the context of new developments in educational administration. In another study by Özmen and Kömürlü (2010), it was found that in-service training and seminars should be organized based on the theory and practice. According to these results, it can be said that the practical training of the manager candidates by the mentor principals (management internship) will bring a different and new dimension

to the school administration. In addition, it can be stated that the preparation of the educational programs of school administrators in the required fields and executing them based on theory and practice will be effective in training the leader school administrators needed in schools.

The results of the study reveal that objective criteria should be determined in the process of appointing administrators to schools. In addition, the results show that both the managerial skills and human characteristics of the candidates should be taken into consideration when appointing administrators to schools. On the other hand, appointment of school administrators based on exam scores is seen by the participants as the most objective method. School principals stated that merit (competence) should be taken as the basis instead of the references of unions and local politicians in appointment process of school administrators. Participants also demanded that the obstacles should be removed in appointment of the qualified administrators for schools. These results can be considered as the important findings in terms of revealing that certain unions and politicians are effective in assigning process of school administrators, and to show that the principle of 'appointments should be do based on merit and career' remained solely on paper. Although this research contains original findings, it also includes similar findings with previous studies. In the study conducted by Boydak-Özan, Gavcar, Saçaklı, and Şahin (2014), the demands of participants include extinguish of the arbitrariness in appointment of the school administrators, remove the appointments done with political concerns, and assign the competent and talented candidates. Similar findings were found in the research by Pont, Nusche, and Moorman (2008). In the mentioned study, it is stated that the criteria frequently used for appointment as an administrator are management experience, academic competence, social and personal skills, vision, school leadership and projects related to school management. In another study conducted by Aydın-Baş and Şentürk (2017), the participants criticized the practices in the process of appointing administrators to schools on the grounds that merit was ignored and injustice was institutionalized. In the same study, the participants stated that the understanding of political favouritism was dominant in the appointment of administrators to schools, the interviews were not conducted objectively and the commission members who conduct the interviews were insufficient in determining the abilities of the candidates for school administrations. The findings of the research conducted by Aslanargun (2012), revealed that the executive body appointed administrators to schools based on arbitrariness and used its authority to appoint administrators without examination. In the same research it is stated that as a result of the objections, the administrative courts made a decision to suspend the execution underlining the concepts such as compliance with the law, requirement of service, public interest, equality, appropriateness, objectivity, and authority. In the research by Demirtaş and Özer (2014), school administrators stated that the exam should be the basic criterion for a fair and transparent selection of school administrators because the exam is a tool that can be applied equally for everyone. In addition, the administrators appointed both with and without an examination pointed out that a candidate who does not have managerial experience but passed the exam must first gain experience by starting as a vice-principal. Similarly, in the studies conducted by Can (2014), Carter (1994), and Seçkin (2019), it was stated that a more qualified, fair, objective principles based on merit should be applied in the assignment of administrators for schools. Moreover, the school administration should be accepted as a profession. On the other hand, it was also stated that the current regulations were inadequate and did not meet these needs.

Focus group interview results revealed the required criteria to appoint as the vice-principals to schools. These criteria, include teaching experience for a certain period of time, score from administrator selection exam, projects, postgraduate education and experience in school management under the supervision of an experienced school principal (mentoring). The required criteria to appoint as a principal for the first time, are exam score, professional achievements, representation ability, projects, to work as a vice-principal in a certain period, and the management training based on theory and practice. The required criteria to re-appoint as a school principal are the performance in previous school, the score from the selection exam conducted by OSYM, leadership characteristics, projects, and trainings.

As a result, in the selection of school administrators, criteria such as interview score and managerial competence come to the fore in addition to the exam score. Especially exam score was emphasised in appointment of vice-principals. In the process of selecting administrators for schools, it can be said that the interview based on objective and concrete criteria and the interview commission who evaluates the candidates fairly will make a significant contribution in ensuring work peace in schools as well as reducing critics on this issue. The results of the research regarding the selection, training and appointment of administrators to schools can be taken into consideration while preparing regulations that include the principles of selecting and appointing administrators to schools.

The results of the study reveal that comprehensive training based on theory and practice should be given to candidate managers and current managers. According to these results, it can be said that on-the-job training based on theory and practice by talented and successful school principals will make a significant contribution to training qualified school administrators. Mention of professional experience, merit, education, managerial skills and personal characteristics in appointment as administrators to schools shows that school administration is perceived as a field of expertise by the participants. In both the semi-structured interview process and in the focus group interviews, the participants stated that the most objective method in choosing administrators for schools is the exam score. This result shows that a fair and reliable system is needed to select administrators for schools. The expressions of participants that 'merit (competence) should be taken as a basis instead of the intervention and references of the unions and local politicians', can be considered as the important results in terms of revealing the discomfort they felt by the current practices. Moreover, the results show that school principals have a serious expectation to eliminate the factors that prevent the appointment of qualified administrators to schools and to ensure work peace in schools.

Suggestions

Based on the results, it can be said that the MoNE should continue the administrator selection exam in selecting administrators for schools and determine the framework of competencies for school administration. On the other hand, it may be suggested that objective criteria should be determined by the Ministry for interview exams, and the required competencies for candidates to appoint as the administrators should clearly be stated in the relevant regulations. In addition, long-term (2 years) on-the-job training should be provided for candidates who appointed as the school administrators, based on theory and practice. Based on the results, it may be suggested that the top administrators of the MoNE should determine objective and measurable criteria in the appointment of administrators for schools, and an impartial, fair and merit-based interviewing method should implement. Moreover, Ministry should apply an interview exam, that measures administrative skills, as well as the selection exam, which measures managerial knowledge. It can be stated that the postgraduate education of school administrators and candidate administrators in Educational Administration Department of universities will make a significant contribution to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, which required for school administration. In addition, the Managerial Academy should be established in cooperation with the MoNE and Higher Education Board, and school administrators should be trained under the leadership of this academy. Moreover, the school administration should be re-organized as a profession. Further research can be conducted with different study groups on selecting administrators for schools, training school administrators, and selecting school administrators by the school community. In addition, the framework of competencies for school administrators and the criteria will be taken into account in appointing administrators to schools can be investigated as a topic of further studies.

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