

## School Principals' Administrative Competency: Teachers' Views

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### Abstract

School principals are key factors in schools. Their selection, appointment and training procedures differ in many countries. The Turkish educational system has undergone significant transformation that has radically changed the expectations placed upon the school principals. According to the current law in Turkey, they are appointed to their posts for four years after an interview conducted by the governor, provincial director of the Ministry of National Education (MEB) and Chief/Deputy Administrator. In recent years, a lot of principals have been appointed to their posts in this way, which is criticized rigorously by educational environments as experience and qualification in school administration are not prioritized. This implementation makes their administrative competency become more contradicted than ever. Therefore, this qualitative research offers some insights into their competencies by investigating teachers' opinions about their principals' administrative competency in the profession as well as in the Turkish educational context in terms of their behaviors of instructional leadership, organizational development and creating a positive school culture. The emerging evidence highlights that the principals of this sample are not experienced and competent enough in all the competency areas researched in this study.

*Keywords:* Administration, principals, professional competency, teachers

### Introduction

People's demands from schools have increased recently. In this regard, schools are supposed to prepare their students approaching the complex and competitive nature of the world to function better. In order to fulfill this expected role effectively, school

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leaders and their professional management approaches become more critical (Villiers & Pretorius, 2011). Naturally, this puts a greater emphasis on both schools and their principals.

It is considered that school principals should have professional competency especially in instructional leadership, organizational development and creating a positive school culture. By having these competencies, they can administer a school more effectively. It is a matter of discussion whether school principals have these competencies. For this reason, as school principals are key factors in any school system in the world, the basic concern of this research is to determine if they own these qualifications or not. By conducting such a study, it is aimed at shedding a light on principal preparation and selection process all over the world.

### **Theoretical Background on Principals' Administrative Competency**

The concept of competence can be defined as a person's capacity to connect knowledge, skills, attitudes and professional identity that are relevant for a certain profession (Krüger, 2009). It is also described as being adequately or well-qualified physically and intellectually to perform duties of any specific profession. These qualities are important for any organization as well as schools. In this manner, their administrative competency can be put as their skills, knowledge and beliefs in their behaviors in instructional leadership, organizational development and creating a positive school culture (MEB, 2008). According to Balci (1988), these competencies have significant functions for principals to perform their work effectively in any school system in the world as well as Turkey. Having the administrative competency especially in instructional leadership, organizational development and creating a positive school culture, it is considered that principals can function better at schools in terms of student outcomes.

### **Instructional Leadership**

Instructional leadership focuses heavily on coordinating, controlling, supervising, and developing curriculum and instruction in the school (Hallinger, 2003:331). Hallinger (2000) proposes three dimensions of the instructional leadership such as defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school-learning climate. In this regard, they are supposed to be goal-oriented and focus on the improvement of student outcomes.

Several researches indicate that school principals contribute to school effectiveness and student achievement indirectly through actions they take both in the school and the classroom. The most influential avenue of effects concerns the principal's role in shaping the purposes of the school (Bamburg & Andrews, 1990; Goldring & Pasternak, 1994). The actual role principals play in the mission building is influenced by features of the school context such as socio-economic status and school size (Drysdale, Goode & Gurr, 2009; Hallinger & Heck, 2002; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b). They are expected to create an 'academic press' that fosters high expectations and standards for all students as well as for teachers (Mortimore, 1993; Purkey & Smith, 1984; Terosky, 2014). Instructional leaders have the following key elements:

***Prioritization:*** Teaching and learning must be at the top of the priority list on a consistent basis. Leadership is a balance of management and vision (NAESP, 2001). While leaders cannot neglect other duties, teaching and learning should be the area where most of the leaders' scheduled time is allocated.

***Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR):*** Instructional leaders must be well informed of SBRR and effective reading instruction in order to assist in the selection and implementation of instructional materials and to monitor implementation. Leaders' participation in professional development sessions will help them remain informed and will provide a focus for monitoring.

***Focus on Alignment of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Standards:*** If student achievement is the goal and that goal is measured by standards-based assessments, the curriculum, instruction, and assessments all must be aligned with the standards. If there is a disconnect among these elements, student achievement will not be evident. Alignment is an ongoing process as standards, curriculum, and assessments cycle through improvements.

***Data Analysis:*** In their focus on improving achievement, effective leaders use multiple sources of information to assess performance (NAESP, 2001). Decisions at all levels must be based on pertinent data. Central office staff can use data to help principals become more effective instructional leaders and to make decisions regarding policy and curriculum. Principals can use data to help guide the instructional focus and professional development of teachers. Coaches can use data to determine the effectiveness of

instructional strategies. Coaches can also assist teachers in using data to establish student grouping arrangements and pinpoint specific student intervention needs.

***Culture of Continuous Learning for Adults:*** Effective instruction is a skill that can never be perfected. All teachers can benefit from additional time and support to improve their instruction. Research indicates that effective principals have “a view of instructional improvement as an ongoing process” (Chase & Kane, 1983).

School leaders that maintain learning as a priority may provide released time for teachers to attend relevant training. They may follow up by monitoring and providing the support that sustains the new learning. The expectations set by the leaders regarding priorities, SBRR, alignment, data use, and continued learning can impact classroom instruction and student achievement. School principals have a clear and important role in supporting those improvement efforts.

### **Organizational Development**

According to Valentine (1987) organizational development provides insight into the principals’ work in the school to establish processes and relationships that most effectively promote growth and change of school. In this respect, the factors in the organizational development are organizational direction, relations, and procedures. Blumberg and Greenfield (1980) assert that the school principal is the most important and influential individual in any school being responsible for all of the activities that occur in and around the school building in many ways. Here, the principal occupies a most strategic position in the school organizational development and change. It is their leadership that sets the tone of the school, the climate for learning, the level of professionalism, morale of teachers and the degree of concern for what students may or may not become. They bridge between the school and the community and the way they perform in that capacity largely determines the attitudes of students and parents about the school.

In effective schools, the principals articulate its major purposes and undertakes systematic dissemination (Brandt, 1982; Clark, Lotto, & McCarthy, 1982). Here, they create a safe, organized and student-centered environment; identify and obtain the resources; organize people, programs, and activities to meet school goals; develop and maintain both operational and instructional school-wide systems, processes, plans, and

procedures to support the school vision and objectives; anticipate obstacles and prepare appropriate contingency plans (Williams, 2000).

That is to say in order to provide organizational development at schools, school principals fulfill critical roles with their behaviors by creating a safe, student-centered environment; providing the resources; organizing teachers and students, supervising programs and facilities; innovating school-wide systems, processes, plans, and procedures in consistent with the school vision and eliminating problems at school.

### **Creating a Positive School culture**

Collaborative school culture is associated with the achievement of a number of school reform objectives for both teachers and students (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990). It manifests itself in rituals, customs, stories, ways of treating each other, and cultural artefacts like language (Stoll, 1999). In other words, it is a system of meaning that influences how people think and how they act at school (Devos, Verhoeven, Stassen, & Warmoes, 2004; Maslowski, 2001; Staessens, 1990). Here, “a positive or good school culture” is considered as one in which meaningful staff development and enhanced student learning are practised (Engels, Hotton, Devos, Bouckenoghe & Aelterman, 2008).

Common features of school cultures in which professional learning and commitment to enhanced student learning are a shared sense of purposes and values, norms of continuous learning and improvement, collaborative collegial relationships and opportunities for collective problem-solving and sharing experiences (Deal & Peterson, 1998; Fullan, 2001). It is a multifaceted concept comprised of goal orientedness, participative decision-making, innovativeness, leadership, and cooperation between teachers.

School principals are also viewed as culture builders at schools as they participate in rituals and encourage the rituals that celebrate important values. They should also understand teachers’ needs and skills, organizational goals and roles (Deal & Peterson, 1990). As a part of their role, they are supposed to provide a safe environment for both students and the teachers by creating a collaborative school climate community where teachers, parents and community interact regularly in a positive context. Even though educational administration programs of the highest quality cannot provide principals with

the knowledge and skills necessary for the post, many school principals with little/no experience or education in school administration can be appointed as principals in some school systems lately. This is an emerging problem for the Turkish educational system as well as some other developing countries. This may lead to a contradiction to consider if those principals can meet the needs of the developing school systems in the globalized world.

Selecting, appointing, evaluating and training principals are the subject matter of legislations of the Turkish National Education Ministry –MEB- (Balci, 1999; Ozmen & Komurlu, 2012). Nine regulations have been released since the 1990's and they generally have considered teaching as the basis of the administration profession. In this process, the principals were selected with an exam although having a degree in educational sciences is recommended by academic environments (Aslanargun, 2011). From 2004 till 2010, approximately 30 regulations were legislated to solve the principal selection problem. In those regulations 'being a teacher' and 'having a university degree' were accepted enough to apply for any administrative position at a school as well (Tas, Onder, 2010:172). A further regulation released in 2013 which considered a central exam sufficient to be a principal subsequent to an interview (MEB, 2013). In 2014, another legislation was released which asked the principal candidates to have at least some experience in teaching career. Finally, according to the current regulation released in 2015, the school principals are selected for four years with an interview conducted by the governor, provincial director of the MEB and Chief/Deputy Administrator. All these legislations show that the Ministry was not able to set decent standards about this issue (Sisman & Turan, 2003).

It can be clearly seen that all these efforts and legislative framework do not mention school principals' competency in terms of instructional leadership, organizational development and creating a positive school culture. Principals' competency in these areas are vital for successful outcomes. From the way they are selected and appointed, it is an ongoing matter of discussion whether principals have competency to carry out such critical tasks. Therefore, the main concern of this research is to investigate teachers' views of their principals' competency in instructional leadership, organizational development and creating a positive school culture. In attempting to investigate this issue, the current research aims to increase awareness of the

importance of the school administration work in the world as well as Turkey. In this manner, the results and recommendations developed through this research may lead principal preparation program coordinators, national education ministry authorities and policy makers to revise the system to move forward. By doing so, school systems can be improved and the profession and have world-wide standards in the world.

### **Method**

This study employed a qualitative research design which is usually used to gain in-depth knowledge in a study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Marshall & Rossman 2006). Creswell (2002) described qualitative research procedures for describing, analyzing, and interpreting a culture-sharing group's shared patterns of behavior, beliefs, and language that develop over time". As such, by using this research design and utilizing in-depth interviews, the study explored "culture-sharing" behaviors, beliefs, and language among teachers in Turkey. The teachers' views were obtained through interviews conducted with semi-structured questions, as recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (1998) to "get the subjects to freely express their thoughts around particular topics".

### **Participants**

The participants of this study were 40 teachers from different townships in Istanbul, Turkey in the 2015/2016 academic year. The participants were chosen with the purposive sampling method which means forming the working group from the ones with similar characteristics (Bailey, 1994). The participants' demographics are as followed:

Table 1.

*The participants' demographics*

	Men	Women				
<b>Gender</b>	33	7				
	1-5 yrs	6-10 yrs	11-15 yrs	16-20 yrs	21-25 yrs	26 +
<b>Experience</b>	-	10	12	10	7	1
	Graduate	Post graduate		PhD		
<b>Education</b>	30	10		-		

Of the participants, 33 are men and 7 women. While 10 participants have 6-10 years' experience, 12 have 11-15, 10 have 16-20, 7 have 21-25 year's experience and 1

has 26 years teaching experience. Of these, 30 principals have graduate degrees whereas 10 have post graduate degrees in educational administration.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

In this research, the data were collected using the “repertory grid” technique, which can best be characterized as a semi-structured interview. Here, the respondent is confronted with a triad of elements and then asked to specify some important ways in which two of the elements are alike and, thereby, different from the third (Kerkhof, 2006). In this respect, first the researcher sent an e-mail to a group of teachers explaining the purpose of the study and asked if they are volunteer to participate in. Second, an interview was planned on an agreed-upon day with volunteer participants, and they were visited on that date. The interviews were both recorded and written down with their permission and each took approximately 1 hour.

The data were analyzed with “content analysis” technique which usually aims to gather similar data on a topic and comment on (Mayring, 2000). The first step taken in the analysis of the data was the data organization procedures recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (1998). These are category definition, exemplification, and codification regulation. Here, the interviewer played the role of facilitator and listener by simply asking questions and recording the answers without leading them. The questions were reviewed by six field experts to ensure content validity.

### **Trustworthiness and rigor**

Here, the interviewer played the role of facilitator and listener by simply asking questions and recording the answers without leading them. Six field experts reviewed the questions to ensure content validity and then we developed the latest forms of the questions with these experts' suggestions. In addition, the participants were content enough with the confidentiality of the research to get in-depth answers without any hesitation. We chose the locations to avoid by power relations. Therefore, we conducted the interviews somewhere out of the schools. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the study some precautions were taken. First, while preparing the interview form, the related literature was examined to create a contextual frame in order to increase the internal validity of the research. Second, the participants were able to express their opinions freely and sincerely since we guaranteed to keep their identities secret. Moreover, we explained the research process clearly in order to increase external validity. We also



described the design of the research, study group, data collection process, analysis and interpretation of the data in detail. We wrote and recorded all of the data without any interpretation to ensure internal reliability. In addition, another faculty who has experience on qualitative research coded the information obtained from interviews. We compared this code with and calculated the consistency. The consistency rate was 94 % (Miles & Huberman, 1994). We explained the research process clearly in order to increase external reliability. We also preserved the raw data and coded data to welcome other researchers to examine them.

There are several limitations of this research in terms of transferability to the population. First, the sample was one of volunteers. These individuals are not necessarily representative of other academics within other school types. Therefore, the results are limited to this group of teachers and caution should be exercised when attempting to infer about any of the results with regard to other populations. Secondly, the researcher was the main instrument of data analysis. The analyses and results are a product of the researcher's interpretation of the data. The study is the product of the researcher's perspective, and it is recognized that a different researcher may identify different features of importance within the same data sets (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Creswell, 2002). Finally, although the researcher tried to look for equal gender representation, it was impossible because of the high willingness of male academics.

### **Findings**

This study investigated teachers' opinions about their principals' competency regarding their behaviors of instructional leadership, organizational development and creating a positive school culture. In this part, the findings were given below each main theme:

#### **School Principals' Instructional leadership Behaviors**

One of the basics of a school principal as an instructional leader is to set a vision for the school, translate it into action steps, use innovative approaches to achieve vision and acquire the resources and support needed to pursue vision. In this regard, a teacher explained, a school principal as an instructional leader should set a vision, propose the school's mission, manage the instructional program, and also focus on the role of coordinating, controlling, supervising, and developing curriculum and instruction in the

school. However, it is difficult to say that our principal meets these requirements. Our principal is new at our school and it is his first administrative experience. Indeed, he does not know what to do. He tries to learn how a school is managed here.

Another important thing for school principals is to clearly communicate the vision and action plans to others, build culture within the school. They are supposed to motivate the teachers with a compelling vision; effectively organize them, build the teachers' leadership capacity, and create a distributed and collaborative leadership system to achieve goals; remove barriers and ensure them to have resources. In this regard, a teacher remarked, principals should establish challenging and ambitious goals and take action to achieve them. We are a little bit lucky, because our principal was an assistant principal before and he knows what to do here. He is a model here with his supportive behaviors.

Another teacher highlights, a principal should set clear, high expectations for students and staff, align expectations with college and hold the self and others accountable for meeting performance standards. However, he cannot meet these criteria because he is experienced and has no education in school administration. He is trying to learn the work in trial and error method. I see him only on Mondays during the opening ceremony, then nobody sees him in the corridors, or anywhere else.

Another participant added, she guides and supervises the work and performance of all of us and also provides professional leadership within the school, because she is an experienced principal. Experience is important here, inexperienced ones should not be appointed to schools with political concerns. A young teacher remarked, as instructional leaders they should lead teachers and other staff in developing and delivering effective, standards-based, differentiated instruction; develop strategies and systems for improvement in instruction, but I don't think he knows what these terms mean. He is here as a principal just because he is politically close to the senior management.

In another teacher's view, a principal should encourage development of professional practice, use data to evaluate and connect instructional activities and results, analyze instruction through evidence-based observation, and provide direct feedback and coaching. Nonetheless, he is a newly-appointed one and he has no experience in school management. He is learning the profession here.

As noted in the participants' views, the current situation is far beyond the teachers' expectations. Some participants did not say anything in that regard due to lack of knowledge. This suggests that in these schools, there are no clearly defined instructional role of the school principal. The principals are either non-existent or they tend to be office-bound.

### **School Principals' Behaviors of Organizational Development**

As known, work on organizational development focuses on aligning organizations with their rapidly changing and complex environments through organizational learning, knowledge management and transformation of organizational norms and values (Shull, Church, & Burke, 2013). In this sense, school principals have critical behaviors in the process of organizational development. One participant maintained, organizational development is important for the principal in that it empowers, develops and equips his staff so that they will execute their duties with efficiency, but he is not capable of it. Another participant remarked, developmental issues aimed at helping to improve the staff. Our principal himself needs developing.

There are positive beliefs in teachers' views of the extent to which their principals to make a difference in the lives of students, provide opportunities for professional growth, develop relationships with others inside and outside the school, and influence school change. In this regard, one participant remarked, our principal does his best to develop the school, its relations with the environment and manage the change. He is so proactive and this probably stems from his experience in school administration.

However, there are negative beliefs teachers report. They remark that the principalship requires long work hours, has too many responsibilities, decreases opportunities to work with children, and creates a lot of stress. Finally, one teacher noted, our principal does not spend much time on these issues, and does not show a significantly stronger commitment. He is a newly-appointed principal, and he does not know them because he is there with political reasons rather than his qualities and competency in school administration or experience. Another teacher noted, we should set an improvement plan each year as a school requires a collaborative effort with the classroom teachers. We should set our assessments right in that plan to evaluate them, but

unfortunately, we have no certain plan because principals change very often and the profession requires some qualities to conduct them.

Similarly, a teacher said, I think it's important check the data and see what's working and what isn't, and to involve everybody in that process to look build capacity. However, our principal does not have that capacity to do that because all experienced principals were fired and schools are full of inexperienced ones. They do not have any education in school administration as well.

A teacher noted, schools should focus on student outcomes, attend to organizational change and strategic planning processes to build the "infrastructures" at the staff, school, system, and community levels. Nevertheless, it is a utopia because they are not qualified for that position. Another teacher remarked, they are supposed to formulate and carry out plans for internal and external communications, demonstrate facilitation skills, recognize and apply an understanding of individual and group behavior in normal and stressful situations, facilitate teamwork. Our principal tries his best but he cannot meet these needs. A teacher claimed, they should demonstrate an understanding of conflict resolution and problem solving strategies, make presentations that are clear and easy to understand, respond, review, and summarize information for groups. However, I do not think he is capable of doing these things. A young teacher claimed, they are supposed to communicate appropriately with students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders, understand and utilize appropriate communication technology. However, he is far away from all these qualities.

A teacher said, they are expected to organize meetings with parents and staff, assist with school-community programs and projects, attend and booster meetings where appropriate, assist in conducting needs analysis. In fact, he does not know what they are.

Most teachers assert that their principals are inexperienced, have no or little experience in the school administration. This is considered as a weakness for the principals. They are also claimed not to have capacity to develop their schools.

### **School Principals' Behaviors of Creating a Positive School Culture**

School principals have critical roles in the process of creating a positive school culture in their schools. In this regard, the principal should enjoy working with the students, positively reinforce students, develop appropriate roles and procedures, strive to achieve autonomy for the school and promote a feeling of confidence in the school. A

teacher noted, our principal is too young and does not know how to communicate and collaborate with all members of the school community. He cannot respond to diverse interests and needs, and mobilize resources to promote school culture. Another teacher explained, each school has its own character or culture. It reflects deep patterns of values, beliefs, and traditions that have been formed over the years. The ministry appointed a new principal last year and he does not know the school culture. He tries to set a new culture as if the school is a new place. Nonetheless, our school has a deep history. A teacher remarked, consciously or unconsciously, the principal should always alert to read the school culture. He understands the school patterns, the purposes it serves, and how it came to be.

Another teacher insisted, changing something is not easy at a new institution. Our principal is a new one, but he tries to sweep the culture of the school and set his own understanding as a culture. To be effective, he must read their school and community culture. It is difficult to say that our principal is aware of the current culture. A teacher explained, a principal should affirm values through dress, behavior, attention, routines. By doing so, he can be a symbol of the school. Indeed, our principal is not the one who can create that culture.

Another teacher said, a principal should shape and be shaped by the school's heroes, rituals, ceremonies, symbols. Our principal is trying to change the settled culture. He does not want to be a part of this culture. He collected all the photos, pictures that the previous principal put on the walls. A teacher remarked, he needs to use a language to reinforce values and sustain the school's best image of itself. However, his own language during the meetings and daily gatherings shows that he does not belong to this culture.

A young teacher notes, he does not promote multicultural awareness and demonstrate respect, sensitivity, and appreciation for individual differences. A teacher noted, schools need to develop into learning organizations where principals and teachers' leadership is in focus and are concentrated on student learning. This is possible only with a positive school culture. However, our principal is an inexperienced one and does not have any ability to control these aspects. As seen above, the teachers of this sample consider their school principals as incompetent to build a good and positive school culture, which is basic for a school.

## **Discussion**

The current study investigated teachers' opinions about their principals' competency regarding their behaviors of instructional leadership, organizational development and creating a positive school culture. Several results were obtained through this research.

According to a result, principals do not demonstrate instructional leadership behaviors and they are mostly considered as inexperienced in school administration, which may affect teacher performance. In a qualitative case study of effective high school principals' overall influence on teachers, Blase (1987) described several instructionally related impacts on teachers' time on task, expectations for student achievement, focus, and problem-solving orientation. However, the current law allows inexperienced principal candidates to be appointed to this post. The participants claim that many principals were relocated from their posts and inexperienced ones were appointed to the positions, which is criticized harshly by educational environments as they have no or little experience in administration and qualification in educational administration. Hence, it is a profession that requires a lot of qualities and qualifications. School is an important society that should be administered with qualified principals. As Hallinger put (2003) an instructional leader has some basic practices such as defining the school's mission including framing and then communicating the school's goals, managing the instructional program includes supervising and evaluating teaching, coordinating the curriculum, and monitoring student progress, and promoting a positive school learning climate. However, it is understood from the teachers' views that the current principals of this sample do not show these behaviors at all because they are mostly inexperienced and incompetent in the school administration field. Because the field of educational administration is neglected in their preparation and appointment process. Regarding instructional leadership, the majority of participants were conversant with what instructional leadership entails as well as the necessary qualities that an instructional leader should have. However, to some participants it is evident that their principals have very little knowledge of what this concept is about.

Interviews showed that an instructional leader should guide and inspire subordinates for the sole purpose of improving the efficiency and effectiveness in teaching and learning in particular as well as the smooth running of the school in general.

Nonetheless, teachers claim that the principals cannot guide them and improve the school community. The frequent changes and evaluations in principal selection process discourage principals from their duties, which results in collapse in their motivation and incentives. Here, they are supposed to encourage teachers to use student evaluation results in planning instruction, develop themselves about the school's mission, facilitate professional development activities of teachers, and encourage teachers to change teaching methods if students are not doing well by setting high expectations and standards and communicate it to teachers. However, results reveal that they lack competency in the behaviors mentioned in the literature. It is commonly claimed that they are in their posts not just because of their qualities, but political concerns. In any school system, this approach cannot be accepted easily because Marzano (2003) states that leadership has a strong relationship with the attitudes of teachers, the classroom practices of teachers, the organization of curriculum and instruction, opportunity to learn for all students. As this affects school outcomes directly, this profession should be handled with care.

Another result shows that principals do not have competency in their behaviors in organizational development. According to Knoff (2007) organizational development should be natural, necessary, and ongoing components of any healthy, evolving school in the context of continuous. Nevertheless, the results indicate that most principals do not have competency to enable people to achieve things which could not be done before. They feel that it is a wrong to allow inexperienced principals to become a principal in any school system as well as Turkey. Indeed, they should be educated in accordance with universal standards with certain competencies in addition to having a good understanding of basic concepts in the field of educational management (Sergiovanni, 1991). In this case, it is a rational expectation that a successful teacher can always manage a school successfully. The principals should have willingness to develop, commitment and dedication, preparedness to the post, the ability to develop as well as a positive attitude to self-development. Schools that fail to provide organizational development frequently have problems of attracting and retaining highly talented principals. As identified in the interviews, they cannot implement the things they really want completely as they are not conversant with and lack of motivation. In fact, they lack experience and quality required for the work. Teachers agree that experience or degree in the educational administration

should be important imperatives in principal selection and appointment process instead of political concerns.

A final result shows that school principals' behaviors in creating a positive school culture is not at a desired level. As Ärlestig (2008) states focusing on teaching and learning issues that are compatible with the organization's objectives and the mission is important, it is something that is mostly related to schools' positive organizational climate. Here, the results show that the principals of this sample are weak to build a positive school culture. The participants also claim that most experienced principals were relocated from their chairs leaving their places to totally inexperienced ones. Therefore, they are unable to understand the school culture. Most teachers indicate that their current principals are not "knowledgeable and professional" enough to lead their school in a successful way. Without knowledge about how to use communication and the role of culture in schools, the principal's individual capacity to affect the school outcomes can be limited (Ärlestig, 2008). Insufficient communication does not only reflect or can be mixed up with cultural problems, it can also contribute to them. Leadership has a strong relationship with the overall climate of the school and the climate in individual classrooms, the attitudes of teachers, the classroom practices of teachers (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Marzano, 2003). Day and Leithwood (2007) also claim that success is affected by the school's structure, culture and the beliefs of the principal, staff and students.

Bush, Kiggundu and Pontso Moorosi (2011) state that school principals have the pivotal roles in leading and managing schools. School principals have crucial roles in any school system in the world especially in developing countries. Therefore, this results of this study may contribute to the field of educational administration in the process of selecting and placing them in their posts. By doing so, limited resources can be used in an optimum way. In other words, due to their critical roles, it is significant to analyze how adoptable and applicable preparation and the selection process is. In conclusion, principal selection and appointment is a problematic area in some developing countries as well as the Turkish education context because of frequent changes neglecting experience and degree in educational administration. This makes these kinds of studies more crucial, especially researches focus on principal preparation, selection and appointments to their posts.



When analyzed in the historical process, it can be noticed that the situation is getting worse day by day. Most importantly, it will be imperative to scrutinize whether the current educational reform processes that include a re-definition of the role and responsibilities of the principal, secures positive, significant and lasting educational improvement (Bysik, Evstigneeva, Isaeva, Kukso, Harris & Jones, 2015). The recommendations obtained in this study are below:

- Principals should be selected and appointed among the ones who have experience and degree in educational administration.
- Principal selection and appointment process should be settled according to universal criteria and should not be changed frequently with political considerations.
- Principal candidates should work with an experienced one for a while before they are appointed to a school.

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