

Bureaucratic Reputation in Higher Education: A Case Study

Yükseköğretimde Bürokratik Saygınlık: Bir Durum Çalışması

Araştırma Makalesi – Research Article

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Abstract

Bureaucratic reputation refers to the performances of top managers in public institutions, their behaviours in compliance with ethical values, their fair, impartial and transparent attitudes and technical competences in doing business and conducting operations. The reputation of the top management in public institutions plays an important role in establishing institutional reputation as well as providing motivation for employees and making the institution strong and attractive. In this connection, the purpose of the current study is to reveal the views of the faculty members working at a state university in the Western Mediterranean region on bureaucratic reputation. The study group of the current research is comprised of 20 faculty members working in a state university. In the study, the case study design, one of the qualitative research methods, was used to reveal the views of the faculty members. The collected data were analyzed by using the content analysis technique. As a result of the analyses, it was concluded that the top management of the state university has the adequate level of bureaucratic reputation. It was also found that the factors effective on the perception of bureaucratic reputation include the performance and abilities of the top management to find solutions to local and regional problems, their fairness and impartiality, their transparency and previous administrative experiences. Bureaucrats are also recommended to be fair, impartial and transparent while doing business and conducting operations and to form their work teams from people with managerial experience in order to increase their reputation.

Keywords: reputation, bureaucratic reputation, higher education institutions

Öz

Bürokratik saygınlık, kamu kurumlarındaki tepe yöneticilerinin performansları, etik değerlere uygun davranışları, iş ve işleyişte adil, tarafsız ve şeffaf tutumları ve teknik yeterliliklerini ifade etmektedir. Kamu kurumlarında tepe yönetimin saygınlığa sahip olması, çalışanlar üzerinde motivasyon sağlama, kurumu güçlü ve cazip kılmada yanında kurumsal saygınlığının kazanılmasında önemli rol oynamaktadır. Bu kapsamda bu çalışmanın amacı Batı Akdeniz bölgesinde faaliyet gösteren bir devlet üniversitesinde görev yapan öğretim elemanlarının bürokratik saygınlığa ilişkin görüşlerini ortaya koymaktır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu bir devlet üniversitesinde görev yapan 20 öğretim elemanı oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada öğretim elemanlarının görüşlerini ortaya koymak için nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden durum çalışması deseni kullanılmıştır. Veriler içerik analizi tekniği ile analiz edilmiştir. Analizler sonucunda bir devlet üniversitesinde görev yapan tepe yönetimin yeterli düzeyde bürokratik saygınlığa sahip olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Bürokratik saygınlığa yol açan etkenlerin de tepe yönetimin, yerel ve bölgesel sorunlara çözüm üretme performans ve kabiliyetleri, adil ve tarafsız olmaları, şeffaflıkları ve daha önceki yöneticilik deneyimleri olduğu bulgularına ulaşılmıştır. Bürokratlara da saygınlıklarını artırmak amacıyla iş ve işleyişte adil, tarafsız, şeffaf olmaları ve çalışma ekiplerini yöneticilik deneyimine sahip kişilerden oluşturmaları önerilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: saygınlık, bürokratik saygınlık, yükseköğretim kurumları

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of both state and foundation universities. Such a quantitative increase in higher education institutions has forced universities to compete among themselves and to make a difference in order to gain competitive advantage. Thus, inquiries about the reputation of higher education institutions have started to be observed frequently among the society and academicians¹. It is of great importance that higher education institutions have a high level of reputation because reputation makes higher education institutions more attractive and preferable and increases their competitiveness. Higher education institutions with a high level of reputation are among the institutions where qualified teaching staff and administrative staff want to work². The reputation of institutions provides them with a certain level of protection against heavy criticism and negative reactions arising from social distrust in that reputable institutions survive the negative propaganda and crisis periods with less damage. In addition, these institutions always receive the support of other institutions and organizations with which they are in contact³.

The increase in the number of higher education institutions has made it very difficult for these institutions to promote themselves, to explain themselves adequately, to make a difference and most importantly to create reputation⁴. Therefore, institutions with different levels of reputation have begun to emerge⁵. Institutions with a low level of reputation need to develop and implement a set of plans, programs and projects in order to increase their reputation, to make themselves attractive and preferable and to compete with other higher education institutions. It is the duty of the top management of higher education institutions, namely bureaucrats, to determine, implement and operationalize these plans, programs and projects. The top management's having bureaucratic reputation plays an important role in moving their institution into the group of respected institutions. The performance of bureaucrats in achieving goals, their commitment to ethical and moral values in working and their fair behaviours in work processes affect their bureaucratic reputation. The impartiality and transparency of bureaucrats, the measures they have taken to prevent irregularities and their managerial and professional competences are other factors that affect their bureaucratic reputation⁶. There is a steady increase in the actions of higher education administrators to strengthen their institutional and bureaucratic reputation, such as differentiation from other institutions through branding, establishment of public relations units, management of negative criticisms and crises by using impression management strategies, determination of inclusive mission and vision statements and development of distinctive institutional values. In this regard, it is important to measure the bureaucratic reputation levels of the top managers in higher education institutions, to reveal the problems and to propose solutions. However, it is not possible to talk about the existence of a rich literature on the subject of bureaucratic reputation in higher education institutions. Therefore, the issue of bureaucratic reputation in higher education institutions comes to the fore as a subject that needs to be researched⁷. In this connection, the purpose of the current study is to reveal the views of the faculty members working at a state university on the bureaucratic reputation.

Bureaucratic Reputation

According to the Turkish Language Association⁸ (2021), reputation means "the state of being respected, valued, being reliable and reputation". Okur, on the other hand, (2016, p.143) defines reputation as having reputation and honour⁹. But in general terms, reputation is defined as respect and trust felt for

¹ Koçoğlu, 2018: 23-24

² Durnalı and Ayyıldız, 2019:169

³ Balay, Kaya and Yıldırım, 2017: 646-647

⁴ Köse, 2019: 63-64, Van Vught, 2008:151

⁵ Öncel and Sevim, 2014:151-152

⁶ Maor, 2016: 81, Yiğitaçıköz and Karakaya, 2018: 193-197

⁷ Waeraas and Solbakk, 2009: 450

⁸ According to the Turkish Language Association, 2021

⁹ Okur, 2016, 143

any individual or organization by the environment with which they are in contact¹⁰. As it can be seen, reputation is a multi-faceted abstract concept based on feelings, thoughts, perceptions, opinions and experiences that include many values such as respectability, appreciation, trust, honesty and meeting expectations¹¹.

Reputation is as important for individuals as it is for organizations because reputation ensures the continuity of organizations by making them strong, attractive, unique and unrivalled¹². If we define organizational reputation in this connection, organizational reputation refers to thoughts, perceptions, opinions and experiences of the employees, who are called the internal stakeholders of the organizations, of other institutions and organizations that they have a business relationship with¹³ (Maor, 2010, p.133) and of the public and the media about the strengths and weaknesses of the organization¹⁴ (Esen, 2011, p.292). There are many important factors that affect an organization's reputation. These are listed as communication factor (promotion), recognition factor, corporate identity factor, trust factor and reputation factor of top management or bureaucratic reputation factor in public organizations¹⁵.

Bureaucratic reputation is an important factor and a significant predictor of organizational reputation, especially in the acquisition and maintenance of organizational reputation in public organizations¹⁶. Lee and Van Ryzin (2019, p.178)¹⁷ emphasized the importance of bureaucratic reputation in the emergence of organizational reputation and defined bureaucratic reputation as the performance of bureaucrats in achieving their organizations' goals, their protecting ethical and moral values in business and operation, their fair, impartial and transparent behaviours in doing business and conducting operations and their having technical competences. In addition, bureaucratic reputation has been classified into four sub-dimensions: performance, compliance with ethical values, process and technical competence.

The performance dimension seeks an answer to the question of how the public organization is managed¹⁸. Accordingly, the performance dimension covers all the quantitative and qualitative contributions of bureaucrats to the accomplishment of the goals of public organizations¹⁹. In other words, it refers to bureaucrats' efforts to use resources effectively and efficiently in order for public organizations to achieve their goals. Bureaucrats with a good performance can make their organizations more effective and efficient and put them in a different and respectable position compared to others²⁰. The ethical dimension seeks an answer to the question of whether bureaucrats protect moral, high ethical and democratic values in doing business and conducting operations²¹. At this point, ethics refers to the honesty, reliability, fairness and democracy of bureaucrats in their actions against internal and external stakeholders²². The process dimension seeks an answer to the question of whether bureaucrats carry out their business and operational processes fairly, impartially and transparently and whether they take the necessary measures to prevent irregularities²³. Accordingly, the process refers to the fair behaviour, impartiality, transparency of bureaucrats and the measures taken by them to prevent irregularities in business and operational processes²⁴. Technical competence dimension seeks to an answer the question of whether bureaucrats have the necessary technical competences²⁵. Technical competence refers to the knowledge, skills and influence of bureaucrats on the operation, plans, programs and projects of their

¹⁰ Asiltürk Okutan, 2020: 1363

¹¹ Karatepe and Ozan, 2017: 88

¹² Avcı, 2019: 48, Bustos, 2021: 731

¹³ Maor, 2010: 133

¹⁴ Esen, 2011: 292

¹⁵ Hülür, Avcı, Şenel and Akınç, 2018: 571-572

¹⁶ Gilad, Bloom and Assouline, 2018: 2

¹⁷ Lee and Van Ryzin, 2019: 178

¹⁸ Lee and Van Ryzin, 2019: 178

¹⁹ Christensen, T., and Gornitzka, 2019: 885-886, Koçak and Özüdoğru, 2012: 80

²⁰ Usta, 2010: 32-35

²¹ Lee and Van Ryzin, 2019: 178

²² Bautista-Beauchesne, 2021: 302, Kılavuz, 2004:16

²³ Lee and Van Ryzin, 2019: 178

²⁴Overman, Busuioc and Wood, 2020: 417

²⁵ Lee and Van Ryzin, 2019: 179

organizations²⁶.

Bureaucratic reputation in higher education institutions is related to the values of the institution, its institutional characteristics and the extent to which the goals of the institution are attended to in its functioning. The way these factors are perceived by internal and external stakeholders is decisive for bureaucratic reputation²⁷. Administrators of higher education institutions generally choose to create a perception that administrative activities and the functioning of units are suitable for institutional goals and values by using practices such as branding and public relations campaigns borrowed from the private sector. On the other hand, the competition rules of the national and international higher education market are not the only factors that shape the functioning of higher education institutions²⁸. Factors specific to the institutional environment of higher education, such as government policies, legal regulations regulating the working conditions of academic and administrative personnel, financial restrictions, responsibility to serve the community, the duty to support the competitiveness of private sector institutions, and academic ethics have decisive effects on the bureaucratic functioning of higher education institutions²⁹. Administrators increase the bureaucratic reputation of the institution by taking into account the factors listed above while fulfilling their duties and by leaving positive impressions on internal and external stakeholders. This leads to effects such as an increase in institutional performance, an increase in the organizational commitment and job satisfaction of the staff, and an increase in the quality of the services offered to students³⁰.

In this regard, the main purpose of the current study is to reveal the views of the faculty members working at a state university on bureaucratic reputation. To this end, answers to the following questions will be sought.

- (1) What are the views of the faculty members working at a state university on the reputation of their institution among the public?
- (2) What are the views of the faculty members working at a state university on the performance of top management, one of the sub-dimensions of bureaucratic reputation?
- (3) What are the views of the faculty members working at a state university about whether the top management, one of the sub-dimensions of bureaucratic reputation, acts in accordance with ethical values?
- (4) What are the views of the faculty members working at a state university on the management processes of the top management, one of the sub-dimensions of bureaucratic reputation?
- (5) What are the views of the faculty members working at a state university on the technical competences of the top management, one of the sub-dimensions of bureaucratic reputation?
- (6) According to the faculty members working at a state university, what are the factors that lead to bureaucratic reputation?

Method

The method section includes information about research design, study group, data collection tool and data analysis. The compliance of this study with ethical rules was approved by the ethics committee report of a state university, dated 03.11.2021, meeting number 2021/11 and decision number 2021/393.

Research Design

The case study design, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. The case study design refers to the process of defining a case related to a particular event and phenomenon and analyzing it in a cause-effect relationship³¹. Case studies aim to reveal how a unit (individual, group,

²⁶ Demortain and Borraz, 2021: 3, Özdemir, 2015: 37-38

²⁷ Wæraas and Solbakk, 2009: 449-450

²⁸ Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2006: 317

²⁹ Baruch an Fidan, 2019: 38

³⁰ Sataøen, 2019: 428

³¹ Subaşı and Okumuş, 2017: 420-425

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organization or event) develops in relation to its environment by examining it. The determining factor in case studies is to define the unit to be researched and to determine the boundaries of the study accordingly³². In this context, the views of the faculty members working at a state university on bureaucratic reputation have been tried to be revealed in a cause-effect relationship.

Study Group

Shenton³³ (2004) states that the detailed descriptions of the context in which the research has been conducted and of the demographic characteristics of the participants make it possible to transfer the findings to similar contexts and strengthen the trustworthiness of the research. For this reason, detailed descriptions of the context and participants of the study are given in this section. The research group consists of 20 participants who work in a state university as professor, associate professor, doctor lecturer, lecturer and research assistant. Since the answers obtained from the participants were in the same direction and included repetitions, it was concluded that sufficient data size and data saturation were achieved³⁴. This state university was established in the Western Mediterranean region in 2006. There are 12 faculties, 5 graduate schools and 13 vocational schools in the university. The total number of academic staff is 1043. The number of professors is 124, the number of associate professors is 119, the number of doctor lecturers is 295, the number of lecturers is 334 and the number of research assistants is 171. The total number of students is 32,138. The name of the institution is kept confidential at the request of the management of the institution to protect their reputation. Demographic features of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic features of the participants

No	Code	Gender	Age	Title	Unit
1	1KK	Female	45	Lecturer	Vocational School
2	2KK	Female	43	Professor	Faculty
3	3KK	Female	44	Doctor Lecturer	Vocational School
4	4KE	Male	34	Lecturer	Graduate School
5	5KE	Male	58	Doctor Lecturer	Vocational School
6	6KE	Male	36	Lecturer	Vocational School
7	7KK	Female	36	Doctor Lecturer	Vocational School
8	8KE	Male	27	Lecturer	Vocational School
9	9KK	Female	42	Lecturer	Vocational School
10	10KK	Female	42	Doctor Lecturer	Vocational School
11	11KE	Male	37	Associate Professor	Faculty
12	12KE	Male	28	Research Assistant	Faculty
13	13KK	Female	51	Lecturer	Vocational School
14	14KE	Male	54	Professor	Faculty
15	15KK	Female	35	Lecturer	Vocational School
16	16KK	Female	37	Doctor Lecturer	Vocational School
17	17KE	Male	51	Doctor Lecturer	Vocational School
18	18KE	Male	50	Associate Professor	Faculty

³² Flyvbjerg, 2011: 301

³³ Shenton, 2004

³⁴ Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006

19	19KE	Male	36	Lecturer	Vocational School
20	20KE	Male	33	Research Assistant	Faculty

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that the numbers of male and female participants are close to each other and their ages vary between 27 and 58. The great majority of the participants work in vocational schools. In the state university where the current study was conducted, the number of vocational schools is higher than the number of faculties and graduate schools. In addition, the number of lecturers is the biggest. Therefore, it can be said that the sample represents the population. In addition, each participant was given a code in order to ensure the confidentiality of the participants³⁵.

Data Collection Tool

While developing the interview form, the relevant literature on bureaucratic reputation³⁶ (e.g., Bustos, 2021; Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019; Maor, 2010; Overman et al., 2020) was reviewed. Then, expert opinion was taken from eight academicians who are experts in the field of public administration and education. Then, a preliminary application was made on four academicians and the interview form was finalized. By using the interview form, face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants and necessary explanations were made when the questions were misunderstood, and they were recorded in writing. Before the interview, the participants were informed that they could leave the research at any time without giving any reason. At the end of the interview, the member check technique was applied to ensure the credibility of the study. Accordingly, the participants were asked to check the written records and their consent was obtained³⁷.

Data Analysis

The raw data obtained from the participants were analyzed with the content analysis technique. Content analysis is a technique used in naming, classifying and interpreting raw data. In this context, first, the raw data obtained from the participants were subjected to the coding process. After the coding process, the data were classified into main themes and sub-themes. Then the interpretation stage was initiated³⁸ (Stemler, 2000, pp.1-3) In order to establish credibility in the data analysis process, studies were carried out with two academicians, one expert in the field of public administration and one in the field of education, by using the inter-coder reliability technique. The two academicians were asked to create codes, main themes and sub-themes and then they were compared with the codes, themes and sub-themes created by the researcher. As a result of this comparison, it was concluded that there was 84% agreement between the coders³⁹. In addition, the peer scrutiny technique was used. In this connection, all the stages of the study were opened to the control of an academician who was not related to the study. Feedback was received from this person on literature review, determination of appropriate research method and data analysis technique and naming of codes and themes⁴⁰.

Results

In this section, the results of the current study are presented. The findings are presented under six themes.

1st Theme: Institutional Reputation

The findings for the theme of institutional reputation are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Institutional reputation

Categories	Frequency (f)

³⁵ Arastaman, Fidan and Fidan, 2018

³⁶ e.g., Bustos, 2021; Lee & Van Ryzin, 2019; Maor, 2010; Overman et al., 2020

³⁷ Arastaman et al., 2018

³⁸ Stemler, 2000: 1-3

³⁹ Miles and Huberman, 1994: 64, Öztürk, 2021: 420-421

⁴⁰ Shenton, 2004

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Positive	18
Neither positive nor negative	1
Negative	1

As can be seen in Table 2, almost all of the participants stated that the institution they work for has reputation among the public. On the other hand, while one participant stated that it has neither positive nor negative reputation, another participant stated that she it does not have enough reputation.

“As it is perceived as an institution where educated people are trained, its reputation is quite high among the public.”12KK

“The animal husbandry project carried out in the university creates cooperation between the university and society. Participation in trainings is high and the trainings are effective in finding solutions to their problems. They make effective use of the animal hospital. Vocational courses (ball sewing, etc.) enable individuals to have a job. They are popular with the public.”9KK

“I know that the institution I work for has a respected place among the public. Especially my dialogues with people and the feedbacks I get from them prove this. I think that the work carried out by the university administration is generally recognized and appreciated.”2KK

“I think that the institution I work for is a respected institution among the public. Regarding the problems that occur on a provincial basis, I observe that the university is the first institution from which support is sought to solve problems, and I am happy to see the news about this in the local press.”13KK

“I think that our institution is considered as a second class university both in the Mediterranean region and in Turkey. This is due to the fact that the university entrance scores of the students who get a place in our university are not very high”8KE

2nd Theme: Administrative Performance

The findings for the theme of administrative performance are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Administrative performance

Categories	Frequency (f)
The top management is competent to achieve the institutional goals	11
The top management strives to achieve the institutional goals	8
While the top management was competent at first to the achieve institutional goals, it later became incompetent	1

As can be seen in Table 3, the majority of the participants stated that they found the top management competent to achieve the institutional goals. On the other hand, while some participants stated that the top management strives to achieve the institutional goals, one participant stated that the top management was competent in achieving the institutional goals before, but later it became incompetent.

“Management is very good at this. It has already achieved its goals. It can produce solutions to the problems of the country and region. In some areas, it is directly involved in the sector...”6KE

“I think the institution I work for is well managed. I think that the top management is able to achieve our institutional goals. The reports prepared on this subject are shared with the employees of the institution.”13KK

“I think our institution is managed very well. The top management works to achieve institutional goals and takes steps towards this end. For the promotion of our university, positive steps are being taken by our rector in the national press and the opportunities provided for students are expanded and developed so that university students prefer our university. Internal inspection is performed in order to ensure that the teaching process runs smoothly.”8KE

“I think that the top management is trying to do its best for the university to work at a more advanced level. We can understand this especially from the studies on quality and the importance it attaches to accreditation.”2KK

“I think my organization is well managed. It tries to carry out its duties and activities in accordance with its mission and vision. At this point, I think that the top management is working diligently to achieve institutional goals. As a result of impossibilities and unexpected conditions, disruptions in the management process can be seen in every institution. I am of the opinion that the administrators take more than enough responsibility at the point of management of the institution and invest maximum effort at this point.”11KE

“The longer the top management in any institution stays in that institution, unfortunately, the more it loses its effectiveness in the management. The same is true for my own institution. The top management probably fulfilled their responsibilities and duties they envisaged when they first took office, but I do not think so for later periods.” 4KE

3rd Theme: Compliance with Ethical Values

The findings for the theme of compliance with ethical values are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Compliance with ethical values

Categories	Frequency (f)
Acts in compliance with ethical values	18
No idea	2

As can be seen in Table 4, almost all of the participants stated that the top management acts in compliance with ethical rules. Some participants stated that they have no idea on the issue.

“It is currently managed as it should be. When the academicians have completed their doctorate, they are appointed. There is no injustice.”16 KK

“I believe that the top management and administrators behave in accordance with moral and democratic values. In this context, I believe that all employees and individuals are treated equally. I am of the opinion that the equality prevails in the activities to be carried out, studies to be carried out, research etc.”11KE

“They act in compliance with democratic and ethical values. I think they are honest with the public, people and employees. Some things are related to who the manager is. There is no problem for now.” 16KK

“I think that our institution’s top management behaves democratically in its management strategy. In particular, because of the fact that the administrators of schools and faculties can convene in the Senate committee and take decisions immediately, and that these decisions are put into effect, that the opinions of our academic and administrative staff are taken into consideration, that the top management of our institution acts democratically and acts quickly and effectively in meeting the demands of students, I am convinced that they act in accordance with ethical values, are aware of the fact that they are providing services, and that they adopt the principles of transparency and honesty by actively using social media.”19KK

4th Theme: Administrative Processes

The findings for the theme of administrative processes are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Administrative processes

Categories	Frequency (f)
Administrative processes are carried out justly, impartially and transparently	16
No idea	4

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As can be seen in Table 5, the majority of the participants stated that the management processes are carried out in a fair, impartial and transparent manner, while some participants stated that they have no idea on this issue.

“I do not know about the measures taken regarding irregularities, but I know that importance is attached to the inspection of the functioning of the management. I have not had any problems with promotion or personal rights and I know that they are sensitive about these issues. In addition, when I want to communicate with the management, I can easily reach and express myself without any problems. I think this is also important.” 2KK

“We can say that they manage works and studies well at a standard level. In general, we observe that they are fair, impartial and transparent. I think they follow legal procedures to prevent irregularities. As an example, we can say that all kinds of announcements are made publicly.” 5KE

“Institutions are constituted by units as it is known. Within the framework of the control and supervision of the top management, the administrator of each unit tries to manage the process without any problems. Top management supports the solution of different problems that may occur in the units. At this point, control is provided in an objective and transparent way, and processes are improved. Procedures are carried out within the framework of the rules and regulations determined for irregularities that may occur. In this context, I think that the administrators control and supervise the processes carried out.” 11KE

“Announcing the decisions of the Senate and the Board of Directors on the internet and sending them by email is an example of transparent management. During the distance education process, UZEM carried out various checks on whether the distance education works regularly and requested feedback on the malfunctions detected at this point. I believe that efforts are made to comply with the principles.” 8KK

“I do not have much information on this issue.” 1KK

5th Theme: Technical Competence

The findings for the theme of technical competence are presented in Table 6

Table 6. Technical competence

Categories	Frequency (f)
They have technical competences	19
I have no idea about whether they have technical competences	1

As can be seen in Table 6, almost all of the participants stated that the top management has technical competences, while one participant stated that he/she has no idea on this issue.

“We know that top managers have been managers before. This experience allows them to become more competent in their current duties.” 1KK

“Managers working in top management should have communication skills, analytical skills and conceptual skills. I think that the managers working in the top management have these skills and professional competences. For example, despite the rapid transition to distance education in the institution where I worked during the pandemic, there were no problems experienced in the functioning. I think that the inability of many universities to switch to distance education is due to administrative inadequacies.” 3KK

“I believe that the communication skills of the administrators working in the top management are strong. I observe that our university is very good at adapting to changing conditions and taking quick action. For example, I think they managed the pandemia process very well. Neither students nor teachers were allowed to experience problems during this difficult process. When we mentioned the slightest problem, a solution was produced quickly.” 10KK

“I think that the professional competence of the top management is sufficient. After all, most of them are people having graduated from the faculty of economics and administration and have experience in business and administration. I don’t see a problem as they have enough knowledge and experience in the field.” 16KK

“I have no idea about the managerial and professional competences of the top managers of our institution.”13KK

6th Theme: Factors Leading to Bureaucratic Reputation

The findings for the theme of factors leading to bureaucratic principle are presented in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Factors leading to bureaucratic reputation

When Figure 1 is examined, it is seen that the factors that are the most influential on the perception of bureaucratic reputation are performance and competence of producing solutions to local problems, being just and impartial, transparency and previous managerial experience.

“I think it has the necessary management skills and influence. The bridges established between the institution and public and the institution and industry show that the managerial approach adopted is correct.” 20KK

“The top management of the institution acts in accordance with democratic and moral values in all its operations. For example, they are quite just in appointments and assignment of duties.” 18KE

“I find them highly successful. I believe that necessary measures have been taken to prevent irregularities. All transactions are shared with the public.” 6KE

Discussion and Conclusions

In the current study, the views of the faculty members working in a state university on bureaucratic reputation were attempted to be revealed. In this connection, in the first dimension, which is institutional reputation, almost all of the participants stated that the state university has a reputation among the public as it is perceived to be an institution that provides education and training to people, as being an academician is a respected position, as it produces solutions to local and regional problems, organizes courses for vocational training, performs social and cultural activities and serves as a locomotive in the promotion of the province. In the same direction, K m r (2021, pp.111-112)⁴¹ also concluded that the university researched is considered to be an important and respected institution as it makes significant contributions to the scientific, economic, social, cultural and promotional activities of the city and as it is seen to be an institution having potential to produce solutions to local problems. Similarly, Luque-Martinez and Del Barrio-Garcia (2009, p.326)⁴² reported that according to the faculty members, campus facilities, educational, instructional and research activities, management and services offered to the society are the factors that lead to bureaucratic reputation. On the other hand, one participant stated that it has neither negative nor positive reputation, while another participant stated that it could not gain enough reputation due to the low university entrance exam scores of the students accepted to the university. Similarly, Durmuş and Tokyay (2021, pp.238-240) and Bakanauskas and Sontaite (2011, p.124)⁴³ found that universities with departments and programs accepting students with high university entrance exam scores are perceived to be more attractive and prestigious by students, their families and their environment.

In the administrative performance dimension, the majority of the participants stated that the institutional goals can be achieved as the top management can find solutions to the problems of the country and the region, as there is a strong cooperation between the university and sector and as there is a progress reported in the institution performance evaluation reports. Parallel to these findings, H sigg and Mann (2010, p.180) and Yanik and M ft ođlu (2015, pp.820-836)⁴⁴ stated that besides providing educational activities, universities fulfil other important responsibilities such as providing solutions to problems in social life and allowing technology transfer to the sector by establishing university-sector cooperation and that these activities reflect the administrative performance level of the university and contribute to administrative and institutional reputation. In addition, some participants stated that efforts are made to achieve the goals with works such as quality works and importance attached to accreditation. Similarly, Ulut rk (2015: 406-411)⁴⁵ stated that quality and accreditation works in higher education institutions are an important tool and performance indicator in achieving institutional goals. On the other hand, one participant stated that the top management was first competent but then became incompetent in achieving the goals. In this regard, Ablanado-Rosas, Blevins, Gao, Teng and White (2011, pp.560-561), and Kurtul and  zgenel (2021: 3)⁴⁶ stated that people who have been in the administration for a long time or who have been a manager for a long time in the same educational institutions act slowly in fulfilling their duties. They also stated that they experience stagnation, comfort and complacency, and fail to notice administrative problems.

In the dimension of compliance with ethical values, almost all of the participants are of the opinion that the top management acts in accordance with ethical values because the top management assures the personal rights of employees without any discrimination, is just in appointments and assignments, takes the opinions of all units into consideration in the decision-making processes, announces the decisions taken via social media and implements an open door policy. In the same direction, Parnell and Dent (2009, p.592)⁴⁷ stated that the ethics in management is the equal, impartial and fair behaviours exhibited by managers towards everyone and their attaching importance to democratic values in the decision-

⁴¹ K m r, 2021: 111-112

⁴² Luque-Martinez and Del Barrio-Garcia, 2009: 326

⁴³ Durmuş and Tokyay, 2021: 238-240, Bakanauskas and Sontaite, 2011: 124

⁴⁴ H sigg and Mann, 2010: 180, Yanik and M ft ođlu, 2015: 820-836

⁴⁵ Ulut rk, 2015: 406-411

⁴⁶ Ablanado-Rosas, Blevins, Gao, Teng and White, 2011: 560-561, Kurtul and  zgenel, 2021: 3

⁴⁷ Parnell and Dent, 2009: 592

making processes. Karaköse (2008, pp.121-123)⁴⁸ concluded that administrators in educational institutions who behave in accordance with ethical values are perceived as more prestigious. It was also stated that managers who are perceived as prestigious will cause their organization to be perceived as more prestigious by the environment, can carry the organization further, provide a competitive advantage to the organization and make it preferable. Some participants stated that they have no idea about compliance with ethical values.

In the administrative processes dimension, the majority of the participants stated that the administrative processes are carried out in a fair, impartial and transparent manner because the top management is sensitive about promotion and personal rights, they act in accordance with the legislation, their announcements are made publicly, and they carry out their activities of inspection and supervision. Parallel to these findings, Karaköse (2008, pp.118-120)⁴⁹ concluded that administrators in educational institutions will be perceived as more prestigious if they are fair, free from favouritism and transparent and the administrators having a high level of reputation will increase institutional reputation. On the other hand, some participants stated that they have no idea about administrative processes.

In the technical competence dimension, almost all of the participants stated that the top management has technical competences because the top management has previous managerial experience, their areas of study are social, human and administrative sciences, they have sector experience and they have skills such as communication, comprehension, problem solving and analysis skills. Similarly, Nacar and Demirtaş (2017, pp.448-448)⁵⁰ concluded that managers' previous managerial experiences, the training they have received in the field of management, their knowledge and their ability to communicate effectively contribute to their technical competence. In addition, Karaköse (2008, p.120)⁵¹ found that there is a relationship between the technical competence of managers and their reputation, and that the managers with technical competence are perceived more prestigious. In addition, one participant stated that he/she has no idea about the top management's technical competences.

In the dimension of factors leading to bureaucratic reputation, the participants associated the top management's ability to produce solutions to local and regional problems with their contribution to the region's promotion, economic, social and cultural development. In the same vein, Yıldız (2016, pp.77-80), and Öztürk, Torun and Özkök (2011, p.146)⁵² emphasized that universities and their administrations contribute to local development in the region they are located in and stated that this situation will make the university and its administration more visible and prestigious. The factor of being fair and impartial consists of personal and professional expectations such as timely granting of personal rights, appointments and assignments away from nepotism. Similarly, Fitzgerald, Mahony, Crawford and Hnat (2014, p.408)⁵³ found that the most important factor that will increase the reputation of administrators in higher education institutions is the way they act justly. Accordingly, they stated that administrators of educational institutions who exhibit fair behaviours away from nepotism towards their personnel can be perceived as more prestigious. The transparency factor is determined by practices such as taking the opinions of academic units in the decisions taken, publishing the decisions of the senate and the board of directors on the university website and sharing them with the public. Similarly, Karaevli and Levent (2014, p.94)⁵⁴ found that the most important factor determining the effectiveness of management in educational institutions is transparency, and that the level of employees' participation in decision-making processes, the level of information sharing about decisions and expenditures, and the level of access to information about the institution determine the level of transparency. On the other hand, Karaevli and Levent (2014, p.94)⁵⁵ reached different results by associating transparency with relations with the administration, the image of the administrator, mentoring, teacher grouping, internet services

⁴⁸ Karaköse, 2008: 121-123

⁴⁹ Karaköse, 2008: 118-120

⁵⁰ Nacar and Demirtaş, 2017: 448-448

⁵¹ Karaköse, 2008:120

⁵² Yıldız, 2016: 77-80, Öztürk, Torun and Özkök, 2011: 146

⁵³ Fitzgerald, Mahony, Crawford and Hnat, 2014: 408

⁵⁴ Karaevli and Levent, 2014: 94

⁵⁵ Karaevli and Levent, 2014: 94

and training. The participants associated the managerial experience factor with the competence of top managers. In the same direction, Gül, Gül and Saatçı (2016, p.294)⁵⁶ concluded that there is a relationship between managerial experience and competence. Accordingly, managers with more managerial experience can be perceived as more competent. On the other hand (Toygar, 2011, p.68)⁵⁷, it was found that there is no significant relationship between managerial experience and problem solving and decision making skills.

In light of the findings of the current study, the following suggestions can be made:

- It can be more solution-oriented by showing sensitivity to local and regional problems.
- It can be fair and impartial in all management processes.
- Transparency can be prioritized in doing business and conducting operations.
- It can form the work team from competent people who have previous management experience.

The limitations of the study include the use of only qualitative research method, the sample's being composed of lecturers working in a single university, and the difficulty in including participants in the study. Studies on bureaucratic reputation are scarce in the national literature. For this reason, it can be thought that the current study will contribute to the literature. In the future, quantitative studies can be carried out on larger samples and different public institutions.

⁵⁶ Gül, Gül and Saatçı, 2016: 294

⁵⁷Toygar, 2011: 68

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