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A comparative study on selection and training procedures of school administrators: the case of Finland, Germany, England and Turkey

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Abstract: In this study, the training and appointment processes of education administrators in Turkey were described together with the European countries Finland, Germany and England, and the differences and similarities between the practices were tried to be expressed. In the research, document analysis method was used; research articles related to the subject and the laws and regulations of the relevant country were examined and compared in the conclusion section. As a result, it is seen that the education administrators in the countries that are the subject of the research are generally chosen among those who have teaching qualifications. In other countries, except Turkey, the councils, municipalities, and teachers established at the school have a say in the training and appointment of school administrators, and it is done locally by each school, not as a recruitment center. In Finland, England and Germany, school principals are trained before they come to work, while in Turkey, school principals are trained through in-service training and mostly individual efforts after they take office. This study reveals the similar and different aspects of the practices in different countries in terms of comparatively examining the selection and training procedures of school administrators in Turkey. In this context, it is aimed that the results of the study will help to improve the selection and training processes of educational administrators.

Keywords: Selection of school administrators, education management, training of education administrators, quality management.

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Okul yöneticilerinin seçim ve yetiştirilme prosedürlerine ilişkin karşılaştırmalı bir inceleme: Finlandiya, Almanya, İngiltere ve Türkiye örneği

Özet: Bu çalışmada Türkiye'de eğitim yöneticilerinin yetiştirilme ve atanma süreçleri Avrupa ülkelerinden Finlandiya, Almanya ve İngiltere ile birlikte betimlenerek uygulamalar arasındaki farklılıkların ve benzerliklerin neler olduğu ifade edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Araştırmada doküman analizi metodu kullanılmış olup, konu ile ilgili araştırma makaleleri ve ilgili ülkenin kanun ve yönetmelikleri incelenerek sonuç bölümünde karşılaştırılmıştır. Sonuç olarak, araştırmaya konu olan ülkelerde eğitim yöneticilerinin genel olarak öğretmenlik yeterliliğine sahip kişiler arasından seçildiği görülmektedir. Türkiye hariç diğer ülkelerde okul yöneticilerinin yetiştirilmesi ve atanmasında okulda kurulan konseyler, belediyeler ve öğretmenler söz sahibidir ve işe alım merkezi olarak değil her okul tarafından yerel olarak yapılmaktadır. Finlandiya, İngiltere ve Almanya'da okul müdürleri henüz iş başına gelmeden yetiştirilmekteyken Türkiye'de okul müdürlerinin yetiştirilmesi görev başına geldikten sonra hizmet içi eğitim yoluyla ve çoğunlukla bireysel çabalarla gerçekleşmektedir. Bu çalışma Türkiye'de okul yöneticilerinin seçim ve yetiştirilme prosedürlerini karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemesi bakımından farklı ülkelerdeki uygulamaların benzer ve farklı yönlerini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bağlamda çalışmanın sonuçlarının eğitim yöneticilerinin seçim ve yetiştirilme süreçlerini iyileştirmeye yardımcı olması amaçlanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okul yöneticilerinin seçimi, eğitim yönetimi, eğitim yöneticilerinin yetiştirilmesi, kalite yönetimi.

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Giriş

When the role of the educational manager is mentioned today, not only it refers to the person at the head of an institution, but also the term is directly related to a leader figure who can shape, change and strengthen the learning culture. In this context, training of education administrators and the appointment processes are among the factors that will improve the education system (Akkary, 2014). What is more, while selecting suitable candidates to manage the school, both the natural education and training activities in the school and the structure that will continue the development of the organization are of great importance. The appointment of someone who can act in accordance with the leadership mission mentioned in an educational organization will facilitate the realization of the goals determined for education nationally as well as for the institution itself (Çınkır, 2019).

When we look at the developed countries in Europe, it is striking that education administrators are a very important factor in achieving the mentioned goals. In a successful school, the education manager is an authority that guides many different units and ensures that their work is in harmony with each other (Desforjes, 2009). Considering the effect of this office on the overall success of the school, the importance of educating and appointing school administrators has increased even more.

At this point, the issue of how to train and appoint school administrators in the most ideal way is one of the questions in the field of educational administration in many countries. In order to answer this question, it is observed that some countries carefully follow the field of educational administration and apply new approaches in education administrator training programs, establish leadership institutes and create systematic programs for these leaders (Turhan & Karabatak, 2015). In this regard, the standards for educating educational administrators are determined, and the framework on which the evaluation will be made is drawn. According to these studies (Chapman, 2005):

- Finding candidates with the desired qualifications for education management is a difficult task.
- Today, the programs organized for education administrators are insufficient in terms of content.
- In-service training activities are not continuous and cannot be carried out in parallel with each other.
- Spiritual pleasure in the profession is gradually decreasing.
- Idealistic people who love their profession unfortunately leave their duties at an early age.

According to another study (Hui, 2006); Although the number of candidates applying for education administration seems high, it is seen that the number of qualified candidates among these candidates is quite low. One of the main reasons for this situation is the environment in which the school is located; In other words, it can be said that the formal and informal relations of the school with its stakeholders, and the cultural norms of the society in which the school is located, affect the training and appointment of education administrators

(Desforages, 2009). When the academic studies in this field are examined, some successful applications are also striking. Some of those are:

- Considering the practices they do at school when choosing education administrators,
- People with high management experience as mentors,
- The educational leadership field has a developing and changing content,
- Utilizing different methods and techniques in the training of school administrators,
- Efforts can be made to disseminate these studies.

When we look at the studies on the training and appointment of education administrators in Turkey, it is seen that most of these studies are related to how the practices in the current education system can be developed and regulated (Balyer & Gündüz, 2011; Uğur, 2012; Yavuz & Çakır, 2022; Balcı, 2022; Şahin, 2022). In this study, the processes of training and appointment of education administrators in Turkey are described together with Finland, Germany and England from European countries, and the differences and similarities between the practices are tried to be expressed.

Methodology

In this study, document analysis; one of the qualitative research methods, was used. In document analysis, which is seen as one of the most important data sources for researchers, documents suitable for the purpose of the research are found and the accuracy of these documents is checked, and the information obtained from the documents is subjected to content analysis (Sak, Şahin Sak, Öneren Şendil, & Nas, 2021). As mentioned in similar ways in the literature, in the document analysis, inferences are made in accordance with the purpose of the research by examining the data obtained from different documents. The documents obtained for this research consist of policies, legislation, laws and other regulations that are publicly announced. A list of these documents can be found in Table 1 below.

The selection of countries in this study stems from the fact that these countries have been listed in higher rankings than Turkey in the education index of OECD countries, which suggests that their practices should be looked closer and compared to that of Turkey in order to modal the best practices available (OECD, 2023).

Table 1. Documents used in this research

	Related country	Date	Type	Nr.	Title
1	England	02.11.2009	Regulation	2680	School Staff (England) Regulations
2	Finland	15.11.2011	Guide/ Regulation	2011:29:00	Professional Leadership Degree – Exam Guide. Regulations and guidelines
3	Germany	18.06.2012	Regulation	21-02 #4	General Service (FNBE) Regulation for Teachers and Principals in Public Schools
4	Finland	19.12.2013	Report	2013:16:00	Redefining the School Leaders Profession and Leadership Education. Working Group Report on Renewal of Qualification Requirements (FNBE)
5	Turkey	18.06.2014	Regulation	29034	Regulation on Norm Staff of Educational Institutions Managers and Teachers Affiliated to the Ministry of National Education
6	Germany	31.07.2019	Regulation	647.12	Regulations for School Administration and School Secretariats
7	England	13.10.2020	Guide		Standards of Headteachers (headmasters)
8	Turkey	05.02.2021	Regulation	31386	Regulation on Selecting and Assigning Managers to Educational Institutions Affiliated to the Ministry of National Education
9	Turkey	11.03.2022	Regulation	31775	Ministry of National Education Personnel In-Service Training Regulation
10	England	01.12.2022	Instruction		National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)

Training and appointment of education administrators in Turkey

When the training processes of educational administrators are examined, three basic approaches stand out in Turkey. The first of these is the model based on the master-apprentice relationship. In this model, being a teacher is seen as sufficient to be an education administrator. Looking at the current law, it is seen that no other professional qualification is required to be an education administrator, which supports this model. The second model is the educational sciences model, which has been implemented since the early 1970s and is widely accepted by academic circles (Helvacı, 2007). In this direction, education management, inspection and planning departments at undergraduate level were established in education faculties of universities. Unfortunately, the graduates of these departments were appointed as teachers who were not employed as education administrators. The starting point of this model is that educational administration is a field of science and requires special education (Helvacı, 2007). The third model has actually been put into practice by the Ministry of National Education since the late nineties in terms of being complementary to the first model. In addition to the ones mentioned in the first model, some additional qualifications have started to be required in education administration. For example, it was stated that among those who want to be an education administrator, those who have completed their master's degree or who have done an academic study will be more preferable than others. However, due to the fact that the educational sciences model could not be used in accordance

with its purpose as time passed, and the studies on this subject were not taken into account, unfortunately, education administration in Turkey could not be connected to a system (Helvacı, 2007).

When the last legislation is examined, the qualifications required from those who want to work as education administrators in schools are regulated by the Regulation on the Appointment and Relocation of Educational Institutions Managers of the Ministry of National Education dated 13.08.2009. According to this; The conditions to be sought in persons to be appointed as school principals consist of the following:

- To have higher education.
- Not being a candidate for civil service.
- Having worked as a teacher for at least 3 years.
- Not to have a situation that prevents him from working as an education manager in the institution he wishes to be appointed (Süngü, 2012).
- Not having lost a managerial position due to judicial or administrative investigation in the last 3 years.
- Completion of compulsory labor obligation.
- To be successful in the selection exam by getting at least 70 points out of 100(Dağ, 2015).

In the selection exam mentioned here, candidates who want to be education administrators are given a test including subjects such as school management, human relations, school development, ethics, Turkish administration system, protocol rules, Turkish official correspondence rules. Candidates who perform successfully in this exam can apply to the positions announced by the governorship and their applications are evaluated by the relevant Directorate of National Education (Recepoglu & Kılınç, 2014). Assignments to educational institutions within the scope of this regulation are carried out by the governorship.

In addition to the aforementioned selection exam, in the appointment of education administrators, it is stated that the professional experience of the administrator, the grades he received until the day he applied, and whether he received any disciplinary punishments are also taken into consideration. On the other hand, there is no compulsory course and in-service training program that school administrators must attend during the application and appointment processes. Joint projects are carried out with higher education institutions so that education administrators can continue their graduate programs to improve themselves (Uygun, 2021).

Training and appointment of educational administrators in Germany

While administrators are trained and appointed, Germany's unique training and assignment system operates. As it is known, Germany consists of 16 federal states. In each of these states, there is a school system that is shaped within the framework of their own laws. Therefore, the training and appointment of educational administrators is subject to the laws of the state. There are

similarities and differences in practice between states (Bozkurt, 2005). For example; the title of education administrators appointed as school principals in each state is civil servant. The appointments of these civil servants are subject to the regulations in Article 33 of the German Constitution. According to this article; German citizens can apply for civil service positions in accordance with their qualifications in any state and have the same political rights and responsibilities in each state (Recepoğlu & Kılınc, 2014).

The duties and responsibilities expected from the educational administrators selected among the applicants also differ from state to state. In each state, education administrators are seen as an important part of school culture and are defined as a member of education staff (Akkary, 2014). In other words, it is out of question for the school principal to personally withdraw from educational activities. He is also a teacher and is responsible for attending classes to the extent his job permits. Their high teaching qualifications are already one of the biggest reasons why they are chosen as education administrators.

The appointment of educational administrators to school principals is within the authority and responsibility of the Ministry of Education in the state. The procedure followed here may differ from state to state, but in most of the states in Germany the issue of how education managers are to be appointed is defined without going into too much detail (Hui, 2006). The ministries of education appointed by the states have a say not only in the training and appointment of education administrators, but also in how education administrators will be selected and how this selection should be made.

In some states, courses and seminars are organized by higher education institutions for officials who want to become educational administrators. It already creates a pool of appointments, which are periodically updated and consist of people who are deemed suitable for education administration in each state. When there is a vacant quota for education administration in schools, an announcement is made by the municipality to which the city is affiliated. Here, the three main features taken into consideration in the selection of candidates are that the candidates have merit for the position they apply for, they are considered sufficient for the position they apply for in terms of experience and education, and their performance is high. With minor differences, this system is implemented throughout Germany (Aktepe, 2014).

Those who want to become education administrators apply to the relevant schools. In some smaller states, these applications can also be made directly to the ministry of education. At the end of the selection process, the director of education is appointed by the state's ministry of education. In some places, parent-teacher association of the school may also give an opinion on the decision to be made about the education administrators to be selected as the school principal (Basel Landschaft, 2023).

Considering the qualifications of the candidates applying as education administrators; First of all, they should be at the required education level for the school they are applying for. Educational experience is also required from the candidates. There are different approaches in the selection process. For example, some states require a candidate to teach a lesson, evaluate a lesson taught by another teacher, and moderate a meeting. In these activities, not only the professional knowledge of the candidate, but also his legal knowledge and

personal attitudes and approaches are measured.

After the candidate is successful in this procedure, his/her record grades and the opinions of previous school principals he/she worked with are also taken into consideration. In some states, for example, in Bavaria, it is necessary to have completed a 2-year course to be able to apply for education manager. Some other states have centers that professionally evaluate candidates who want to become education administrators.

Training programs for education administrators are organized by teacher training institutions. The curriculum applied in these programs, the training methods and techniques, the duration of the program and the obligations of those who want to be education managers may differ according to the states. These training programs consist of 4 modules. In the 1st module, how to perform the school administration as a profession and how the teachers will transition to the education administratorship, in the 2nd module, the training for the development of quality evaluation in the school, in the 3rd module how to manage and how the personnel will be developed, and in the 4th module, the regulation of the school's relations with the environment and development training is provided. Each module includes 4-5 days of intensive studies.

Training and appointment of education administrators in England

When you look at the training and appointment of school administrators in England, there is a program that those who want to be employed as education administrators in schools must first attend to improve their professional skills. This program applies to all prospective education managers throughout the UK, without exception. The program is called NPQH, which stands for National Professional Qualification for School Management. This program is a very comprehensive development program in terms of content and duration (Pelit, 2013).

The NPQH was first initiated in 1997 to prepare prospective education administrators for principal positions in schools. In order to implement this program, the National College of School Leadership (NCSL) was established (Dağ, 2015). After the establishment of this college, the NPQH program has been made compulsory for executive candidates. It is important to successfully complete the program rather than start it. According to 2016 data, only 67% of the training administrator candidates enrolled in the program were able to successfully complete the program. On the other hand, completing the program is not a guarantee of being hired as an education administrator in a school. Even though they have successfully completed the program, there are candidates who have not been appointed to the position of principal by the schools they have applied to (Hui, 2006).

It can be said that the curriculum of the program in general is focused on practice and participation. In this context, it has been observed that education administrator candidates work with content such as developing and evaluating academic materials, making school visits, planning and implementing face-to-face and distance education opportunities. The UK Department of Education sees the program as essential to being an efficient manager (Balyer & Gündüz, 2011). Each of the participating candidates is responsible for examining their

own learning processes, learning the powers and responsibilities that education administrators bring in addition to their teaching duties, and adapting their leadership styles accordingly, if necessary. When examined in terms of content, the 5 main topics covered in the program are as follows (Ertürk Kayman, 2017):

- Management of staff in the school
- Efficient use of staff and resources in the school
- School accountability
- Education and training activities in the school and the strategic direction and development of the school

These 5 topics were revised and arranged again in 2005. Accordingly, the topics are:

- Management and organization
- Accountability
- Relations with society
- Self-actualization and working in a group
- Guiding educational activities
- Shaping the future

The NPQH program can be compared to an in-service training given before candidates are appointed as training managers. In this training, it is aimed to equip the candidates with the knowledge and experience expected from them when they become training managers. The program is prepared with this sensitivity and with the contribution of many education experts. It can be said that the program has been constantly evolving and changing since 1997, when it was first prepared. In the first ten years, 47 thousand candidates applied to the program, and 30 thousand of them were entitled to study. 67 percent of the candidates accepted to the program were able to complete it successfully, and only 43% of the candidates who successfully completed it were appointed as school principals. With a recent change in the program, a total of 2500 candidates are accepted to the program throughout the year and it is aimed that 85 percent of the candidates who complete the program will be appointed as education administrators in schools (Süngü, 2012). According to a new regulation made as of 2009, NPQH has been made compulsory for those who want to be appointed to the position of education administrator in schools for the first time (Süngü, 2012). Since this date, those who want to be appointed to positions such as school principal, whether they want to work in the state or in private education institutions, have to successfully complete this program.

In order to be able to apply to the NPQH program, it is obligatory to obtain application approval from the principal of the school where he / she works. During the application process, candidates' academic backgrounds are also taken into account, their current skills and expertise in the profession are considered, and a modular program designed according to the needs of these people is offered. Since each candidate's abilities and needs are different, the

duration of the candidates' stay in the program may also vary. Candidates continue the program for periods ranging from 4 to 12 months, depending on their needs. The contents of the modules in the program are as follows (The National Archives, 2023):

- In the 1st module, all candidates must complete 180 hours of training, of which 60 hours are applied studies. The aim is to give fundamental training on school leadership, laws and regulations.
- In the second module, candidates participate in studies related to education and training activities. This module aims to develop teaching methods and techniques.
- In module 3, candidates learn about human resources and how to manage these resources efficiently.
- In the 4th module, it is tried to gain skills in the financial management of the school and the development of the human resources in the school.

The second, third and fourth modules consist of 90 hours of course time (Süngü, 2012). Candidates applying to the program from private education institutions are charged 3800 British pounds, approximately 85,000 Turkish liras. These fees are usually covered by the school to which the candidate is applying.

Training and appointment of education administrators in Finland

In order to become an education administrator in Finland, it is necessary to be an experienced and qualified teacher and to pass the school administrator exam successfully (Dağ, 2015). In addition to these qualifications, it is necessary to successfully graduate from a course organized by the Ministry of Education in recent years or to receive the school management education diploma given to education manager candidates by Jyvaskyla University (Dağ, 2015).

Education administrators in Finland usually receive these diplomas and certificates after being appointed as education administrators. In order to be an education administrator candidate, similar to the one in Turkey, it is required to be an assistant principal for a certain period of time. In Finland, the titles of school administrators due to their duties may differ according to the number of students of the school or the type of school. 32% of education administrators in Finland are female. (OECD, 2023)

All education administrators are able to apply for school management positions that are opened without professional experience obligation (Ertürk Kayman, 2017). Candidates who are entitled to be appointed as a training manager are expected to complete a 5-credit training program before starting to work. In addition to this training, it is obligatory to attend various study groups, seminars, courses or courses opened at universities for at least 15 days each year. Courses are organized for every candidate who wants to be an education manager.

There are also additional courses that people appointed as education administrators in a school are obliged to attend each year. The recruitment process of schools takes place as follows (Uygur, 2021):

- First of all, if a school needs a principal, the school officials place advertisements in the newspapers.
- Candidates who are qualified to be education administrators send their CVs to the relevant schools.
- The school commission established at each school invites the candidates for an interview. Candidates may also be asked to undergo a psychological test before coming to the interview.
- The recruitment process is decided by a commission consisting of teachers, municipality and parents. In some private schools, this decision can be taken by the founding committee.

Persons employed as education administrators in schools do not have a term of service. These persons can continue their duties until retirement or death. The scope of the authority and responsibilities of the education administrators at the school is directly proportional to the size of the school and its environment. In general, education administrators are responsible for the efficient running of schools. How schools should be run in Finland is regulated by local education laws (Uygur, 2021). It is expected from the education manager within the school to plan, develop, supervise and evaluate the education and training activities and to carry out the financial affairs appropriately. Jobs such as recruiting new teachers to the school are out of the responsibility of the education administrator. These jobs are handled by the recruitment committee established at the school (Lahtero, Ahtiainen, & Lång, 2019).

In Finland, each school has its own budget (Uğur, 2012). As the education administrator, the school principal is responsible for ensuring that this budget is spent appropriately. At the beginning of each year, education administrators and teachers plan and implement the school-based curriculum, taking into account the needs of the school and the environment. In this case, it can be said that the educational administrators are the educational leaders of the school.

Conclusion and recommendations

As a result, it is seen that the education administrators in the countries that are the subject of the research are generally chosen among those who have teaching qualifications. Being a teacher is still considered sufficient to be a school administrator in Turkey. In other words, what changes over time is the continuation of the training and appointment processes of education administrators with minor changes.

Currently, education administration is seen as a task that every teacher can do, and it is predicted that those who are good at teaching will automatically be good at administration. However, education administration is a field that requires expertise as much as teaching. It is not a realistic approach to hope that people who have not undergone special education in this field will be successful in education administration, even if they are teachers.

In countries in the scope of this study; except Turkey, the councils, municipalities and teachers at the school have a say in the training and appointment of school administrators, and it is done locally by each school, not as a recruitment center. In all countries studied, the selection of school heads is evaluated on the basis

of specific examinations, professional background and abilities. In order to be a school administrator in all of the countries examined, there should be no obstacle to working as a teacher at the school. In addition to this, Turkey and Finland also require experience of assistant manager.

In Finland, England and Germany, school principals are trained before they come to work, while in Turkey, school principals are trained through in-service training and mostly individual efforts after they take office (Süngü, 2012). Managers in Turkey do not receive a pre-service management training, and even the in-service training planned for them after they start working cannot be systematically received for various reasons. When the example of England is examined, it is seen that school administrators are informed about subjects such as supervision, evaluation, leadership, interaction, and budget management at the school before they start to work. This information can not be expected to come spontaneously over time with experience in the profession. Instead, it is clear that all candidates who want to be a training manager should undergo an intensive training in this context. This will both ensure that they are ready for the task before they start the task and will prevent the time and resources spent on the winner after starting the task.

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