

## Cultural Administration in Compulsory Lessons Teaching Programs in the Context of School Administration

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to evaluate the special purposes of the compulsory lessons in the curriculum in the context of cultural administration in education, according to the views of secondary school administrators. The study was designed in a phenomenological design, one of the qualitative research methods. 20 secondary school administrators working in Manisa Salihli in 2021-2022 participated in the study. While choosing the sample group, criterion sampling and easily accessible sampling method were chosen from purposive sampling methods. A semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers was used to collect the data. The data were analyzed by descriptive analysis and content analysis method. According to the findings, it was seen that although school administrators have knowledge about curricula, they expressed similar views on what should be included in the curricula in the context of cultural administration. According to the results of the research, it can be said that school administrators do not have an active role in terms of whether the cultural administration of the compulsory lesson programs of their institutions is carried out effectively or not, due to the busyness of daily tasks, official works and transactions occupy most of their time at school. There is a need for studies to improve the curriculum literacy of school principals. It is thought that this study will set an example for researchers in terms of combining educational administration with educational programs and teaching disciplines.

**Keywords:** *Educational administration, Curriculum and instruction, Verbal and numerical lessons, Cultural transfer, Program literacy.*

### Introduction

Societies shape their communities through education and shape their future. States bring the individuals under their influence to the point they aim at and want to reach through educational institutions, and they want to reach the level of modern civilizations of the 21st century modern societies with the help of the adopted educational philosophy and educational goals. Although there are many definitions of education as a concept, the most familiar definition is; Ertürk's (1972) definition is 'the process of bringing about a desired change in an individual's behavior through self-experience and consciously'. According to Ültanır (2003), while answering the question of what education is, it should be included in the culture and these two concepts are closely related to each other.

Education, which is the basis of society, is carried out through schools, which are an institutionalized structure. It is the education programs that guide these educational institutions on how the education and training processes will progress. One of those who directly or indirectly affect the educational processes and the efficiency of the educational processes are the school administrators who are primarily responsible for the administration of those institutions. Although school administrators have an important place in the transfer of culture in the curriculum, it is also an important factor for them to be curriculum leaders in order to demonstrate their roles. Gümüşeli (1996) listed the factors that negatively affect school administrators' curriculum leadership: (i) Official and legal, legislation, implementation limitations: In this context, many powers of administrators are restricted by central managers and it is not possible for them to take part in curriculum practices effectively. (ii) Time limitation: There is a lot of paperwork in the school and there is no time to spare for the curriculum implementation process and educational situations. (iii) Lack of leadership training of school administrators: Since school administrators worked in the field where they were trained as teachers before and did not take part in any in-service training in the field of instructional leadership when they switched to administration, their knowledge and practices in the field of instructional leadership remain limited. (iv) Factors such as making future-oriented decisions, setting goals and lack of self-confidence negatively affect school administrators' educational program administration.

When we look at the literature, it is seen that the curricula are handled separately on the basis of branches. In terms of curriculum and culture, it is seen that cultural elements are examined in the curriculum according to the majority branches (Demir ,2010; Keskin, 2015).In studies on the curriculum, comparisons between the past and the most recently published and in effect curriculum in various branches are frequently encountered in the literature (Altunkeser & Coşkun, 2018; Baş, 2017; Çoban & Akşit, 2018; Kalayci & Yildirim, 2020; Karatay et al., 2013).Studies examining curricula in the context of cultural administration remain at a more limited level.

According to Ministry of National Education (MEB) (2012), although there are no elective lessons at primary school level, it is stated that elective lessons will take place in secondary and high school level schools in line with the wishes and interests of students and parents.It is stated that elective lessons are important for the development of individuals' own preferences and decision-making abilities, they will enable the development of imagination,

they contain a democratic approach, and they will contribute to the development of common culture (Şişman & Dönmez, 2010).

MEB (2012) 'Turkish, Mathematics, Life Sciences, Science, Social Studies, T.C. History of Revolution and Kemalism, Foreign Language, Religion and Ethics, Visual Arts, Music, Games and Physical Activities, Physical Education and Sports, Technology and Design, Traffic Safety, Guidance and Career Planning, Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy' He stated that there were lessons. In addition, it has been announced that two new lessons, 'Games and Physical Activities' and 'Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy' were added to the curriculum as compulsory lessons in the 2012-2013 academic year. Compulsory lessons; In order to complete the education and training process, it is seen as the lessons with the main content that students need to have (Akay et al., 2016).

In addition, verbal lessons are listed as "Turkish, Social Studies, Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge, Guidance, English", while "Mathematics, Science and Technology, Information Technologies" lessons are listed as numerical lessons. Physical Education, Music, Visual Arts, Technology Design lessons are defined as talent lessons. In the study of Daşdemir & Tekin (2018), in which the Turkish cultural elements in the social studies lesson, which is taught as a compulsory lesson in secondary schools, are examined, it is seen that the material culture elements of Turkish culture are mostly included in the textbooks in the transfer of Turkish culture in secondary schools, but the spiritual culture elements are not included enough, therefore, this is the case in Turkish. It is stated that there is an important deficiency in the transfer of cultural elements. It has been determined that many textbooks need to be filled in terms of Turkish cultural elements in order to carry out the cultural administration at the secondary school level in a qualified way.

One of the most emphasized problems in the transfer of culture in digital lessons is ignoring the fact that numerical information is universal information, that it carries cultural elements, and that these are used within the needs of every society and their lives. The fact that cultural elements are included in numerical lessons such as mathematics lessons increases the effectiveness of the education process (Ari et al., 2019).

### **Purpose and Importance of the Research**

The aim of this study is to reveal the responsibilities of secondary school administrators related to cultural administration in the compulsory lessons curriculum, the problems they encounter

and the solution proposals in providing school administration. With the findings to be obtained, it is hoped that determinations will be made regarding the changing educational and administrative needs of school administrations, and that original contributions will be made to the field of educational administration in the conceptual sense, as well as to education programs and teaching. In line with the main purpose of the research, 'What are the responsibilities of secondary school administrators regarding cultural administration in the compulsory lessons curricula in providing school administration?' Based on the basic research question, answers were sought for 2 sub-questions.

1. What are the difficulties that secondary school administrators face in cultural administration in compulsory lessons curriculum in providing school administration?

- What are the difficulties encountered in cultural administration in the verbal compulsory lessons curriculum?

- What are the difficulties encountered in cultural administration in numerical compulsory lessons curricula?

2. What are the suggestions for solutions to the difficulties faced by secondary school administrators in culture administration in compulsory lessons curriculum?

- What are your suggestions for solutions to the difficulties encountered in cultural administration in the verbal compulsory lessons curriculum?

- What are your suggestions for solutions to the difficulties encountered in cultural administration in numerical compulsory lessons curriculum?

## **Method**

### ***Research Design***

The research was designed in a phenomenological pattern in the qualitative research method. Phenomonology is suitable for studying people's life experiences (Merriam, 2018, p. 26). In this study, the phenomenological design was preferred since it was planned that the data would be collected based on the school administration experiences of secondary school administrators.

### ***Research Sample***

The study group of the research consists of 20 secondary school administrators working in private and public secondary schools in Salihli district of Manisa province. Easily accessible case sampling and snowball sampling were used in the study. The purpose of snowball sampling is to sample or select case studies in a network (Neuman, 2010, p.325). On the other hand,

easily accessible case sampling was beneficial in terms of being economical and allowing the research process to progress rapidly (Yıldırım, & Şimşek, 2008, p. 113). Availability, cost and voluntary participation were considered in the selection of the sample.

### ***Research Instrument***

In this study, interviews are the data sources of the research. A semi-structured interview form prepared by the researchers was used to collect the interview data. The form consists of two parts. The first part is about personal information. In the second part, there are six main and four probe questions open-ended on the subject. 3 main questions are about the ethics of the research, the situations to be added to the research and the method of the research. In order to create the form, first of all, the relevant literature was scanned. Opinions of two academicians and a school administrator about the created form were taken. Two school administrators were interviewed using the draft form. The transcripts obtained from this interview were evaluated with two academicians and the interview form was given its final form. A Turkish teacher assisted in organizing the final form in terms of language and expression. The data were collected by the researchers themselves through face-to-face interviews. Participating school administrators were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary.

### ***Data Analysis***

Content analysis and descriptive analysis were used in the analysis of the data. The main purpose of content analysis is to reach concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008a, p.227). The answers given by the school administrators to the questions were coded and these codes were divided into sub-themes and themes according to their similarity and homogeneity. The reliability of the data obtained through content analysis was checked by the researchers with the formula  $\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{consensus}}{\text{consensus} + \text{disagreement}} \times 100$  (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and theme-theme coding reliability. Accordingly, the percentage of agreement of the coding made by the researchers is expected to be at least 70% (Şencan, 2005). The reliability of the study was found to be .91.

## Results

**Table 1**

*Categories and Codings of Theme 1*

<b>THEME</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>CODE</b>
<b>THEME 1: Responsibilities Taken</b>	Supervisory and observation	Provide curriculum supervision
		Ensuring the implementation of educational programs
		To preside over the English teachers' branch committee
		Following teacher seminars
	Internalization of cultural elements	Giving importance to values education activities
		Establishing a 'civilization and values' club for students
		Taking part in project and exhibition organizations
		Introducing cultural elements
	Being a guide and role model	Being a role model
		Pioneering work that adapts to the era
		To enable teachers to follow technological developments and to encourage them to use
		To motivate
		Guiding teachers
Having program and professional knowledge	Having knowledge of the curriculum	
	Having knowledge of teaching profession	

When Table 1 is examined, school administrators have listed the responsibilities they take on cultural management in their curriculum in the category of being a guide and role model. The least code is in the category of having program and profession knowledge. School principal I, mentioned the importance he attaches to the teaching of the lesson in accordance with the curriculum as follows: 'As the school administration, it is under the supervision of the teachers

during the year and its compliance with the program is checked. Teachers are observed in the school and the results are followed.

**Table 2**

*Categories and Codings of Theme 2*

<b>THEME</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>CODE</b>
<b>THEME 2: Challenges Encountered</b>	Difficulties faced by verbal compulsory lessons	The program is not application-based.
		Insufficient acquisition of cultural transfer in curricula
		Insufficient coverage of cultural elements in curricula
		Teacher reluctance
		There is no difficulty
		Problems arising from the presence of students from different regional cultures at the school
		Students' insensitivity
		Cultural corruption
		No idea
		Curriculum density - time constraints
		Incompatibility of the program with textbooks and teaching materials
		Lack of cultural relativism perspective in the program content
		Difficulties faced by numerical compulsory lessons
	Insufficient use of digital resources	
	Lack of acquisition for cultural transfer	
	Insufficient coverage of cultural elements in curricula	
	Students' perspective on numerical lessons	
	Curriculum density - time constraints	
	Non-concrete content	

When Table 2 is examined, the difficulties faced by school administrators in terms of cultural management in curricula are higher in verbal compulsory lessons than in numerical compulsory lessons. The fact that the program is not based on practice, the inadequacy of cultural transfer in the curriculum and the lack of adequate coverage of cultural elements in the curriculum have been the most repeated difficulties for cultural administration in verbal lessons by school administrators. While the principal Ü, did not express their opinion, the principal O, emphasized that he did not encounter any difficulties.

The category of difficulties encountered in terms of numerical compulsory lessons consists of 7 codes. School administrators mostly stated that they had difficulties in terms of lack of acquisition for cultural transfer, Curriculum density-time limitation, And not including cultural elements in the curriculum enough. While the principals L, R, and Ö did not express an opinion, the principal O, emphasized that there was no difficulty.

**Table 3**

*Categories and Codings of Theme 3*

<b>THEME</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>CODE</b>
<b>THEME 3: Suggestions for solutions for the difficulties encountered</b>	Suggestions solutions to the challenges faced by verbal mandatory lessons	The teacher should be a role model
		Transfer of cultural elements with interdisciplinary approaches
		Involving applied activities in transferring cultural elements
		Enriching lesson content and achievements with cultural elements
		Values education club being active
		Teacher willingness
		Providing cultural administration training to teachers
		Increasing group work



	More systematic and programmatic supervisory of applications
	Administrator – teacher – parent – student cooperation
	Considering the cultural structures of the students
Suggestions for solutions to the difficulties faced in numeric mandatory lessons	Examples of daily life should be reproduced in the lesson content.
	Involving applied activities in transferring cultural elements
	Increasing group work
	Increasing teacher training
	Expressing the usage purposes of numerical lessons in practice
	Teacher and program follow-up
	Developing the curriculum literacy of the administrator
	Conducting activities to reduce exam stress in students
	Reviewing and updating the curriculum

When Table 3 is examined, the solution offers for the difficulties faced by school administrators in terms of cultural management in their curriculum are higher in verbal compulsory lessons than in numerical compulsory lessons. The solution suggestions of the school administrators for the verbal compulsory lessons were mostly repeated under the title of including practical activities in the transfer of cultural elements. The administrator Ü, did not express an opinion on the subject.

The category of suggestions for solutions to the difficulties encountered in numerical compulsory lessons consists of 9 codes. While five of the administrators did not make suggestions, the most emphasized topics by the administrators were the topics of reviewing and

updating the curriculum and giving place to applied activities in the transfer of cultural elements, respectively. School Principal I, said that the lessons should be taught through gamification, 'Making cultural elements fun in the teaching of numerical lessons encourages two-sided learning.' Improving the literacy of the administrator's syllabus is another recommendation topic emphasized by the participants for compulsory numerical lessons. In this regard, the administrators emphasized the importance of the administrator's mastery of the subject and content, and the importance of school administrators gaining the competencies that can dominate cultural administration in lessons other than their own branch.

### **Discussion**

Curriculums are tools that contain the cultural elements of the society and enable the transfer of the culture of the society to the new generations. Although school administrators have knowledge of the syllabus, they also have the responsibility of transferring the cultural elements of the syllabus (Karakışla, 2009; Şimşek, 2014). According to Deal & Peterson (1994), culture affects everything from attire in educational institutions to the subject of conversation, from educational status to the importance given to the student and the willingness to change.

According to the data obtained from school administrators, it can be seen that school administrators are aware of the responsibilities they take in the context of cultural administration in their syllabus. There are both domestic and international studies that are in line with the research and where the responsibilities and duties of school administrators are expressed similarly (Cheng, 2005; Marks & Printy, 2003; Marzano et al., 2001; Şişman, 2002; Tahaoğlu & Gedikoğlu, 2009) . However, in many studies in the field, it is also possible to come across studies that have findings that the competence of school administrators is not at the desired level. In the study conducted by Atay (2001), teachers and students from the participants stated that they found primary school administrators inadequate in cultural transfer and cultural leadership. According to the findings of Can (2013), school administrators were found to be less sufficient in terms of curriculum knowledge, the scope of the syllabus, motivating teachers, guiding, fulfilling supervisory duties, and conveying their experiences to teachers. Thanomwan & Buncha (2014) examined the relationship between school culture and school administration competence; It has been determined that there is a positive relationship between schools with a common culture and school administration competencies. The

responsibilities of school administrators stated in the researches are in line with the responsibilities stated by the participants.

Within the scope of the research, 'student insensitivity, students' view of numerical lessons, teacher reluctance, curriculum density and time limitation, reducing exam stress in students' are among the important problems expressed by school administrators in the cultural administration of verbal and numerical lessons. According to the study of Leithwood et al. (2002), which is in line with the research, the high scores obtained from the tests from the school administration, teachers and students constantly, attaching importance to the education and training process academically, not being able to use the syllabus in line with the desired purposes, and education in school administrators, teachers and students. It is stated that it causes reluctance and intimidation to take part in the teaching process. Although student reluctance is expressed as a difficulty in cultural administration in the research findings, it is stated that there is organizational commitment, student reluctance and insensitivity are less, and academic success is higher in schools with school culture (İnce, 2017). There are studies in the field that mention that the school culture, which has reached different findings, has little effect on student success (Demirtaş, 2010).

Today, it is seen that many types of literacy are mentioned in the academic literature. One of the most important types of literacy is program literacy. It is seen that the research participants stated that 'the program literacy of the administrators should be improved'. The necessity of improving the program literacy of administrators is emphasized in many studies (Aslan, 2019; Matsumura et al., 2009). However, there are studies that have determined that school administrators do not have sufficient level of educational program literacy (Yıldırım & Dursun, 2018).

School administrators point out that practical activities should be included in the transfer of cultural elements to the problems encountered in the context of cultural administration in the numerical and verbal lessons syllabus. Çarkıt (2020)'s research emphasizes the importance of applied activities in the transfer of culture, but it is stated that the textbooks do not have sufficient applications in the transfer of culture, and a finding that overlaps with our research is revealed. Therefore, it is clear that the realization of activity-centered studies in both syllabus and teaching materials in order to internalize cultural elements will improve cultural administration problems.

One of the factors that enable the administration of culture in curricula is the cultural content in the curricula and expected to be included. However, there are data showing that cultural elements are not at a sufficient level both in the scope of the research and in the syllabus of many lessons in the field (Alan, 2020; Daşdemir & Tekin, 2018; Esemem & Sadioğlu, 2019; Güfta & Kan, 2014; Okur, 2013).

School administrators expressed the suggestions of 'teachers' willingness to be a role model, to give cultural administration training to teachers, to cooperation between administrators, teachers, parents, and students' as solution suggestions to the problems encountered in cultural administration in the verbal lessons curriculum. In the study conducted by Grosemans et al., (2015), which is in line with what school administrators say, it is stated that teachers provide better development in cooperation with school administrators and their environment, learning processes are positively affected, and this situation positively affects school culture. In many countries in Europe, it is stated that with shared leadership and administration in schools, the willingness of teachers and students increases and thus successful results are obtained (Mulford, 2003). It has been revealed by various studies that the insufficient level of communication between school administrators and teachers increases teacher absenteeism, negatively affects their motivation, student success and organizational culture (Nefayaz, 2019).

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings obtained within the scope of the research; School administrators are aware of their responsibilities regarding the syllabus. In the verbal and numerical compulsory lessons, it was emphasized that the deficiencies in the curriculum, such as the lack of timeliness of the content that the participants frequently repeat, the enrichment of the content, the fact that the contents do not consist of concrete and practical content, and the insufficient cultural elements in the curriculum, were emphasized.

It is thought that more time is needed for the effective realization of cultural administration in educational institutions, that teachers use practice, activity-based, different teaching methods and techniques in the process, and that effective cultural administration can be done with the active participation of learners by being exposed to rich content. In cultural administration in the curriculum of both numerical and verbal compulsory lessons; It is an important fact that it is emphasized that the cultural administration shared by all parties that

affect the education process, rather than the monopoly of the administration by one person, will produce more desirable results. Although school administrators state that it is a responsibility to guide teachers in cultural administration and be a role model, it is also emphasized that there is a need for school administrators to improve their curriculum literacy.

### Recommendations

Since the study was carried out only with school administrators, it may be useful to conduct research on cultural management in compulsory courses for teachers, students and parents, who are the elements of educational processes, to determine the deficiencies of the curriculum. Research on compulsory courses can also be carried out at every branch level, so that field-specific deficiencies, determination of problems can give ideas to those in charge of future program development and program revision. More applied studies in the field can be included in the determination of the degree of school administrators having responsibilities. By ensuring the active participation of school administrators in the process of curriculum updates, school administrators can be given the opportunity to get to know both curriculum literacy and cultural elements in curriculum in more detail.

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