



The Difficulties of Female Primary School Administrators in the Administration Process and Solution Suggestions*

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to determine the administration experiences of female administrators, find out the troubles they have had during their administration process, and suggest some solutions according to these experiences. The qualitative method was used in this research and data was collected via the semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers. 30 school administrators composed the study group for this research. It is seen that female and male administrators' views are similar regarding the difficulties that female administrators face during the administration process. According to the participants, female administrators are sensitive with regard to having some ideal administration qualities such as being systematic, well-planned and ambitious. School administrators mentioned that they support female administrators as their communication skills are strong, they work attentively, and they cause the school to gain aesthetic perceptions. On the other hand they emphasized that the long lasting effect of sexist social values, patriarchal societal structures, and difficult working conditions are the reasons why most women do not prefer being an administrator. For increasing the number of female administrators in schools, school administrators suggested that gender based role perceptions that exclude women should be changed.

Key Words

Administration Process, Difficulties, Female School Administrators, Male School Administrators, Management, Primary School.

In the era of the new millennium, the world has gone into a process of change and improvement. Adapting to the process of change is parallel to the quality and effectiveness of education. The education of women, who compose half of the population and have the

fundamental role of raising future generations, is not only a significant prerequisite for adapting to these changes, but also the reason women get good careers. Education causes women to participate more in production and development. More effort

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should be spent to establish egalitarian attitudes in both educational and social life to educate women and men equally. Otherwise, if the education of women is not given considerable attention, if freedom and rights continue to differ according to sex, countries may have difficulties (Işıksoluğu, 1997 as cited in Can, 2008).

In Turkey, employment is one of the most important fields that the government tries to improve. However, women have less of an advantage than men in employment participation. In the Republic period, as soon as the education of women increased, their participation in the labor force also increased. Until the 1970's, although there had been an increase in both participation of women in the labor force and in the number of women that aimed for administrative and professional careers, researchers (Ayan, 2000; Baştuğ & Çelik, 2011; Brenner & Tomkiewicz, 1982; Çelikten, 2005; Dubno, 1985; Fierman, 1990; Köroğlu, 2006; Mizrahi & Aracı, 2010; Özkaya, 1988; Peters, Terborg, & Taylor, 1974; Sefer, 1999; Terborg, Peters, Ilgen, & Smith, 1977; Tomkiewicz & Adeyimi-Bello, 1995) found that women started to work in the same conditions and with similar feelings as those of men but afterward their career and professional experiences differed for some reasons.

From past to present, in all periods of life and all levels of society, although women and men have been working together, the contributions they have made have not been valued to the same extent, and women have always stayed in second place. Women working in jobs with low status are regarded as natural. However, it has been very difficult for them to start working in high-status jobs or have rising careers. Women who want to work in high administrative positions all too frequently confront the glass ceiling syndrome. As a result, it can be said that with administrative positions that require greater responsibilities, women are found in the limited numbers (Çelikten, 2004; Ergün, 1996; Shum & Cheng, 1997).

Although women working in the different sectors in Turkey have made advances, it is striking to note the many differences between the roles of women and men (Acuner & Sallan, 1993). There is no forensic obstacle in either the appointment or the elevation of women. Women are as well educated as men, but they cannot have the same opportunities as men.

Since time long past, the education of children and teaching have been seen as suitable professions for women (Apple, 1994). On the other hand, in both high schools and colleges the number

of women in higher positions is less than that of men (Blackmore, 1998). From this, it is clearly seen that the administration profession belongs to men (Streitmatter, 1999). Despite the fact that the percentage of female educators working in primary and secondary schools in Turkey is 45%, the rate of the women administrators working in the Ministry of Education has not yet reached 10% (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB], 2005). According to Negiz and Yemen (2011), as the distribution of the sexes is examined in social services, it is seen that 16% of administrators are women while 84% is men. According to the Grant Thornton research reports of 2012, the percentage of female administrators is up to 31%. Research (Ergün, 1996; Mizrahi & Aracı, 2010; Terzioğlu & Taşkın, 2008) has revealed that there have been some troubles preventing women from being active in the educational administration process despite social improvements and changes. These troubles are many and can be described as follows: (a) when a woman becomes an administrator the anxiety of family life being damaged emerges. There is a belief that women will one day give up working because of choosing family life. That's why women cannot take the risk of accepting the responsibilities that a career rise brings (Barutçugil, 2002). (b) As women think that they do not have the opportunity to rise in their career they have a lack of self-confidence. (c) Most women see their fellows as rivals and they do not have any courage to struggle with men. (d) The organizational cultures based on gender expect different roles from men and women (Antal & Izraeli, 1993; Eyüboğlu, 1999; Muller & Rowell, 1987; Özkalp, 1991; Schein, 1994). It is thought that professions such as obstetrician, nurse, and teacher are more suitable for women. Women, in their terms, think that it is suitable for them to work in semi-professionalized jobs such as teaching, nursing, and librarianship (G. Arıkan, 1998). Stereotypes such as women being naturally less skillful than men, women having little success, and women lacking leadership qualities (Deemer & Fredericks, 2006) prevent women from being administrators. Besides these troubles, women working both in institutions and at home, men not helping their wives at home, and the difficulties in finding babysitters (Özkaya, 2005) are a few of the other factors that have created an unwillingness in women to rise to administrative positions.

Not neglecting women in educational administrative positions and evaluating their skills is of vital importance for the development of society. Although there are many studies about

administrators and administration, it is seen that there are not enough studies about the administration experiences of female administrators (Gerni, 2001; Baştuğ & Çelik, 2011; Sağlam & Bostancı, 2012). Altunışık (1999) stated that research has been done about women administrators in Turkey, but he also underlined that there are a limited number of studies about the appointment of women to school administrative positions and the obstacles in becoming administrators. In this respect, how women administrators perceive themselves in the management process and how they are perceived by other administrators working in the same institution are seen as important issues to be investigated. Therefore, it is hoped that this research will make a contribution to literature.

Purpose

The aim of this research is to determine the administrative experiences of female administrators, to find out the troubles they have had in this process, and to suggest some solutions according to these experiences.

In light of this aim, answers to the following questions are sought:

- 1) What are the perceptions of primary school administrators regarding the experiences of female administrators in the management process in their schools?
- 2) What are the perceptions of primary school administrators regarding the troubles that female administrators experience in schools?
- 3) What are the suggestions of primary school administrators about how to increase the number of female administrators?

Method

The aim of the research is to determine the administration experiences of female administrators, to find out the troubles they have had during the administration process, and to suggest some solutions according to these experiences. For this purpose, the qualitative method was used. As this research tries to reveal the administrative experiences of female administrators through their perceptions, via the semi-structured interview form, "phenomenology method", suitable for this type of research, was used.

Study Group

The population group for this research came from primary schools found in the central districts (Konak, Bayraklı, Bornova, Buca) of İzmir where there have been female administrators. The purposive sampling method was used in this research, and 30 administrators, 15 females and 15 males, composed the study group for the research. As the number of female administrators was not the same in the selected regions, the easy, reachable sampling method was used. The demographic qualities of the administrators and assistant managers are given in Table 1.

Table 1.
The demographic Qualities of the Participants

The demographic Qualities of the Participants	Women	Men
Marital Status		
Married	10	14
Single	5	1
Educational Background		
Undergraduate	14	9
Doctorate	1	-
Associate Degree	-	4
Educational Institution	-	2
Age		
30-40	9	5
41-50	5	5
51 and more	1	5
Branch		
Class Teacher	11	7
History Teacher	1	1
Science Teacher	-	1
Physical Education Teacher	-	1
Social Studies Teacher	-	1
Mathematics Teacher	-	1
Music Teacher	1	-
School of Economics	1	-
Religious Culture Teacher	-	1
Counseling and Guidance Teacher	1	-
Faculty of Agriculture	-	1
Philology	-	1
Management Experience		
1-10 years	11	6
11-20 years	4	7
21-30 years	-	2
Professional Experience		
1-10 years	1	1
11-20 years	12	8
21-30 years	2	6

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that 10 female administrators are married, 14 are undergraduates, 1 of them has their PhD., all of them have more than

10 years of work experience, and 11 of them are classroom teachers, whereas 14 male administrators are married, 14 of them are undergraduates, 12 of them have more than 10 years work experience, and 11 of them are classroom teachers.

Data Collection Tool

The semi-structured interview form was used as a data collection tool in this research. The semi-structured interview form was developed by the researchers to obtain comparative results. Within the interview form are some questions regarding the advantages of having female administrators in schools, what factors are significant in the success of female administrators, what are the reasons for the low number of female administrators, what obstacles do women face during their rise in career, and how to increase the number of women administrators. The form was given to field experts to examine how much the form serves the comprehensibility of the research as well as applicability to the aim of the research. The researchers then finalized the interview form, composed of five questions, after the combination of some questions and changing of some expressions according to the experts' suggestions. It was noted that there was no problem with the form after it was pre-applied to two female and two male administrators. In the research, the internal validity (cogency) was tested by expert examination, participant confirmation, and extended, long lasting interactions. Also, in order to increase the cogency of the research, the coherency of the data and findings was investigated. This served to control the harmony between the findings and the conceptual framework of the research. Two researchers worked together to administer the interviews; one of them managed the interview while the other one observed and asked extra questions when further explanations were needed. In this way, harmony between the data and research questions was obtained and loss of important data was minimized. Besides these efforts, quoted comments from the participants were taken to increase the cogency of the research. To increase the external validity (transferability) of the research, the research process and all the levels in this process were defined in detail. In this respect, the research model, study group, data collection tool, data collection process, analysis of data and its interpretation, as well as the method for organizing the results were explained in detail. In order to increase the internal reliability (consistency) of the research, all results were given directly without

any interpretation. Also, one of the researchers and one expert on qualitative research made separate coding for the results. The codes were compared and then the rate of consistency was calculated. For increasing the external reliability (confirmation availability) of the research, some explanations were given regarding the position of the researchers, the participants who are the sources of data for the research, the social climate where the research was done, the conceptual framework that was used for analyzing the data, and the analysis methods. In case any researchers request to make comparisons for other studies in the future, the raw data has been preserved.

Data Collection

The data of the research was gathered via the semi-structured interview form during October 2011 and March 2011 from 15 female and 15 male school administrators and assistant school administrators who worked in different schools. When they wanted, the data was gathered from the participants in their own schools. The questions were asked to the participants using the same words and tones. A voice recorder as well as note taking was used during the interviews. Each interview lasted about 45 minutes and it was observed that the participants had given their answers sincerely.

In the analysis of data, descriptive analysis was utilized via direct quotations in order to strikingly give the perspectives of the participants. The analysis of data was verified in the framework of four activity levels (decrease of data, presentation of data, deduction, and affirmation) (Türnüklü, 2000). In the presentation of data, for direct quotations, limits such as intensity (different ideas), expressiveness (theme conformity), variety, and extreme samples (Ünver, Bümen, & Başbay, 2010) were taken into consideration.

The data gathered from the interview forms was first transferred to Microsoft Office. After that, the data was read several times by the researchers and codes were formed accordingly. Afterward, codes were brought together and the themes that form the main line of the research were found. Lastly, descriptive and content analyses were made.

In the content analysis, in order to determine reliability, the general coherence between encoders was calculated. After the interview transcripts were completed, by considering the interview questions and by determining the choices that cover the answers to these questions, an interview coding

key was prepared. For detecting the reliability of the interview coding key, five interview transcripts were chosen randomly and multiplied. Then, these transcripts were evaluated by the researchers with the interview coding key. Evaluation was done by marking the suitable choice in the interview coding key. In order to determine the coherence of the signs in the interview coding key, all answers to the questions were compared by examining them one by one. After this step, the last version of the interview coding key was given. Each researcher assigned suitable choices that included the answer to each question after reading the interview transcript forms independently. After this process, the answers of the related questions were checked, and signs such as idea union and differences of ideas were found. If the researchers signed the same part of the answer it was accepted as an idea union, if they signed different choices, it was accepted as a difference of ideas. In this research, in order to determine reliability of the content analysis, the agreement percentage formula between researchers was used. The agreement percentage formula is given below:

$$P = Na \times 100 / Na + Nd$$

(P: Percentage of agreement, Na: The rate of agreement, Nd: The rate of disagreement)

In this research, by using the agreement percentage formula, the percentage of agreement for the first question was found to be 87%; for the second question, 86%; the third question, 93%; the fourth question, 95%; fifth question, 85%. In total, all questions were collectively found to have 89% agreement. Since the agreement of the answers to the questions from the interview form is above 70%, the reliability of the coding is considered to be acceptable.

The themes and sub-themes that emerged after the analysis of the data are shown in Table 2:

As seen in Table 2, after the analysis of data three different categories are revealed. The first main category is the perception of male and female school administrators about the experiences of female administrators who work in their school regarding the management process. This category has 2 themes and 8 sub-themes. The first theme of this category is the perception about the advantages of having female administrators in schools, and the sub-themes are communication, working systematically and well-planned, perception of aesthetics, taking responsibility, and working by focusing on success.

Under the heading of the second theme, "The perceptions about the factors that are important

Table 2.
The Categories and Themes

1. The perceptions of the male and female school administrators about the experiences of the female administrators that work in their school during the management process

- 1.1. The perceptions about advantages of having female administrators in schools
 - 1.1.1 Communication
 - 1.1.2. Working systematically and well-planned
 - 1.1.3. Perceptions of aesthetics
 - 1.1.4. Taking responsibility
 - 1.1.5. Working by focusing on success
- 1.2. The perceptions about the factors that are important in the success of female administrators
 - 1.2.1. Personal qualities
 - 1.2.2. Aptness to team work
 - 1.2.3. Family support

2. The perceptions of female and male administrators about the troubles that female administrators have who work in their school

- 2.1. The perceptions about the reasons why there are few female administrators in schools
 - 2.1.1. The number of responsibilities in private life
 - 2.1.2. Patriarchal community structure
 - 2.1.3. A lack of family support
 - 2.1.4. A lack of self-trust
 - 2.1.5. Prejudices towards women
 - 2.1.6. Institutional reasons
 - 2.1.7. Characteristics of the management profession itself
 - 2.2. The perceptions about the obstacles that female administrators meet in career development
 - 2.2.1. There have been obstacles
 - 2.2.1.1. Social pressure
 - 2.2.1.2. Sex discrimination
 - 2.2.1.3. Personal reasons
 - 2.2.2. No obstacles

3. The perceptions about how to increase the number of female administrators

- 3.1. The changing of roles that depend on social structure and sex
- 3.2. Improvement of working conditions
- 3.3. Motivate
- 3.4. Setting quotas
- 3.5. Increase of salary

in the success of female administrators,” the sub-themes of personal qualities, team work, and family support are formed. On the other hand, in the second main category, “The perceptions of male and female administrators about the troubles that female administrators have who work in their schools,” two themes are formed. Within these two themes, 12 sub-themes are found. Regarding the first theme of this category, “The perceptions about the reasons why there are few female administrators in schools,” the following sub-themes are formed: the amount of responsibilities in a woman’s private life, patriarchal society structure, the lack of family support both in professional and private life, learned lack of self-confidence, stereotypes against women, institutional reasons, and the qualities of administrators. Under the second theme, “The perceptions about the obstacles that female administrators meet in career development” two sub-themes are revealed. One sub-theme indicates that there are obstacles in front of women, while the second sub-theme indicates there aren’t obstacles. Under the ‘existence of obstacles’ sub-theme, social pressure, sexual discrimination, and personal reasons are formed. The third category “The perceptions about how to increase the number of female administrators,” the following sub-themes emerge: change of roles based on society structure and sex, the improvement of working conditions, motivation, setting quotas, and salary increase.

Results

As per privacy rules, the participants’ names are coded as K for female and E for male school administrators. In this part, the semi-structured questions according to the sub-problems are given.

The Views of Male and Female Primary School Administrators on Female School Administrators’ Experiences in the Management Process

The Views of Female and Male Administrators about Female Administrators’ Advantages in Their School: The question in the semi structured form according to this sub-dimension is “What are the positive sides of female administrators in a school?” As responses to this question the emphasis is on female administrators’ positive effects on communication (K1, K2, K3, K5, K6, K7, K8, K9, K10, K11, K12, K13, K14, K15, E1, E2, E3, E5, E6, E8, E9, E10). The other views of school administrators are that female administrators are able to conduct their school work well-planned and

systematically; as they have aesthetic perspectives, they evaluate the physical conditions of school better; they are more sensitive than men in taking and verifying responsibilities, and as they work aiming toward success, they are more ambitious and hardworking. When the views of the administrators are compared, most of the female administrators emphasized views that all groups (student, parents, teachers) are effected positively (K1, K2, K3, K5, K6, K7, K8, K9, K10, K11, K12, K13, K14, K15) by female administrators. They conduct their school work well-planned and systematically (K1, K5, K6, K11, K12, K13, K14, K15). As women have a more aesthetic point of view, they evaluate the physical conditions of a school better than men (K1, K4, K6, K9, K10) and are aware of more details (K1, K5, K6, K11, K12). The most emphasized expressions from the male administrators are that female administrators affect communication positively (E1, E2, E3, E5, E6, E8, E9, E10), they perform their school work systematically (E3, E4, E6, E9), female administrators are more sensitive than man in taking and verifying responsibilities (E3, E9, E12), and they cause men to be more careful with their manners (E3, E5, E6). In light of this category, the basic difference between male and female administrators is that most of the female school administrators emphasized the themes that were determined as advantages of female administrators.

One of the school principals (E3) mentioned his idea about the positive aspects of female administrators as follows, “*The communication is better with women. If there is not a female administrator at school there become some problems. The girl students can not solve their problems totally.*” Another administrator (E6) also mentioned that “*The parent that can not talk with male administrators can talk with female administrators. Sometimes, for example, some women do not come to courses as male teachers work in these courses.*”

According to the advantages of female administrators at schools, K5 said, “*Female administrators are aware of details. Processes become more planned. They put everything in to regularity.*” Whereas K6 said “*If there is a female administrator at school, everything is clean, regular and systematic. Entering or leaving the school, how to use the class book, the plan for school work is specific. Every paperwork is apparent, each person’s work is also apparent.*” K1, K11, K12, K13, K14, K15, E3, E4, E6, E9 also supported this idea.

K4 said, “*Female administrators evaluate the physical structure better. We realize what to use, where to use,*

and how to use in a beautiful way, because we have aesthetic perspectives” about female administrators’ better evaluation of the physical conditions of schools regarding their taste for aesthetics. K4, K6, K11, K12, K15, E9 and E12 participated in one of the school administrators, E9’s idea which is as follows, “Female administrators are more sensitive in taking responsibility and verifying it.” Like one school administrator’s (K3) view, “Female administrators work more due to minority psychology. They work aiming for success. If there is a problem with a school, they evaluate all the possibilities to solve it”, the other school administrators (K6, K11, K12, K15, E3, E9 and E12) mentioned that as female administrators work aiming for success, they are more hardworking and ambitious.

The Views of Male and Female School Administrators regarding the Factors That Are Important in the Success of Female Administrators: The question according to this sub-dimension in the semi-structured form is, for the female administrators, “Do you find yourself successful? What are the factors that make you successful?”, and to the male administrators, “Do you find the female administrators that work with you successful, what are the factors in their success?” For the responses to this question, the most emphasized factors are the female administrators’ personal qualities, team work and support of their family.

When the views of the school administrators are compared, it is seen that personality qualities (K1, K2, K3, K4, K6, K7, K9, K10, K11, K12, K13, K14), tendency towards team work (K1, K2, K3, K5, K12) and family support (K3, K5, K12) are the most emphasized factors of female administrators. Personality qualities (E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E9) and tendency towards team work (E1, E2, E4, E7, E9) are the most emphasized factors of male administrators. So in light of this category, it is seen that the views of male and female administrators are similar. Different from the views of male administrators, female administrators determined that their personal success is related to the support of their family.

By emphasizing the significance of personal qualities on her success, K4 expressed her view as follows, “Everybody sees herself successful. Being an administrator is difficult but I can handle it. I do not give up easily. There are lots of effective factors but I can control them and handle them. I think first than move. I am cool-headed and I can not endure failure. Sometimes basing on my prejudices

I believe everything can change.” Another school administrator (K9) also expressed her idea as follows, “Being hardworking is one of the most important factors in my success. I work a lot. I love my job. I have leadership qualities.” One of the male administrators (E1) mentioned the importance of personal qualities as follows, “I find women more successful because they verify their jobs fussily. They are objective, ambitious and decisive. They try to do their best. They work more well-planned and elaborately than men.” The other school administrators (E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E9, K1, K2, K3, K4, K6, K7, K9, K10, K11, K12, K13, K14) also supported E1’s idea.

The most important factors in the success of female administrators are a tendency towards team work and family support. K12 mentioned her thoughts about team work and family support as follows, “Success changes from one institution to another. Everybody sees himself successful. I also find myself successful. Success is team work, I can not do anything here alone. It is necessary to do team work and be in harmony with colleagues. Also working hard, not giving up, being strong against troubles are very important in my success.” K1, K2, K3, K5, K12, E1, E2, E4, E7 and E9 supported K12 in the team work factor. K3, K5 and K12 gave ideas similar to K12’s regarding the family support factor.

Unlike school administrators who emphasized the importance of personal qualities, team work, and family support, E12 expressed that he does not find most female administrators successful, and he expressed his idea as follows, “Women can not be successful in management due to their responsibilities at home, babysitting. Their capacity is not enough for being an administrator. They can not think as fast as men. Of course, there can be exceptions, but in my opinion women can not be administrators. They should be at home. On the other hand, they are not contentious. Can we talk about success here?”

The Views of Primary School Male and Female Administrators on the Troubles That Female Administrators Face at Schools

The Views of Male and Female Administrators on the Reasons Why There Are So Few Female Administrators in Schools: The question according to this sub-dimension in the semi-structured form is, “What are the reasons for the low rate of female administrators in schools?”. Responding to this question, the female and male administrators mentioned that the responsibilities of women in

their private life are too much. According to the patriarchal society structure, they can not get out of the roles given to them by society. The lack of family support both in their professional and private lives, the lack of learned self-esteem, stereotypes towards women, institutional reasons, and the qualities of management all were mentioned.

When school administrators' views are compared, it is seen that the most emphasized themes of female administrators are the responsibilities of women in their private lives being too much (K3, K4, K5, K6, K7, K8, K9, K10, K11, K12), learned self-trust deficiency (K2, K9, K4, K11, K13, K14, K15), and the qualities of management (K2, K5, K6, K12, K13, K14, K15). Male administrators mostly emphasized women having a lot of responsibilities in their private lives (E1, E2, E4, E5, E6, E8, E10, E12), women not being able to leave their roles according to a patriarchal society structure (E2, E3, E6, E8), stereotypes against women (E1, E9, E10, E12), and the qualities of management (E14, E5, E6, E7).

The most emphasized factor about the low rate of female administrators in schools is that the responsibilities of women in their private lives are too much (K3, K4, K5, K6, K7, K8, K9, K10, K11, K12, E1, E2, E4, E5, E6, E8, E10, E12). One of the school administrators mentioned his idea about this low rate as follows: *"The responsibilities' being high make women afraid. Both in their social and professional lives, women think that they can not struggle with these responsibilities, so they do not want to be administrators."*

About the patriarchal community structure (K3, K8, K11, K13, K14, K15, E2, E3, E6, E8), K8 said that, *"Most of the things that seem to be the choice of women are the roles given to women by society, there are unseen obstacles in front of women. They feel unseen pressure on themselves due to community structure."* One of the male administrators (E8) relating to this subject said that, *"Because of the cultural structure of our society, men are dominant. Even though men see women as weak, they still try to put pressure on them."*

The school administrators expressed similar points of view about the lack of family support for women administrators (K2, K3, K4, K7, K15, E1, E2, E5, E10). One of the principals, (E2), relating to learned helplessness said that *"There is not a suitable situation for women to work in self-trust both in the family and private sector. Even women themselves see men worthy of administrating."* (K2, K9, K4, K11, K13, K14, K15, E1, E2).

K2, K5, K6, K12, K13, K14, K15, E5, E6, E7 and E14 all supported E1's idea relating to the professional qualities of the job, *"The responsibilities of an administrator are too much. The conditions are too hard and the working hours are too long. That's why women do not choose to be administrators. As they take the same salary when they work as a teacher, being an administrator for them is not desirable."* E9 stated his view as follows, *"Being an administrator requires professionalism. An administrator should not mix logic and emotions. Women are not successful at saying no. As women are aware of their sensitivity they do not want to be administrators."* About the stereotypes towards women, K7 said, *"As women form up the minority in management, men indicate different reactions. You see the prejudices at first. Sometimes a lot of concern gives unrest. Women do not see much respect in society. Men do not believe women can manage."* K4 expressed her ideas as follows, *"Men look at the physical qualities of female administrators. Where she works and if she is beautiful or not. As women form up the minority, their physical qualities are more striking than their being administrators."* K1, K2, K8, K11, K12, E1, E9, E10 and E12 also supported K4's idea. The ideas of E2, *"As no suitable working conditions are formed, the number of female administrators is low"* and K11's idea, *"The number of female administrators is low in our country because the criteria of management assignment are not settled yet"* is supported by K13, K14, E1 and E5.

The Views of Women and Man about Obstacles That Women Face in Career Development:

The question in the semi structured interview form is "What are the obstacles that women face in career development?" As response to this question, some male and female primary school administrators mentioned social oppression, gender discrimination, and personal reasons. Others mentioned the absence of any obstacles.

When the views of primary male and female school administrators are compared, the views of female administrators were split into two categories: the presence of obstacles and the lack of obstacles. Female administrators stated that there is a variety of obstacles (K1, K3, K7, K9, K10, K11, K13, K14, K15), gender discrimination (K7, K11, K14, K15), social oppression (K1, K3, K10), and personal reasons (K1, K9, K13). Some female administrators (K2, K4, K5, K6, K8 and K12) reported that there are not obstacles. It was seen that the views of male administrators were also divided into two categories: the presence of obstacles and the lack of

obstacles. Male administrators mentioned personal reasons (E1, E3, E10, E12), social oppression (E1, E3, E6, E9), and the presence of obstacles (E1, E3, E6, E9, E10, E12). Some male administrators (E2, E4, E5, E7, E11, E14) reported that there are not any obstacles. According to this category, the main difference between the views of administrators was that female administrators most often emphasized the theme of gender discrimination. Male administrators mentioned that there weren't obstacles and that there were personal reasons connected to women.

The view of school administrator (K1) is *"Many problems emerge from culture. We are taught, brought up, by these. That's why we restrict ourselves and can't advance as a profession. We don't want to increase our responsibilities"*. Another one (K10) stated, *"Cultural characteristics. Society's perspective towards women and a woman's perspective towards women is important. Firstly, women must change themselves. Women must open the window, be open minded, get rid of the social teaching about gender discrimination. In business, we are all human, we are not women."* Three different views supported this situation: E3 stated, *"Because of social features, women think that they should spend more time with family. Due to the fact that the nature of Turkish society is dominated by men, women don't prefer much management."* E1 stated, *"Men want to be in the forefront. Women don't defend their rights. Prejudices about women and problems in the structure of the system are supporting the pattern of gender roles. There is a reactionary mentality from men. Those who founded the system were men. Those who continue the system are men."* E9 stated *"Due to the fact that we have a patriarchal structure, women are considered to be at home, so in business, they don't take part. Women are staying out of management."*

Two primary school administrators mentioned gender discrimination. These two views were found to support each other. One school administrator's view (K11), is *"There are invisible obstacles in front of women in management. You know, the glass ceiling syndrome. When a new task is given, no one thinks of the women administrators. (Choosing) among male administrators is preferred"*. (K15) said that *"The former administrator-types don't want to work with female administrators. Women administrators are blocked at appointments, men administrators are preferred and so women can't ascend to the top."*

One of the school administrators (E12) in relation to personal obstacles mentioned, *"Women are not very challenging, when there is a wall in front of them,*

they give up and go." Another school administrator (K13) also mentioned, *"As women administrators spend more time with their family, they do not even want to return to teaching. The role of women in their family prevents the profession."*

K2 emphasized that women administrators don't encounter any obstacles in career development. K2 mentioned *"I haven't encountered obstacles due to my gender. I hadn't lived a gender-based discrimination."* Similar to this view, some other school administrators (K2, K4, K5, K6, K8, K12, E2, E4, E5, E7, E11 and E14) also reported that women are not blocked anywhere.

Suggestions of Women and Man Administrators about How Can the Number of Women Administrators Be Increased:

The question in the semi structured interview form is *"What can be done to increase the number of women administrators at schools?"* In response to this question, male and female school administrators mentioned the change of social structure and gender roles, improvement of working conditions, promotion of women, quota setting and pay raise.

When male school administrators were compared with female administrators, the most emphasized factors for the female administrators were improvement of working conditions (K1, K2, K3, K6, K8, K10, K12), wage increases (K2, K3, K6, K8, K12, K13) and changing the pattern of gender roles (K1, K2, K6, K7, K14). The most emphasized themes for male administrators were as follows: improvement of working conditions (E4, E5, E7, E8, E9, E10, E12), the quota usage (E1, E2, E4, E6) and the promotion of women (E1, E3, E10).

According to this category, the main difference between the views of female and male administrators was that female administrators changed the order of priority themes. Themes specified by male administrators were generally suggestions aimed at the education system. One theme stated by female administrators was economic-based and the other themes were social-development based.

K7 stated about stereotypes, *"We know that women prepare dinner at home and train their children. Change in society is required. Society is changing. For example there were fewer female school administrators in the past. My kids will say that my mother is different and your children will say too. As a result this ratio will increase day by day with our children who model us. The definitions of gender stereotyping are required to change. Over time, they will, and the change will begin from families."* E1

emphasized that beginning with elementary school, children should be given a different perspective and should not be taught gender differences as a concept of equality." E10 mentioned, "*If everything in the house is perceived as woman's work there will be problems. For increasing the number of female administrators this mentality must change. Everything should not be regarded as woman's work. But, roles are given to us from infancy and we are separated as girls and boys*". Similar to this view, some other school administrators (K1, K2, K6, K14, E4, E5, E7, E8, E9, E12) reported that for increasing the number of women administrators, the perspective of society regarding women should be changed, and roles should not be based on gender.

One of the school administrators (K3) stated that "*Arrangement of working hours is required. The hours at school should be used effectively*". E1 mentioned that "working conditions (day care, paid maternity leave, ...) must be improved and another school administrator (E5) stated that "*the work load should be reduced, these conditions must be phrased in the regulations, and should be arranged during office hours*". Similar to this view, other school administrators (K1, K2, K3, K6, K8, K10, K12, E1, E5, E14) mentioned that working conditions should be organized, that flexible working hours should be applied, and working hours should be equal for teachers and administrators.

One of the school administrators (K3), about increasing the number of administrators, stated that teachers that would be administrators need to be encouraged to receive training for a master's degree. E3 mentioned that "*administrators should direct teachers who have the necessary qualifications, such as having good social relations and communication. Some people prefer administration, (such as those who have been) taking tasks such as the class president or student council from childhood. I am too in this way. Teachers who have leadership qualities should be encouraged to be administrators*". E1 mentioned that "*The responsibility of school administrators should be reduced*".

Three school administrators (E1, E2 and E6) mentioned that there should be quota for women at all levels in educational institutions. The view of one school administrator on this matter is as follows: "*In each level, one of the positions at least should be separated for women*".

One of school administrators (K3) mentioned wage increases for promoting the rate of women in the level of administration. According to her "*A monthly wage for working should be provided*

equally to the work done. Because in this way, only people who spend time in working hours remain in administration." Similar to this view other school administrators (K2, K6, K8, K12, K13, E2, E5) emphasized that teachers can be encouraged to be administrators with the increases in wages.

Discussion

The findings of this study, which searched the administrators' views about the experiences of women administrators, their problems in the administration process, and how to increase the number of women administrators indicated the following conclusions:

School administrators emphasized the advantages of female administrators in schools. According to these views, female administrators have positive impacts on communication with teachers, parents and students, they are more planned, regular and systematic in their responsibilities about school. Female administrators have aesthetic perspectives, so they pay more attention to the physical structures of schools, act more sensitively and accurately than male administrators in fulfilling the responsibilities. They are more ambitious and harder working than men.

When the views of school administrators are compared, the main difference between the opinions of female and male administrators is that many of female administrators give emphasis to the advantages of female administrators. The themes which male administrators stated were found to be less diverse. According to Eagly and Johnson (1990), women have more democratic, participatory and interpersonal relationships than men.

Female administrators provide effective communication with the problems of staff and allow the staff to share their feelings about themselves (Eagly & Johnson, 1992). Looney, Kurpius, and Lucart's (2004) study's findings were similar to these. According to their research, it was found that female leaders were more democratic and gave rights to group members in the decision-making process, and male leaders were more authoritarian and directing. Male leaders are considered to be more negative than female administrators when male administrators use authoritarian leadership. In another study, it was found that women adopt the administration style which is task-oriented, male adopt the administration style which based on image and autonomy (Statham, 1987, p. 425). Krüger's research revealed that female administrators gave more importance to education

and male administrators gave more importance to administrative and jobs outside the school. At the same time women spend less time in their office, visit more classrooms, support other women, and devote more time to their colleagues (as cited in Tan, 1996, p. 41). According to Özdevecioğlu et al. (2003, p. 128), female administrators were supportive and people-oriented, male administrators were authoritarian. While women have the features of loyalty, collaboration and sincerity, men have qualities of control leadership. According to another research (Zel, 2006), female administrators in the business world intend to help people in organization, while male administrators were more interested in income and growth. At the same time female administrators are observed to have higher business ethics. In many of the researches related to gender and ethics, it was found that women behaved more ethically than men both in being a student and in their professional life (Betz, O'Connell, & Shepard, 1989; Glover, Bumpus, Sharp, & Munchus, 2002; Whipple & Swords, 1992).

In Oplatka's (2004) research it is mentioned that women administrators initiate the process of personal renewal for teachers, increase the efforts and efficiency, and provide energetic feelings to the staff. The new administrators adopted a feminine leadership and reduced the negative effects of being an administrator. In another research (Toprak, 1993), as most women have motherhood instincts, they share all the problems and benefits that they have during the administrative process with their families. In the same research it is stated that women have high tendencies and willingness to work in a team, to organize their staff and all details of the institution, and to direct them in accordance with the common goals. Men put more pressure on the staff whereas women work to solve problems with their teams together. Men prey on the targets, women are interested in the people who reach these goals. Men communicate strategically, women communicate to feel confidence on the opposite side. The positive attitudes of women toward teamwork and adaptation lead to growth more rapidly than men (Toprak, 1993). As a result, according to the findings of this study, women were trained as individuals who give awards to employees that work better, and they share their powers with. Therefore the presence of female administrators affects schools in a positive sense.

School administrators mentioned the factors which affect a woman's success, such as their personal characteristics, teamwork and family support. Gray (1989) mentioned that women were more

combative in solving problems and men weren't able to achieve the same success. Similarly, in the researches of Kutanis and Alpaslan (2006) when the profiles of women administrators are examined, it is noted that they are honest, intuitive, planned, combative, responsible, soft and more sensitive than men. They communicate well with employees and motivate them, they use people-oriented and supportive administrative styles, and they have characteristics where they set difficult targets to reach for themselves. In contrast to these findings, Özkan and Akpınar (2002) mentioned that female administrators were as successful as male administrators in school administration and there weren't differences in fulfilling the task of administration between females and males. Similarly Tan (1998) and Ergün (1996) mentioned that there is no data related to women who failed and will fail in administration. As a result, according to the findings from this research, the personality traits of women such as being combative, ambitious and determined, compatible with people who work together and supportive of their families affect women positively allowing them to become successful administrators. Female and male administrators' views on this matter are mostly similar except for "the presence of family support."

School administrators' views were similar regarding the reasons for women administrators to be in low numbers. School administrators mentioned some reasons such as the many responsibilities of their private lives, the structure of patriarchal society, a lack of family support in professional and private life, a lack of learned self-esteem, prejudices against women, institutional reasons, and the qualifications of the administrative profession. Comparing the views of school administrators, the main difference between female and male administrators' views is that most of the themes listed as reasons by female administrators were highlighted by the majority of female administrators, whereas the diversity of themes listed by male administrators were low as well as the number of similar views of male administrators. According to Sağlam and Bostancı (2012) women have a lot of responsibilities in family life.

According to Can (2008), Turkey's traditional, social and cultural structures are not suitable enough for women to work as administrators. Altunışık (1998) mentioned that because women teachers want to devote themselves to their families, they do not want to have the responsibilities of school administrators, the long work days or trying to move up to supervisory positions. According

to another study, men hold political power and economic resources all over the world. They always had a greater voice in competition as well as physical strength. For this reason, men had higher status than women because of the gender-based power (Rudman, Greenwald, & McGhee, 2001).

Women change the surnames of family after marriage and take the surnames of the men they marry. Children receive the father's surname regardless of gender (Jost, Pelham, & Carvallo, 2002). There were many examples of women being treated worthlessly in the social field. All of these examples show that women experience discrimination because of their gender. According to these researches, people think that there should not be any discrimination between male and females; however, they don't clearly demonstrate their attitudes as they continue to express their attitudes in a veiled way (Tougas, Brown, Beaton, & Joly, 1995). In a study on university students' attitudes towards female administrators, male participants were found to have more negative attitudes against women administrators (Sakallı-Uğurlu & Beydoğan, 2002). Güldal (2006) mentioned reasons which demotivated women administrators, such as not being given the opportunity to develop themselves, injustice, negative criticism, lack of free time for their children, prejudices against marriage in case it prevents their work, and difficulties in establishing a balance between home and work. The findings of this research and other researches in literature support each other. Factors of personal, environmental and traditional values continue to cause low numbers of women administrators in educational administrative positions. Male administrators reported less number of problems than women administrators as to the reasons for the low number of women administrators. This situation may be associated with a low awareness on the part of male administrators about the problems which women experience.

School administrators mentioned obstacles in school that women encountered during career development such as social oppression, gender discrimination and personal reasons, but some school administrators reported that there were not any obstacles. The main difference between female and male administrators' views was that women administrators highlighted gender discrimination and male administrators ignored it. Men administrators often stated that there weren't any obstacles against women for becoming administrators. This finding from the research is consistent with the findings of Açıklalın's (1980)

research. Açıklalın (1980) mentioned that women are not valued in their professional lives as administrators. Izgar (2001) found that due to the fact that female administrators think more about their husbands, children and homes, they do not spend enough time on school administration. According to Atay's (2001) research, women cannot fulfill the need of being an effective administrator. Atay mentioned some prejudices related to women administrators such as women don't want to work, they don't depend on their careers, they aren't sufficiently rigid and strong, they don't work outside the working hours, they don't have the capacity for decision-making, and they are very emotional.

Sönmez (1992) mentioned that there is the perception that women cannot deal with the severe conditions of the management process that they cannot integrate the responsibilities related to family, housework and raising children, which is given to women as their social duty. According to the same researcher, although there wasn't an obstacle in progress, there was a system of complex resistance against women rising to the role of an administrator in the male-dominated business world. S. Arıkan (2003) mentioned that the public sector prefers employing male administrators, and job descriptions are generally defined in accordance with male values. Usluer (2000) reported that female teachers prefer the role of motherhood and being a good wife, and they see these traditional roles as higher priorities than the public sphere roles, believing that being a teacher is more appropriate for them than being an administrator. Ergün (1996) mentioned that going on trips and coming home late are disadvantages for women who work as administrators.

In other research, Can (2008) mentioned that the reasons for the low number of women administrators in educational institutions were traditional, social and cultural structures. Bedük (2005) in parallel to all of these findings, found that a number of stereotypes accepted in society prevent women from taking administrative positions. Streitmatter (1999) and Altınışık (1995), in their researches, stated that there was a separation between a woman's job and a man's job in social perceptions, and administration was reserved for men. In addition to all of these findings, Can (2008) underlined that there isn't any legal obstacle stopping women from being administrators in Turkey's educational sector. As a result, based on the research findings, it is possible to say that women encounter numerous obstacles in the profession of administration due to the patriarchal structure of

society, gender discrimination, stereotypes about women, and a lack of qualification for becoming administrators. The suggestions of female and male administrators about how the number of women administrators can be increased included the change of social structure and gender roles, the improvement of working conditions, the promotion of women, quota setting, and pay rises. Tan (2002) emphasized that women should have an equal chance in all levels of educational administration. In the researches of Altunışık (1995) and Can (2008) it had been revealed that most teachers do not prefer school administration due to the difficult working conditions. In addition, being an administrator is no different from being a teacher when comparing the salaries. For that reason, female teachers do not want to have administrative positions as it has more responsibilities than those of a teacher. Sağlam and Bostancı (2012) mentioned that the responsibilities of women should be lower. In this context, it is possible to say that the improvement of working conditions, the encouragement of successful female to become administrators, and an increase in salaries can motivate women to become administrators. The themes stated by male administrators were mostly aimed at the configuration of the system (improvement of working conditions, the introduction of quotas, and encouraging women for administration) whereas the themes stated by female administrators were mostly aimed at economical and social developments.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The aim of this research is to determine the management process of female administrators, their experiences in this process, and the troubles they have had in this process through the perceptions of female and male administrators. The basic result of this research is that female and male administrators have similar perceptions regarding some basic aspects; however they differ in the sub-themes.

The school administrators mentioned that female administrators affect communication positively, they do their all work well-planned, regularly and systematically, and they evaluate the physical conditions of the school much better than men due to their aesthetic perceptions.

Having many responsibilities in private life, a lack of family support, patriarchal social structures, roles that depend on sex, and a lack of learned self-reliance are accepted as the reasons for there being a low number of female administrators that work at schools.

School administrators mentioned that female administrators are faced with obstacles such as social pressure, sexual discrimination, and personal reasons. Some of them mentioned that there have not been any obstacles.

For increasing the number of female administrators in schools, school administrators suggested that the perception of roles based on sex that leave women behind should be changed, the social mindset in general should be changed, working conditions should be improved, women should be motivated to be administrators, salaries should be increased and quotas should be set.

To briefly summarize, school administrators mentioned that they support women as administrators because their communication skills are strong, they work rigorously, well-planned, and attentively, and they cause the school to gain aesthetic perceptions. However, they mentioned that the long lasting effect of sexist social values, patriarchal societal structure, and the work conditions being more difficult than just teaching are the reasons why most women do not choose to be administrators.

According to these findings, the following suggestions are developed:

In order to struggle with the prejudices and false thoughts that prevent women from reaching higher management levels, the cultural, domestic and intellectual structures of society should be supported with education.

For reaching the equality of women and men, an aim of social development, women in the role of administrators should be supported. The number of women should be increased in general employment. For this reason, the discrimination of women should be removed in such areas as having a job, and the dismissal of their job conditions, salary, and career development. One of the most important obstacles for a woman's success in her work life is that child care should be shared with men or provided as a public service.

The required re-orientation should be done in the triangle of family, school and environment for changing the doctrines that are based on sex. Objective assignment criteria such as the exam system for management should be generalized. Female administrators that have removed their career obstacles should motivate other women for being administrators, and they should support those with talent.

This is a qualitative study, some other researches with mixed methods and different samples can be done.

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