

## **School Principals' and Teachers' Views on Teacher Performance Evaluation\***

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to detect school principals' and teachers' views on teacher performance evaluation, which is made for teachers- who are one of the most important resources of education- to develop themselves. Semi-structured interview method, one of qualitative research methods, was used in this study. The study group was composed of 18 school principals and 60 teachers working in the Çan district of Çanakkale province. "Interview Form 1" to obtain school principals' views on teacher performance evaluation and "Interview Form 2" to obtain teachers' views- both of which were developed by the researchers- were used for data collection. The collected data were put to inductive content analysis. The majority of the school principals were informed of the goals of teacher performance evaluation. School principals considered teacher performance evaluation as positive in that it was objective, that it helped teachers in self-development, that it contributed to students' development, that it made students active in the classroom and that it used the method of reward and punishment. According to principals and teachers, leaving teacher performance evaluation to the managers of the institutions was positive in terms of reliability and objectivity. Yet, both school principals and teachers were of the opinion that conflicts could occur in schools unless the criteria for evaluation were not clear and distinct and unless evaluation is fair.

**Keywords:** Performance Evaluation, Teacher Performance Evaluation, School Principal, Teacher.

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## Introduction

Performance evaluation means measuring the efficiency of employees in an organisation in order to achieve its target and making decisions accordingly. In this sense, performance evaluation is the comparison between what is expected of individuals in an organisation and individuals' achievement (Açıklan, 2002). In other words, it means reaching a conclusion by evaluating employees' capacity according to the evaluation criteria set. The goal of performance evaluation is to determine the extent to which the employees in an organisation help to attain the organisational objectives, to ensure the continuity of communication between the employees, to increase their motivation and to guide them in self-actualisation and personal development. This is because performance evaluation is available for setting the standards in an organisation for its mission and for developing the standards or for determining the areas it needs and forming the basis for the system of rewarding (De Cenzo & Robbins, 1988; Pehlivan, 2001).

The system of performance evaluation is very important for individuals working in an organisation because employees wish to receive the recompense for their effort and their work. When humans- wishing to be appreciated- face positive reactions, their motivation increases and thus they begin to take greater care with their work. Yet, performance evaluation should be made correctly and honestly. Evaluations made objectively raise employees' believe and confidence in their organisation (Ertürk, 2009). Besides, employees are expected to notice their deficiencies in consequence of performance evaluation and to make efforts to overcome the deficiencies (Özgen, Öztürk & Yalçın, 2005; Sabuncuoğlu, 2000).

An effective system of performance evaluation is important for educational institutions where learning and teaching processes are available; because performance evaluation system is necessary for teachers' self-development and for students' achievement. Many studies conducted in the field of education in recent years consider the correlations between teachers' self-development and students' learning (Elliott, 2015; Hayes, Mills, Christie & Lingard, 2006; Taylor & Tyler, 2012). Evaluating teachers' performance and their involvement in professional development activities ensure student achievement (Bownan, 2013; Sahlberg, 2015).

Studies concerning performance evaluation have been available in the literature in Turkey for a long time. For instance, objectives were set for performance evaluation in public institutions in the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> five-year development plans. Ministry of National Education (MoNE), on the other hand, has conducted activities to "Develop Performance Model in Supervision" since the early 2000s. Consequently, according the 10<sup>th</sup> five-year development plan, teachers in Turkish system of education were given performance evaluation in 2015-2016 academic year by school principals; but, work on evaluation based on multiple sources of data was started by the Ministry of National Education with feedback from school principals, and the process of teacher performance evaluation was stopped temporarily in 2017-2018 academic year due to the above mentioned reason (MoNE, 2018).

However, teacher performance evaluation is used in many countries today consistently with contemporary supervision conception. Therefore, studies conducted abroad on the issue have been increasing. The effectiveness of teacher performance evaluation has been emphasised in studies abroad in recent years (Campbell, 2014; Colins, 2004; Elliott, 2015; Isore, 2009; Marshall, 2005). A review of literature show that the number of such studies has also increased recently in Turkey. The studies were conducted with the participation of managers, teachers, students and/or supervisors (Aygün, 2008; Boyacı, 2003; Fırınıoğulları Bige, 2014; Günbayı & Yıldırım, 2012; Öksüz, 2008; Sarpkaya, 2004; Süzen, 2007; Şengül, 2010; Üzmez, 2006). Yet, the number of studies assessing the application in 2015-2016 academic year especially and conducted with the participation of both school principals and teachers is rare. This is a study describing the importance of making teacher performance evaluation in the field of education. Therefore, it can contribute to the development of alternative approaches of evaluation in addition to teacher performance evaluation criteria and methods used in the field of education. The study is significant in that it guides educational policy makers and the

managers of institutions in decision-making and in implementation. The study aims to determine school principals' and teachers' views on teacher performance evaluation made for the self-development of teachers- one of the most important sources of education. In accordance with its purpose, it seeks answers to the following sub-problems:

- What are the goals of teacher performance evaluation in school principals' views?
- What are the criteria for teacher performance evaluation in school principals' views?
- What are the positive sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in school principals' views?
- What are the negative sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in school principals' views?
- What alternative evaluation activities can be done with institution managers in the process of teacher performance evaluation in school principals' views?
- What are the positive sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in teachers' views ?
- What are the negative sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in teachers' views ?

## Method

The research model, study group, data collection and data analysis are described in this section.

### Research Model

This study was conducted in survey model because it aimed to obtain the views held by school principals and teachers at the time when the interviews were made. Since the study tried to collect detailed data answering the questions of how and why about a certain unit in the population, it used case study survey model (Karasar, 2000; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013; Yin, 2014).

### Study Group

The study was conducted with 18 school principals and 60 teachers working in primary, secondary and high schools located in Çan district of Çanakkale province in 2016-2017 academic year. Both school principals assessing teachers' performance and teachers being assessed were included in the study group. Thus, purposeful sampling was made.

The demographic properties of school principals and teachers included in the study are shown below in Table 1 and Table 2. According to Table 1, the majority of school principals are male, in the 31-40 age range and had at least 10 year-experience except for one. 6 of them work in primary schools while 6 work in secondary schools and 6 in high schools. According to Table 2, 40 of the teachers are female, 20 are male, the majority of them are in the 31-50 age range and 10- year or more experience in teaching. Additionally, 37 of them are teachers of branches. 28 of them teach in primary schools, 22 in secondary schools and 10 in high schools.

**Table 1.** The Demographic Properties of School Principals

School Principals	Gender	Age Range	Seniority	School Level	Title
P1	Female	31-40	11-20	Primary	SP
P2	Male	31-40	11-20	Primary	SP
P3	Male	41-50	11-20	Primary	SP
P4	Male	31-40	11-20	Primary	SP
P5	Male	51 and more	21 and more	Primary	SP
P6	Male	41-50	21 and more	Primary	SP
P7	Male	31-40	0-10	Secondary	SP
P8	Male	41-50	21 and more	Secondary	SP
P9	Male	41-50	21 and more	Secondary	SP
P10	Male	31-40	11-20	Secondary	SP
P11	Male	31-40	11-20	Secondary	SP
P12	Male	41-50	21 and more	Secondary	SP
P13	Male	31-40	11-20	High School	SP
P14	Male	41-50	21 and more	High School	SP
P15	Male	31-40	11-20	High School	SP
P16	Male	41-50	11-20	High School	SP
P17	Male	41-50	11-20	High School	SP
P18	Female	41-50	21 and more	High School	SP

P and SP: School Principal

**Table 2.** The Demographic Properties of Teachers

Teachers	Properties	N
Gender	Female	40
	Male	20
Age	21-30	10
	31-40	30
	41-50	15
	51 and more	5
Branch	Classroom teacher	23
	Branch teacher	37
Seniority	0-10 year	25
	11-20 year	25
	21 and more	10
School Level	Primary	28
	Secondary	22
	High School	10

T: Teacher

### Data Collection and Analysis

First, literature on teacher performance evaluation was reviewed for research data collection. Then, "Interview Form 1" containing five open-ended questions to be answered by school principals was prepared. In addition to that, "Interview Form 2" containing two open-ended questions to be answered by teachers was prepared. After that, the following steps were taken for validity and reliability analysis of the interview forms. To begin with, 3 lecturers working in Educational Sciences Department of the Educational Faculty of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University (ÇOMU) and 2 lecturers working in the Educational Sciences Department of Uludağ University- 5 lecturers in total- were consulted for expert opinion. Later, a pilot study was carried out by giving "Interview Form 1" to 15 school principals and "Interview Form 2" to 15 teachers in schools located in Çanakkale city

centre. Semi-structured interviews were used in collecting the data. The interviews with school principals were made face-to-face by making appointment beforehand and were recorded using a voice recorder. The interviews with teacher were made by giving “Interview Form 2” to the teachers and asking them to complete it in writing. The school principals and teachers were found to answer the questions sincerely.

The research data were put to writing and were analysed in inductive method. Inductive analysis is performed so as to reveal the concepts underlying the data and the correlations between the concepts through coding (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The analysis was done in three stages: Stage one the stage at which the data was coded first by the researcher and then by an expert in the field. After that, the formula  $\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{agreement}}{\text{agreement} + \text{disagreement}} \times 100$  was used with the codes given by the researcher and the expert (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Consequently, the percentage of agreement between coders was found to be 95%. Since having 70% or above agreement was considered adequate, reliability was attained for data analysis. Themes were distinguished on the basis of codes given by the researcher and the expert in accordance with the sub-problems.

## Findings

The findings obtained with the analysis of the data in accordance with the sub-problems are as in the following.

### The Goals of Teacher Performance Evaluation in School Principals’ Views

The first sub-problem of the research was “what are the goals of teacher performance evaluation in school principals’ views?”. The findings for the problem are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** The Goals of Teacher Performance Evaluation in School Principals’ Views

Main Theme	Sub Themes	f
	Positive development in consequence of objective evaluation	11
The goals of teacher performance evaluation	an application whose goal was incomprehensible	7
	self-development	7
	student development	5
	activing to student	4
	reward and punishment	2

As is clear from Table 3, the majority of school principals state that teacher performance evaluation has such goals as positive development in consequence of objective evaluation, contributing to teachers in self-development, contributing to students’ development by making sacrifice, making students active in the classroom, and using the system of reward and punishment. Only seven principals said that it was an application whose goal was incomprehensible and which was unnecessary. In this matter, a school principal, P18 made the statement “*it is a right approach for teachers to be evaluated by the managers with whom they work together since those teachers’ work is followed one-to one and continuously*”. Another principals, P9, said, “*it is important in making the staff more efficient, more eager and tidier.*” Still another principal, P3, on the other hand said, “*The method of reward and punishment is not used in performance evaluation. Therefore, I don’t believe it will be healthy in guiding. Thus, it will remain as an activity which cannot achieve its goal*” and

implied that reward and punishment should be available in order for performance evaluation to achieve its goal.

### The Criteria for Teacher Performance Evaluation in School Principals' Views

The second sub-problem of the research was “what are the criteria for teacher performance evaluation in school principals' views?” The findings for the sub-problem are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** The Criteria for Teacher Performance Evaluation in School Principals' Views

Main Theme	Sub Themes	f
The criteria for teacher performance evaluation	teachers' adopting their school	8
	working with sacrifice	7
	the development of their institution	6
	professional competence	6
	communication	6
	discipline	5
	MEBBIS Form	5
	sincerity	3
	feedback from parents	3
Command of the programme	3	

It is clear from Table 4 that a number of criteria for performance evaluation which is made for teachers' self-development have been set beforehand. The criteria include such things as teachers' adopting their school, working with sacrifice and voluntarily, contributing to the development of their institution, professional competence, communication, discipline, sincerity, feedback from parents and command of the programme and of the domain. Besides, a few of the principals laid emphasis on the evaluation scale containing 50 items available in “Performance Evaluation Module” in the Ministry of National Education data processing system (MEBBIS). As is evident from this finding, school principals are informed of the criteria for performance evaluation but they are uncertain about how to implement them. A school principal, P10, responded the question with the statement “*the criteria for evaluation have been set in the regulation*”. P5 supported the principal in the statement “*the form which is available in the Ministry of National Education data processing system.*” Another principal, P16, mentioned more specific things in the statement “*may be teachers' approach towards students, their communication with colleagues, their command of the programmes, their efforts for self-development, their communication with students and parents, their adaptation into the environment and their contributions to the school.*” P12, on the other hand, said, “*performance criteria are very general and inadequate.*”

Work and evaluation on institutions should not be made randomly. If it is made according to a plan on the basis of pre-set criteria, progress is made in the workplace. Although there are pre-set criteria for the evaluation of teacher performance by school principals, pilot projects should be carried out and training should be offered in order for teacher performance evaluation to be effective.

### The Positive Sides of Leaving Teacher Performance Evaluation to Institution Managers in School Principals' Views

The third sub-problem of the research was “what are the positive sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in school principals' views?”. The findings for the sub-problem are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5.** The Positive Sides of Leaving Teacher Performance Evaluation to Institution Managers in School Principals' Views

Main Theme	Sub Themes	f
The positive sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers	objective evaluation in education	10
	following the works done by teachers	9
	the opportunity to solve problems	5
	feedback from managers	4
	contribute to the authority of managers	1

As clear from Table 5, the majority of school principals think it is positive to leave teacher performance evaluation to institution manager. This is because school principals are objective in evaluation, they follow and analyse the work done by teachers in their school closely throughout the year, they have the opportunity to solve problems when and where they occur and they can give instant feedback. Besides, school principals also emphasised that such evaluation contributed to the authority of institution managers. In this matter, a school manager, P2, said, *“because institution managers spend all their time in school in terms of making evaluation and because they follow teachers’ work closely, planning will be more appropriate; but only if it is objective”* and stressed objectivity. In support of P2, another principal, P16, made the statement *“because managers spend more time with teachers.... Supervisors of education come to school one day, they make observations and then they go. Therefore, performance evaluation is more positive.”* Another principal, P8 called attention to the fact that the results of performance evaluation did not have any sanctions by saying, *“supervision done at the right time and in the right place is more efficient. It is then possible to get to know the individuals. But authority for sanctions is not sufficient.”*

### **The Negative Sides of Leaving Teacher Performance Evaluation to Institution Managers in School Principals' Views**

The fourth sub-problem of the research was “what are the negative sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in school principals' views?”. The findings for the sub-problem are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6.** The Negative Sides of Leaving Teacher Performance Evaluation to Institution Managers in School Principals' Views

Main Theme	Sub Themes	f
The negative sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers	conflict between teachers and managers	10
	disruption in communication	9
	getting away from objectivity	7
	ambiguous criteria	3

As is evident from Table 6, the negative sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers are conflicts between teachers and institution managers, disruption in communication, getting away from objectivity and absence of distinct and clear criteria. P3 described the negative sides in the statement *“conflicts occur between administration and staff in objective evaluations. Different marks given to teachers in evaluation do not increase the sense of competition”*

but on the contrary they cause increase in disintegration and in rumours. Principals and teachers supervising each other cause chaos in terms of authority". P8 said, "Work environment in schools requires a bit more intimate relations. So, bilateral relations make evaluation difficult" and thus stated that problems could occur in communication after performance evaluation.

### Alternative Evaluation Activities that Can Be Done with Institution Managers in the Process of Teacher Performance Evaluation

The fifth sub-problem of the research was "what alternative evaluation activities can be done with institution managers in the process of teacher performance evaluation in school principals' views?". The findings for the sub-problem are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Alternative Evaluation Activities that Can Be Done with Institution Managers in the Process of Teacher Performance Evaluation

Main Theme	Sub Themes	f
Alternative evaluation activities in the process of teacher performance evaluation	all the staff should participate in the process of teacher performance evaluation	6
	institution managers' evaluation adequate	5
	educator seminar should be available	4
	students and parents evaluation	3
	performance-based wage system	2
	supervisor evaluation	1
	examination system	1

According to Table 7, school principals mentioned evaluation based on multiple source of data by stating that all the staff should participate in evaluation in the process of teacher performance evaluation, that students and parents should be encouraged to make evaluation and supervisor evaluation should also be made. In addition to the above mentioned views, there are also views that educator seminars should be available and performance-based wage system and examination system should be introduced. 5 of the school principals considered institution managers' evaluation adequate in teacher performance evaluation system. One of the school principals said, "Students, parents and even school employees and teachers' colleagues can be included in teacher evaluation." Another principal, P13, pointed out that supervisors should not be kept away from educational environments by saying, "it would be appropriate for supervisor to carry out general supervision at certain intervals." P17 stated that it would be appropriate to evaluate teachers with a central examination saying, "An examination should be given to see whether or not teachers' knowledge is up to date. Teachers' performance mark should be law unless they have in-service training." P17 also said, "Institution managers are sufficient" and stated his/her satisfaction with evaluation practice.

### The Positive Sides of Leaving Teacher Performance Evaluation to Institution Managers in Teachers' Views

The seventh sub-problem of the research was "what are the positive sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in teachers' views?". The findings for this sub-problem are shown in Table 8.



**Table 8.** The Positive Sides of Leaving Teacher Performance Evaluation to Institution Managers in Teachers' Views

Main Theme	Sub Themes	f
The positive sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in teachers' views	deficiencies will be revealed by school principals	28
	more objective and reliable	28
	positive communication between principals and teachers	15

According to Table 8, the most positive side of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in teachers' views is that they consider the practice as more objective and reliable. In addition to that, teachers think that deficiencies will be revealed by school principals. In this respect, T15 said, "*school principals can make more reliable evaluation since they know teachers better according to the supervisors of the ministry*". The other hand, T3 said, "*Teachers can see their deficiencies when they are evaluated from the eyes of someone from outside and thus they can compensate for their deficiencies*" and stressed another positive side of evaluation. T21 stated that performance evaluation would contribute to the communication between principals and teachers in his/her statement "*I think it will contribute positively to the communication between school principals and teachers.*" T20 stated his/her view as "*feedback is given in after evaluation is made in our school. This enables us to see the deficiencies.*"

#### **The Negative Sides of Leaving Teacher Performance Evaluation to Institution Managers in Teachers' Views**

The eighth sub-problem of the research was "what are the negative sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in teachers' views?". The findings for this sub-problem are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9.** The Negative Sides of Leaving Teacher Performance Evaluation to Institution Managers in Teachers' Views

Main Theme	Sub Themes	f
The negative sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in teachers' views	getting away from objectivity	26
	unclarity and indistinctness of criteria for performance evaluation	26
	unnecessary practice	3
	disruption in communication between managers and teachers	3
	conflict	2

According to Table 9, the negative sides of leaving teacher performance evaluation to institution managers in teachers' views are getting away from objectivity, ambiguity stemming from the unclarity and indistinctness of criteria for performance evaluation, disruption in communication between principals' and teachers and having conflicts. Additionally a small number of teachers believe that it is unnecessary practice. In this respect, T10 said, "*I don't think those who will make the evaluation will behave objectively. How objective can students' and parents' evaluation be?*". T37, on the other hand, said, "*I don't think there is objective performance evaluation. Personal intimacy influences evaluation.*" T40 said, "*Teacher performance evaluation is an unnecessary practice. It does nothing but destroy teachers' self-confidence.*"

## Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Educational systems, just as all other systems, should also be renewed considering the changing circumstances of time and scientific development today. The system of supervision functioning as the feedback mechanism should also be renewed in the system of education. Therefore, teachers taking on leadership roles in the educational system, managers and supervisors should be pioneers in innovations in the system of education and they should adapt into the innovations; because the system of supervision is important to ensure the continuity and development of an organisation. Today, the approach of performance evaluation has been adopted in educational institutions in many countries for the supervision of teachers. This study, which was performed so as to determine school principals' and teachers' views on teacher performance evaluation- which has just started in Turkish system of education- obtained the following findings:

According to the majority of principals of schools of various levels, teacher performance evaluation has important goals in that it contributes to teachers' self-development and that it causes positive development in consequence of objective evaluation. Accordingly, school principal are informed of the goals of performance evaluation. The principals also stated that criteria such as teachers' adoption of their school, their sacrificed and volunteering work, contributing to the development of their organisation, professional competence, communication, discipline, sincerity, feedback from parents and teachers' command of the programmes and the domain should be the criteria for performance evaluation. They considered performance evaluation positive due to the fact that it was an objective evaluation system, it contributed to teachers' self-development and students' self-development, it made students active in the classroom and that it used reward and punishment method. According to the school principals, the fact that it caused conflicts in school and that communication broke down were the negative sides of performance evaluation. This was a find parallel to the one obtained by Boyacı (2003) and Demirci (2011). On the other hand, half of the school principals recommended that alternative methods of evaluation should be used.

In this current study, the most positive side of leaving performance evaluation to institution managers according to teachers was that it was a reliable and objective practice. Teachers thought that the negative sides of leaving performance evaluation to institution managers were getting away from objectivity, ambiguity due to unclear and indistinct criteria for evaluation and problems of communication and conflicts. These were the findings similar to the ones obtained by Boyacı, (2003), Brown (2005), Demirci (2011), Odhiambo (2005) and Süzen (2007). Those studies report that the majority of teachers point to negative human relations between evaluators and the ones who are evaluated in the process of teacher evaluation.

According to the results of this study, the following may be recommended so that teacher performance evaluation can be used effectively in Turkish system of education: Firstly, the goals and criteria for teacher performance evaluation should be described clearly and distinctly. Secondly, who is to make teacher performance evaluation should be explained with reasons. Besides, evaluation process should also be performed objectively and reliably. Only in this way can contributions be made to personal and professional development. How teacher performance evaluation results will be used should be explained at the end of the process. Reward and punishment to be given at the end of the process or the in-service training to be offered should be clear. In addition to that, effective mechanisms through which feedback can be received from teachers should be designed. The fact that the study was conducted in a district of Çanakkale province- that is to say, with a small population- was the restriction in this study. Therefore, it may be recommended that similar studies be performed with larger population.

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