

Mentoring-Based Learning Culture at Schools: Learning from School Administrator Mentoring

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the mentoring roles and behaviors of school administrators in the context of developing a learning culture in schools comprehensively and holistically. The study was designed as a phenomenological study and we utilized the interview as the data collection technique. A total number of 10 school administrators working at the public schools in Turkey participated in the study. Results revealed that mentoring is an essential component in the process of creating and maintaining an effective and collaborative learning culture. The findings of the research were discussed in the context of mentoring and learning culture with the theme of administrators' competence areas, perspective and contribution on learning and development, professional learning activities, mentoring roles, learning barriers, self-assessment and benefits of mentoring.

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Introduction

School administrators have an essential role in creating learning-focused school environments (Deal & Peterson, 2009; Hallinger 2011; Tichnor Wagner, Harrison, & CohenVogel, 2016). The task of school administrators is to establish and organize a link among the purpose, reason and practice for the benefit of the students. This task contains several questions in its content: "How do the school administrators build and sustain learning, generate the conditions that will encourage learning, and what strategies should they use?" (Walker, 2010). School administrators indirectly influence the conditions for a productive learning culture and student learning (Boyce & Bowers, 2018; Day & Leithwood, 2007; Hallinger, Bickman, & Davis, 1996), and indirectly contribute to student learning (Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Accordingly, the school administrator can consult to various ways to provide a shared understanding and a sustainable learning culture (Walker, 2010). Among these ways, mentoring of school administrators is remarkable (Hudson, 2013; Portner, 2008).

School-based education mentoring is important in creating a school culture that focuses on teacher development (Bakiođlu, Hacifazliođlu, & Özcan, 2013). Mentoring-based learning can be seen as part of the information shared by organizational learning that promotes collaboration and cooperation of employees (Sabaityte, Davidaviciene, & Karpoviciute, 2020). Mentoring changes the

teaching and learning method and the relationships of partners (Margolin, 2011). In mentoring, identifying learning goals, supporting progression and increasing mentees' control over their learning take an important place (Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education [CUREE], 2010). In addition, mentoring roles or skills exhibited in different proportions are essential components that shape change and development (Aguilar Goxiola, 1984; Cohen, 1993, 2003; Galbraith & Cohen, 1997; Hall, Draper, Smith, & Bullough, 2008; Naillioğlu Kaymak, 2017; Sowell, 2017; Turpeinen, 2018).

Sustainable learning culture in the school is a product of a collective effort. Although the creation of this culture brings essential responsibility to all stakeholders of the school, the key actor is the school principal/administrator. Principals think that mentoring improves their professional values considerably as school leaders and provides the creation of an information-sharing culture that increases self-confidence levels and increases their practical knowledge of school leadership (Tahir, Said, Daud, Vazhathodi, & Khan, 2016).

School leadership is a challenging task, and new principals need to take comprehensive induction and mentoring programs that will drive a strong learning community and make schools safe by being sensitive to the culture in which they participate (Villani, 2006). In addition to being a leader of education to reach the teaching goals of the school by using human and material resources, the school administrator should manage his / her school in the best way (Hunt, 2012). A school leader is like a painter. S/he creates intuitive and original tasks for the school, creates favorable working conditions for teachers and guides teachers on democratic participation values (Alegre-de la Rosa & Villar Angulo, 2012). In this way, teachers are supported and developed professionally, teacher standards are



raised, and their learning is facilitated (Fransson, 2012). However, support to reduce the stress factors that lead to the retirement of new teachers and ensure their continuity to the profession can be provided through a mentoring process implemented in schools and the mentoring of competent school administrators who take part in this process (Bakiođlu et al., 2013).

The international literature about mentorship of school administrators, including school heads or principals, began to diversify with a relatively practical mentoring research. Research in Turkey showed that mentoring process is vital in the professional and social development of administrators in schools (Bakiođlu, Özcan, & Hacifazlıođlu, 2002; Balyer & Gündüz, 2012; Ereş, 2009; Sezgin, Koşar, & Er, 2014; Yılmaz, Kurşun & Köksal, 2015), the mentor roles of school principals are effective in increasing the academic success of the school (Yıldırım, 2013; Yıldırım & Yılmaz, 2013), the effect of trust is important on mentoring experiences of managers in different career stages (Bakiođlu et al., 2013), and to be more active in carrying out mentoring processes and creating a learning culture at school is expected from school principals (Ozdemir & Sahin, 2020). As mentioned above, the international literature emphasizes the importance of the mentoring of school administrators for the managers, their employees, and their schools. The relevant literature has seen the school principal as a person who is receiving and providing mentoring in a mentoring relationship. However, the studies examining the mentoring offered by the principal in the development of learning culture in schools with a mentoring mindset are quite limited. Thus, this study aims to examine the mentoring roles and behaviors of school administrators in the context of developing a learning culture in schools comprehensively and holistically.

The study was designed as a phenomenological study and utilized the interviews conducted with the school administrators. The findings of the research were discussed in the context of mentor school administrators' competence areas, perspectives and contributions on learning and development, professional learning activities and mentoring roles in creating a learning culture, learning barriers encountered in the implementation of mentoring in learning culture, and self-assessment and benefits of mentoring. The study will contribute to the literature to show the viewpoints of school administrators' regards to mentoring and creating and maintaining learning culture at schools. To discover viewpoints of school administrators on mentoring, and to maintain learning culture at schools can contribute to the acceleration of school development.

Theoretical Framework

Mentoring of School Administrators

The word mentor, which is used in the sense that a patient and an experienced counsellor can guide his less experienced young colleague (Playko, 1991; Shea, 2001), has preserved its original name from mythology and has been established without being translated into that language (Yirci, 2009). The mentor is an experienced employee who guides and directs the development of the talents and careers of the inexperienced youth entrusted to them in the fields of professional and personality development (Noe, 1988). A friend, in whom the mentor shares his knowledge and experience and supports him to become more successful in his field, is called "Protégé or Mentee" in the literature (Yıldırım & Şerefhanoglu, 2014). Mentoring has been one of the techniques for the school administrators to manage the school effectively. School administrators are volunteer



mentors who can renew themselves, technologically literate, scientific thinkers and writers with their knowledge and experience (Bakiođlu et al., 2002).

Mentoring has two dimensions: career and psychosocial development (Kram & Isabella, 1985). The purpose of the career function is to facilitate and improve the career development of the employee. In this function, the mentor coaches protect and supervise the person under his / her mentorship in dealing with the most challenging tasks. Mentoring is the heart of a successful professional development process, the first step in increasing the effectiveness of lifelong learning and teaching (Kutsyuruba, 2012). Mentoring relationship at school is of great importance for novice teachers to be successful in adjusting their teaching needs (Smith, 2002). A collective competence-based collaboration and collegial culture (Hopkins Thompson, 2000) are described as the best ways for teachers to learn by mentors. Formal collaboration/cooperation opportunities in effective schools with an influential learning culture are primarily created by administrators (Tichnor Wagner et al., 2016). According to Kuter (2016), cooperative mentoring is an important role of school mentors in the development of personal and professional skills of adults. On the other hand, it is important to make mentoring an integral part of basic career development, as principal preparation programs cannot provide effective content on how to deal with the challenges of the profession (Bakiođlu et al., 2013; Parylo, Zepeda, & Bengtson, 2012; Searby, 2010).

As a second dimension of mentoring, in psychosocial function, the mentor serves to improve the employee's identity, competence, and roles in the workplace (Kram, 1983). The experienced mentor provides technical and psychological support to the supervised

person in doing all these and finds ways to satisfy the employee with his/her work. Professional socialization and sponsorship behaviors include introducing the mentee to other colleagues and supporting the mentee's career (in obtaining a job, solving financial problems, researching, or publishing) (Aguilar-Goxiola, 1984). Through the role of sponsorship, the professional support provided to the mentee by mentors and the professional personal learning experiences of the mentee are increasing (Lankau & Scandura, 2002).

In the mentoring process, the mentor should have features such as mutual trust, understanding and empathy (Bakioğlu & Hacifazlıoğlu, 2000; Yılmaz et al., 2015). To ensure the welfare of the school as an organization, trust is one of the primary components. The support and appreciation of the principal for the work of the teachers help build trust in the school community. Teachers or counsellors who are appreciated by encouragement and support increase their sense of self-worth and motivation to invest in additional solutions to fulfil their assigned duties (Arar & Masry Harzallah, 2019). Mentors establish and maintain their relations with their mentees based on mutual trust, respect and professionalism. Such a behavior creates an environment that encourages honest sharing of ideas and needs (Portner, 2008). In a mentoring relationship, the collective mindset and solidarity promote individual development by easing to develop a sense of friendship, loyalty and attentiveness among mentors and mentees (Young, Alvermann, Kaste, Henderson, & Many, 2004).

The roles expected from the mentor in the mentoring relationship are also considered as mentoring roles of the mentor (Naillioğlu Kaymak, 2017; Naillioğlu Kaymak & Sezgin, 2020; Sezgin, 2002). Mentoring roles contain some concepts like role modelling,



advocacy, facilitating professional socialization, sponsorship, providing emotional support and active encouragement (Aguilar Goxiola, 1984; Klopff & Harrison, 1981; Levinson, 1978). Galbraith and Cohen (1997) define the roles of mentors in six dimensions: interest-based role, knowledge-based role, facilitator role, the role of confrontation, role modelling and role of supporting the vision of the mentee.

The mentor exhibiting role model behaviors serves as a role model of intellectual stimulus or career-related behavior; it conveys the values of the profession, serves as an example of admiration and imitation, and shapes the professional identities of the students (Aguilar Goxiola, 1984). On the other hand, it is the motivation that prominent behavior in the role model in Sezgin's (2002) and Galbraith and Cohen's studies (1997). Here is, the mentor aims to 'raise his thoughts and feelings, report belief in talent, ensure to take a safe risk, and provide opinions on his behavior' against the mentee.

The desire to be like the mentor may motivate the protégé to be more proactive in information-seeking (Lankau & Scandura, 2002; McCauley & Young, 1993; Morrison, 1993), and result in increased learning. Through modeling or observation (Bandura, 1977), protégés may strengthen work habits exhibited by mentors. The most basic behavior believed that advisor mentor teachers should have is that they are exemplary with their own lives (Naillioğlu Kaymak, 2017).

Another role of the school principal that can be associated with mentoring and learning culture is the role of being a source of learning. School principals perform as a resource provider, instructor, communicator, and presenter with in-depth knowledge and understanding of the evaluation of curriculum and teaching work in schools. Moreover, they have strengthened the development of

teachers with these roles (Shakeshaft & Grogan, 2013). According to Aravena (2018), mentors learned the importance of being a suitable respondent and source of knowledge. One of the six primary roles in mentoring roles displayed to mentees as a knowledge-based role (Cohen, 1993, 2003; Galbraith & Cohen, 1997). In the study of Sezgin et al. (2014), the role of resource provision is a role emphasized by the teachers and assistant principals involved in the knowledge-based upbringing behavior in the category of school principals.

Another component that can affect the mentoring of school principals is the competences that principals should have as a manager. School administrators should have three qualifications which are technical competencies which involve management processes, financial and organizational competencies; humane competencies which involve motivation, teamwork, individual psychology, and conceptual competencies which involve philosophy of education, management and organization theories and theories of leadership (Töremen & Kolay, 2003; Uslu, 2013). If management processes do not include the human dimension much in the organization, they may fail in managing a complex school structure and operation. Because of the dynamics of change in the external and internal environment, traditional competencies as human, technical and conceptual should be developed, and school principals' competencies include leadership, communication, program development, learning and teaching processes and performance assessment skills (Kondakci & Zayim, 2013).

In the literature, some of the mentoring researches point to manager competencies and behaviors within the context of mentoring. Kram and Isabella (1985) define mentoring functions as vocational support, psychosocial support, and role modelling.



According to Lankau and Scandura (2002), these functions create a sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in the role of a mentee in the organization. In the personal development sub-dimension of the mentoring scale of the principals (Yılmaz et al., 2015), developing empathy in human relationships, relieving the employees when facing with anxiety and stress, and valuing the personality of the employees are among the behaviors of mentor school principals.

Learning Culture at School

Research shows that the development and effectiveness of schools are affected by many factors. These are school administrators' leadership approaches (Day & Leithwood, 2007; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood, Anderson, Mascall & Strauss, 2010), teacher-related characteristics (Darling Hammond, 2006; Tschannen Moran & Barr, 2004) and the learning capacity of the school (Collinson & Cook, 2007; Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998). Besides, the importance of a healthy and positive learning culture to support school development is emphasized in making meaningful changes in schools (Haiyan, Walker, & Xiaowei, 2017). Tichnor Wagner et al. (2016) concluded that the element (or direction) that differentiates effective schools from other schools is an influential learning culture. In this context, a strong learning culture consists of formal cooperation opportunities, common goals focused on universal high expectations, participatory leadership, and academic support to students. Garvin, Edmondson and Gino (2008) emphasized three main elements of a learning-oriented organization: a supportive learning environment, concrete learning processes and practices, and supportive leadership behavior.

Schein (2010) states that learning in organizations with a strong learning culture is seen as a value, and there is a "learning gene" in

the DNA of these organizations. Schein mentioned that with the world becoming more complex, organizations are more flexible and learning-oriented. He listed the characteristics that should be present in a culture that includes continuous learning and flexibility: proactivity, commitment to learning, positive assumptions about human nature (Y theory), belief that the environment can be managed, commitment to reality through pragmatism and questioning, positive orientation towards the future, full and clear engagement-related communication, commitment to cultural diversity, commitment to systemic thinking, and belief that cultural analysis is a valid lens set to understand and develop the world. Tichnor Wagner et al. (2016) examined learning culture in four dimensions. These dimensions include collaboration among adults, a community of learning among adults, support for the culture of learning among adults, and the culture of learning among students. In schools with a productive learning culture, there are high expectations that all students will succeed. These schools seek to promote a learning culture that prioritizes learning and success. In these schools, students are responsible for their learning. School leaders adopt a participatory understanding and are encouraging and supportive for cooperation (Tichnor Wagner et al., 2016). Successful instructional leaders care about empowering teachers by talking to them about teaching processes, encouraging collaboration/cooperation among teachers, empowering them by decision-making, autonomy, and self-efficacy (Walker, 2010). Successful teaching leaders encourage teachers and students to form a learning community (Knapp, Copland, & Talbert, 2003). Activities carried out together are important in establishing learning relationships in the institution. Working together, taking part in joint projects and jobs can be part of the learning relationship at work.



Eating together, exchanging opinions, training together or going on other trips provide learning relationships among people (Lim, 2012).

Benefits of Mentoring for Creating a Learning Culture

The mentoring practice that includes collaborative work culture becomes the main component of the teaching and learning program and changes the teaching and learning method and the relationships of the partners by creating new learning environment and opportunities in the community, also by providing an environment for innovative ideas and problem-solving (Margolin, 2011). Mentoring is a professional development attempt to increase knowledge transfer among colleagues, and it helps to create a learning culture. It differs from other professional development interventions, such as education, management, consulting, and coaching (Morgan & Rochford, 2017). Besides, leadership by communicating with people emerged as the main feature of mentoring and learning (Lim, 2005). While communicating, teachers who became school principals after the mentoring experience can learn how to build a sense of trust from the mentors who act as essential models devoted to education (Lim, 2012).

The impact of coaching and mentoring activities on organizations was mostly on the organization's culture. The positive effects of mentoring and coaching of school administrators on mentees are increased reflectivity and clarity of thinking, improved psychological well-being and trust, better problem-solving skills, gains in practitioner knowledge and skills, improved application sharing, better communication and relationships, more positive attitudes towards professional and career development and self-management and self-learning skills. The most critical reflection of coaching and mentoring activities in educational organizations and

the requirements for the promotion of learning culture is that 'reflection encouraged by practical mentoring and coaching approaches promotes a supportive learning culture in organizations' (Lord, Atkinson, & Mitchell, 2008).

Mentoring is a useful tool in creating a long-term sustainable learning culture (Morgan & Rochford, 2017). It is enabling learning communities to have a more positive understanding of the role of cooperation in learning (Mullen, 2003; Mullen & Tuten, 2010) and to achieve self-learning (Bennetts, 1995; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Portner, 2008). It lets mentees to make a change in the self-organized learning from external regulation to guidance-based self-regulation (Schunk & Mullen, 2013). A mentoring practice that includes a systematic co-working culture based on co-learning and development can change the structure, method, and relationships of the partners in the teaching and learning program (Margolin, 2011). School principals' perspective on learning and development is essential in the effective functioning of mentoring programs and in increasing the effectiveness of lifelong learning and teaching (Kutsyuruba, 2012).

Mentoring also has various contributions to executives who take the role of educational leaders. Training leaders see mentoring sessions as information sharing sessions between mentees and mentors. In order to help teachers achieve the goals and objectives of the school, practical experience is significant (Tahir et al., 2016). Besides, mentoring activities support the learning culture of an organization and increase the sense of professionalism. Therefore, the benefit for schools involved in mentoring practice is the transferability of mentoring skills to other aspects of school settings. A school staff, enriched with mentoring experience and managed by senior mentors, is likely to provide more natural change and



improvement. When mentoring and coaching approaches are 'harmonized' to the context and ethos of an organization, the impacts may be more significant, especially around collaborative learning culture. Therefore, mentoring and coaching training for school leaders can be incredibly efficient in influencing and changing school culture (Lord et al., 2008).

Mentors personally benefit from the mentoring process. One of the important benefits of mentoring for mentors is increased personal satisfaction (Ragins & Verbos, 2007). In particular, mentors' personal satisfaction increases when they think they help others improve their job performance (Schechter & Firuz, 2015) and when they present and share personal experiences that are considered to be beneficial for their colleagues (Crow, 2006). Similarly, Bolam, McMahon, Pocklington and Weindling (1995) reported four benefits of mentoring for mentors as interacting with colleagues and adapting new knowledge, learning about good and bad leadership practices, networking with colleagues, and gaining opportunities to continue professional development. One of the benefits that mentorship provides to the mentor is the personal satisfaction and job satisfaction of seeing that prospective teachers/students achieve something, increased enthusiasm, motivation, and energy to teach (Botha, 2012).

Methodology

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the mentoring roles and behaviors of school administrators in creating and developing a learning culture in schools. By employing qualitative modes of enquiry, this study follows a phenomenology design. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) argued that a phenomenological study enables to reveal various reactions or perceptions of a

phenomenon. Van Manen (2014) argued that “phenomenology aims to grasp the exclusively singular aspects (identity/essence/otherness) of a phenomenon or event.” In this study, the phenomenology design was employed because it was intended to elucidate the views, experiences, and perceptions of school administrators on creating and developing a learning culture in schools.

The participants of this study are determined by criterion sampling method and they are school administrators who have at least three years of school management experience. Mentoring, by its nature, involves the process of supporting the inexperienced by the experienced. At least three years of experience in school administration has been chosen because it can be a period that can affect both mentoring and shaping the learning culture of the school.

Maximum diversity method – namely diversity in sample selection to allow for a more excellent range of application of the findings- have been applied to reveal different views, thoughts, and perceptions (Merriam, 2009). Thus, the participants were diversified in terms of demographic characteristics such as gender (male, female), education status (undergraduate, master, PhD), experiences (very experienced, less experienced) and school type (primary, secondary, high school). Table 1 shows the participant information.



Table 1.
Participant information

Participants	Gender	Education status	Seniority of school administration	Seniority of school administration at their school	School type
SA1	M	Undergraduate	15 years	3 months	Secondary school
SA2	F	Undergraduate	5 years	3 years	Primary school
SA3	M	Master	5 years	3 years	Primary school
SA4	M	Master	8 years	2 months	Primary school
SA5	M	Master	5 years	5 years	Primary school
SA6	M	Undergraduate	23 years	3 months	Secondary school
SA7	M	PhD	8 years	5 years	High school
SA8	M	Master	13 years	5 years	Primary school
SA9	M	Master	21 years	3 years	Primary school
SA10	M	Master	16 years	4 years	High school

Note: SA: school administrator, F: female, M: male

One of the participants is a female school administrator. In Turkey, only 7.2% of school principals are female (OECD, 2019). This data is reflected in the number of female participants in the study. Most of the participants have graduate degree ($n = 7$). Also, three participants have undergraduate degree. When the seniority of the participants is examined, it offers a variety from very experienced (23 years) to less experienced (5 years). Similarly, the seniority of school administrators in their schools is varied (from 2 months to 5 years).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with school administrators. Patton (2002) argued that the aim of interviewing is to allow the researcher to get into the other person's perspective. Therefore, the opinions, thoughts and perceptions of school administrators were examined in depth through the interview technique. Interview questions were determined with a three-step strategy. Firstly, the researchers created an interview question pool of twenty questions based on the relevant literature on mentoring and learning culture. Secondly, a field expert and a language expert examined the questions in the question pool. Based on their views, some questions were removed while some questions were changed. Finally, a pilot interview was held with two school administrators to determine the understandability and appropriateness of the questions. After these interviews, the question form was finalized. Typical questions are *"As a school administrator, what is your perspective on learning and development? Do you contribute to the learning and development of someone or are you willing to learn from others? What do you think about learning and developing together in school?"* A total of 10 interviews with school administrators were conducted face to face. Interviews were held at pre-determined appointment times in the schools of the participants. The interviews took about 60 minutes, except for one of them; they were audio-recorded with the permission of the participants.

Content analysis was conducted in analysing the data. In the content analysis, the original codes, categories and themes of the research are obtained from the data collected within the scope of the research. This analysis technique contributes to the researchers to interpret and summarize the obtained data (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). The qualitative data were analysed by the researchers in a three-stage strategy: (i) transcription, (ii) reading each text (texts produced as a



result of transcription) in detail and coding according to pre-developed initial code list, and (iii) reaching significant themes from the codes and reporting findings. Firstly, researchers transcribed audio-recordings verbatim. Following transcription of the audio-recordings, each text was read in detail by two researchers. Subsequently, the interviews were coded by utilizing the code list. In the coding process, some codes were changed, some of them were removed, and new codes were generated. Finally, similar codes were combined, significant themes in the mentoring process were determined, and the report of findings was written.

In qualitative research, it is vital to collect highly valid and reliable data. In this study, various strategies have been used to reach valid and reliable results. Firstly, in this study, the expert review was used in order to gain a different perspective and improve the quality of the study process. Therefore, two qualitative research experts supported us during the examination of the interview form and presentation of the findings. Secondly, the triangulation strategy was used to increase the consistency and intelligibility of the research and to obtain various perspectives. Thirdly, the researchers presented the opinions of the participants in full by making detailed description (or quotations) in the reporting of the findings. Finally, the consistency strategy was used to achieve more reliable results. Two researchers (author 2 and author 3) carried out the coding and conceptualization processes of the data obtained from the participants separately. The consistency of the coding and conceptualizations produced by both researchers was determined according to the Miles and Huberman formula. In this model, a similarity rate called internal consistency and conceptualized as the consensus among coders is reached. The similarity rate reached in this study is 84% according to this formula. The consensus between coders is expected to be at least 80%. In this

respect, it can be said that there is consistency between coders (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Results

Mentor School Administrators' Competence Areas (1)

In the theme of mentor school administrators' competence areas, the findings were grouped into 'conceptual, human and technical competence areas' categories. The prominent codes in mentor school administrators' views on 'conceptual competence area' are to demonstrate a coherent/inclusive management approach, to participate actively, to take initiative, to have a visionary perspective, to create a common goal (to raise awareness about goals, to talk about goals, to ensure participating in goals), to make a joint decision, and to evaluate whether the goals have been achieved. It was stated by the participants that all stakeholders should have a say in the school and that managing together is a more accurate and easy management style. The participant views on this subject are as follows:

Authority increases as it is shared. I think it is a more accurate and easy way to manage the school with teachers and parents. You can't do anything alone. We need to get everyone involved. (SA4)

The codes that come to the forefront in 'human competence area' can be expressed as giving psychological support to their employees, motivating them, giving importance to honesty, kindness, creating a positive school climate, adopting fair and humane management and valuing the individual. Finally, 'technical competencies area' includes competences such as dominating the legislation, creating resources, identifying, and coordinating business processes, benefiting from technology and displaying professional behaviors.



Mentor School Administrator's Perspective and Contribution on Learning and Development (2)

In the theme of mentor school administrator's perspective and contribution on learning and development, the findings were grouped into 'learning and development perspective' and 'contribution to learning and development' categories. Codes that stand out in their views on 'learning and development perspective' are being open to learning, adapting to the changing world, valorizing the learner, co-learning and development. According to the participants, to work as a mentor, the administrator should be open to continuous learning, renew herself and be equipped to adapt to changing conditions. However, it is emphasized that the mentor school administrator should value the learner, provide the necessary facilities for her/his and learn and develop with all employees. Moreover, it was stated that the mentor administrator should conduct the learning process with a systematic working strategy and develop himself personally. The participant views on this subject are as follows:

I think people should be open to learning. The teaching role or the developing role should not be only on the school administrator or school principal. The school administrator should also look at this. What can I learn too? For example, he should ask for what I can learn from everyone. (SA7)

Codes that stand out in school administrators' views on 'contribution to learning and development' are supporting learning, encouraging learning, caring about the contribution to learning and leading the learning, and reflecting the excitement of learning. Some participants stated that they cared about contributing to the learning and development of others, leading to learning, and reflecting the

excitement of learning. One of the participant views on contribution to learning and development are as follows:

If development and learning have slowed down in an institution, it will, of course, be difficult for the institution to develop and to work towards improving its vision. If someone learns that excitement while learning, to see it in the eyes of that person and that stakeholder, of course, we will be very pleased. (SA9)

Professional Learning Activities in Creating Learning Culture (3)

The findings obtained in the theme of ‘professional learning activities in creating learning culture’ are grouped in the categories of ‘evaluation of existing professional learning activities’, ‘personal and institutional learning activities’ and ‘support to career development’. The professional learning activities mentioned by administrators are in-service training, workshops and seminars conducted by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and provincial organizations, attended by teachers and administrators. The prominent codes in ‘evaluation of professional learning activities’ are insufficient programs and non-professional studies, the problem of time, difficulty in creating a suitable environment for learning, closed management approach to learning. The participant views on this subject are as follows:

I do not think the current professional learning works very well. Because there are no suitable programs to develop teachers at the moment by the MoNE or provincial organizations. (SA7)

Codes that stated by school administrators on the category of ‘personal and institutional learning activities’ are academic training (congresses, conferences, workshops, seminars, postgraduate training, etc.), in-service training (central and local training), specialist training (investigator, therapist, etc.), group meetings,



cultural visits (museum visits), civil society activities, arts, sports and social activity courses. The aims of the administrators to participate in these activities in and out of school are to increase the level of personal knowledge (e.g. foreign language) and skills, to improve their career and/or to gain knowledge and skills that will contribute to corporate work and operation. Institutional learning activities are being carried out with stakeholders both inside and outside the school. Almost all of the participants stated that they made a significant effort to involve employees in institutional learning activities such as conferences and seminars in line with the needs of teachers, various courses and in-service training. Some participant views on the subject are as follows:

I apply for in-service activities. I applied to in-service training to eliminate my lack of knowledge about project writing. (SA2)

When you ask for learning and development together at school, I think of the activities implemented in the school. However, if each individual provides his / her personal development, learning and development can be achieved together in school. (SA10)

Finally, in the 'support to career development' category, school administrators stated that they care and support their employees' career development to create an effective learning culture. In this context, the majority of the participants firstly stated that it is valuable to be an example to the teachers and then need to encourage the teachers for getting a graduate education. Most of them stated that therefore they were getting a graduate education. The participant views on this subject are as follows:

...I encourage them to do graduate studies. I have teachers that I refer to and assist in their interviews. I sent my teacher to meet my teachers at the university, I was a reference. We provide convenience for teachers in their

*graduate studies. One day or afternoon in the schedule of teachers are emptied.
(SA1)*

Mentoring Roles in Creating Learning Culture (4)

In the theme of 'mentoring roles in creating a learning culture', participants' views were determined in seven categories. These are 'being a learning resource role', 'cooperation role', 'providing feedback role', 'social capital provision and sharing role', 'being a role model', 'development and enculturation role' and 'intellectual stimulation role'.

Being a learning resource role

This role has been examined in three categories as being a source of communication, information, and experience expert. To be a source of communication, administrators use of correct and constructive language in relationships, especially with the parents. They stated that as a communication expert, they conveyed their knowledge and skills to teachers about how to establish communication. To be a source of information, they share knowledge on education and training issues, legislation and official correspondence and teaching field. They emphasized that they are constantly renewing themselves, researching and supporting the employees on their demands to be a source of information for teachers. Finally, they stated that they conveyed their experiences to teachers in and outside of the school and made them gain different perspectives as a source of experience. They said that working in different socio-economic regions, in different schools and with different teachers make them gain experience. The following statements are examples of school administrators' views as a source of learning:



I see it as a source of experience. Because every year you go through different events. You encounter different sources of stress. You face crisis situations. Moreover, there are things you get from here, I think it is more important to give them to the staff as a source of experience. (SA9)

Cooperation role

Cooperation role is grouped into the sub-categories of 'coordinating', 'monitoring and evaluation', 'supporting' and 'creating colleague solidarity'. In the cooperation role, it has come to the forefront to organize meetings suitable for teaching purposes and to coordinate teaching activities. In addition, the school administrators stated that they formed teams to develop colleagues' solidarity among teachers, and they matched experienced and inexperienced teachers in these teams. Furthermore, issues such as monitoring and evaluating the teaching process and teachers' learning development and directing teachers to in-service activities and school rituals were emphasized. The following are participatory views on vocational learning and improving cooperation:

I think that teachers' learning at school is based on colleague solidarity. Learning takes place at an activity where experienced teachers match with less experienced teachers. (SA10)

Providing feedback role

The providing feedback role to create an effective learning culture based on the opinions of school administrators is considered valuable. The findings obtained in this category are grouped into sub-categories of 'feedback subjects' and 'feedback purposes'. Feedback subjects are warnings on class attendance, school shift, and so on issues, assessment of in-school activities, assessment of children's behavior, classroom management, classroom visits and course supervisions. However, school administrators provide feedback for

specific purposes. The codes for these feedback purposes are analyzing the current situation, giving positive feedback, consultation (one-to-one interview), verbal constructive stimulation/criticism, reward (verbal or written thank and appreciate praise) and developing self-awareness. Administrators stated that they observed teachers in in-school processes such as on duty, entry and exit, activities at school, and behaviors with students. Also, they made classroom visits and therefore observed teachers' classroom management skills such as time management, teaching methods and techniques, and relations with students. After the observations, the school administrators stated that they carried out one-to-one interviews with teachers and made a situation assessment with their providing feedback role. Some participant views on providing feedback role are as follows:

How do you know where you are without feedback. (SA6)

...For example, during a class visit, I noted the positive things I saw in the back of my grade sheet. I have written positive features such as materials, student behavior, class dominance. After class observation, I read to my teacher friend what I wrote. He said there's nothing negative here. I said these are the positive things we've seen. Other than that, I talked about the negative things I saw, I had suggestions...I use feedback without forgetting that the other person is our colleague, without breaking his heart. (SA4)

Social capital provision and sharing role

Within the scope of social capital provision and sharing role, sub-categories of 'social capital acquisition and contribution' and 'reflection of social capital to teachers' have been established. Firstly, the sub-category of social capital acquisition and contribution includes the views of the administrator on ways of acquiring social networks and the contributions of the social capital to himself. Almost all school administrators stated that their social environment



and networks were exceptionally large. School administrators stated that they obtained their social capital from past or ongoing union relations, relations during graduate or postgraduate education and/or personal social relations. Moreover, it was emphasized that social capital contributes to broadening the point of view, enabling to see the differences, and seizing the opportunity to learn from others. Secondly, in the sub-category of the reflection of social capital to the teachers, it is mentioned about the reflections of the social capital of the school administrators on the teachers. In this context, opinions were expressed on being a reference for teachers and creating various ways of interaction. A participant view on the role of social capital provision and sharing is as follows:

I have a very wide social network because I was the president of the union before. My recognition is high. I have a network of bureaucracy, principals, and teachers... In the evenings, we do consultations with my friends. I'm in constant communication... I invite school principals, provincial district directors and senior bureaucrats to the programs I do at my school. I make my teacher friends interact with my environment through such means. (SA4)

Being a role model

The findings obtained in being a role model were grouped into 'the exemplary life role model' and 'professional role model' subcategories. Firstly, in the exemplary life role model sub-category, it was stated that being presentable, obeying working hours, being impartial and fair, paying attention to behaviors (being kind) and being sincere. Secondly, the professional role model sub-category focuses on field expertise, successful management characteristics, demonstrating exemplary executive behaviors, and becoming a training leader role model. Here are some views on the role of role model:

As an education leader, we must be role models... I think I'm a role model for teachers. I'm trying to be a role model with my dress, coming before them in the morning, chatting with them and getting involved. (SA1)

Development and enculturation role

Another mentoring role of school administrator was determined as 'development and enculturation role'. The findings obtained in this category are grouped into 'orientation', 'developing a sense of belonging', and 'facilitating guidance' sub-categories. Within the scope of the orientation, the school principals carry out studies to welcome, recognize, introduce, and integrate the teacher, introduce the school and the environment, and provide appropriate working environments. However, codes of developing a sense of belonging are organizing activities, ensuring family participation, and supporting participation. School administrators organize and participate in activities for teachers such as breakfast days and celebrations on special days to adapt to school and to develop a sense of belonging to the school. The activities support the participation of teachers with their families to establish more genuine social interactions. Some school administrators stated that they guide teachers on issues such as bureaucratic issues, communication with parents, classroom management, and sharing innovative practices. Some participant views on the role of development and enculturation are presented below:

If we know that the new teacher will come, I will greet him with flowers at the door when the teacher arrives. (SA1)

I make informative speeches about professional and bureaucratic procedures, whether or not they concern them. From time to time I host them in my room, I want them to see the functioning. (SA9)



Intellectual stimulation role

In this role two categories were determined as 'developing teachers' intellectual accumulation' and 'to gain them intellectual rich perspective'. Within the scope of developing teachers' intellectual background, administrators encourage teachers to participate in professional studies, follow professional and academic publications, and research and monitor innovative practices. One participant's say, "I think that the school principal should encourage our teachers to think differently. I think they need to give them a new direction." (SA8) is vital to show that school administrators should have a "stimulating" role for teachers. Participants stated some codes for the category of "gaining intellectual rich perspective to teachers " such as encouraging, developing abstract thinking-giving depth, paving the way and giving different examples, suggesting a multifaceted look.

Learning Barriers Encountered in The Implementation of Mentoring in Learning Culture (5)

School administrators addressed various barriers in the theme of 'learning barriers encountered in the implementation of mentoring in learning culture'. These barriers were examined in two categories: 'personal problems with teacher characteristics' and 'time and space constraints'. School administrators emphasized teacher characteristics most among the learning barriers. Accordingly, participants often think that the teacher structure, which is closed to learning and change, hinders learning processes in the school. In particular, the teachers who are reluctant towards professional development, approaching retirement (in the upper age group), sees himself self-sufficient, using traditional teaching methods were not involved in learning processes at school. Some managers expressed the concept of peer opposition. According to this, teachers who are closed to

learning and development at school negatively affect other teachers, and they form a resistance group to the professional learning activities in the school. The other obstacles in terms of teacher characteristics are teachers who are experiencing burnout with incompatible teacher structure. Learning barriers related to teacher characteristics are stated as being closed to learning and change, the structure of old and discordant teachers, childcare, problems in the career system, colleagues' opposition and professional burnout. In this context, they mentioned the perception of lack of knowledge and experience and perceptual and generational conflicts. Accordingly, administrators emphasized that the inadequacy of the school in terms of physical facilities such as classrooms, conference halls, sports halls and meeting rooms caused some problems. On the other hand, some participants stated that lack of time and excessive workload prevent learning processes. They stated that the school's management, technique, care, parent relations and other tasks lead to a significant waste of time. Therefore, they have difficulty in monitoring the development and learning of teachers. Below are some views on the learning barriers encountered in the implementation of mentoring in learning culture:

The teacher profile in the school consists of teachers in the middle and upper age group. They don't want to get tired. There is resistance to innovations due to the retired teacher profile...(SA1)

I talk to teachers all the time, I recommend some website. However, teachers have a state of despair. They do not think that what they have learned will contribute. There is no career step in teaching...(SA4)

In national education, teachers are mainly female. I think women performance in education falls after she gets married and has a child. (SA6)

As a senior administrator in terms of my professional work-life, I can experience perceptual and generational conflicts in my dialogue with a teacher friend who is close to retirement during the mentoring process. (SA9)

Self-Assessment and Benefits of Mentoring (6)

The findings obtained in this theme are grouped in the categories of 'self-assessment of mentoring' and 'benefits of mentoring'. In the category of 'self-assessment', the school administrators stated the strengths and weaknesses of their mentoring. School administrators expressed their strengths in the mentoring process primarily as an empathic approach, adaptation to teamwork, cooperation and influence. School administrators generally think that they have practical communication skills, are prone to cooperation and can influence employees through persuasion. They also stated taking an impartial and fair approach as their strengths. However, school administrators also think that they have some weaknesses in the mentoring process. Some participants stated that they lacked in subjects such as other teaching field knowledge and adult education skills, while others stated that they were impatient. One participant sees himself as weak in the mentoring process as he does not have the authority to reward employees, such as giving appreciation or certificates to employees. Some participants' views on their strengths and weaknesses in the mentoring process are as follows:

I think I'm good with an empathetic approach... In any crisis, I try to act by thinking about the situation of our friend in front of us, that is, by calculating the mood at that moment. (SA9)

If you do not adopt a neutral and fair approach, you cannot act as a manager. (SA1)

I am an energetic person with high communication skills...(SA2)

I feel that we are inadequate because it is not in our hands to reward, that is, to give a certificate of appreciation. (SA10)

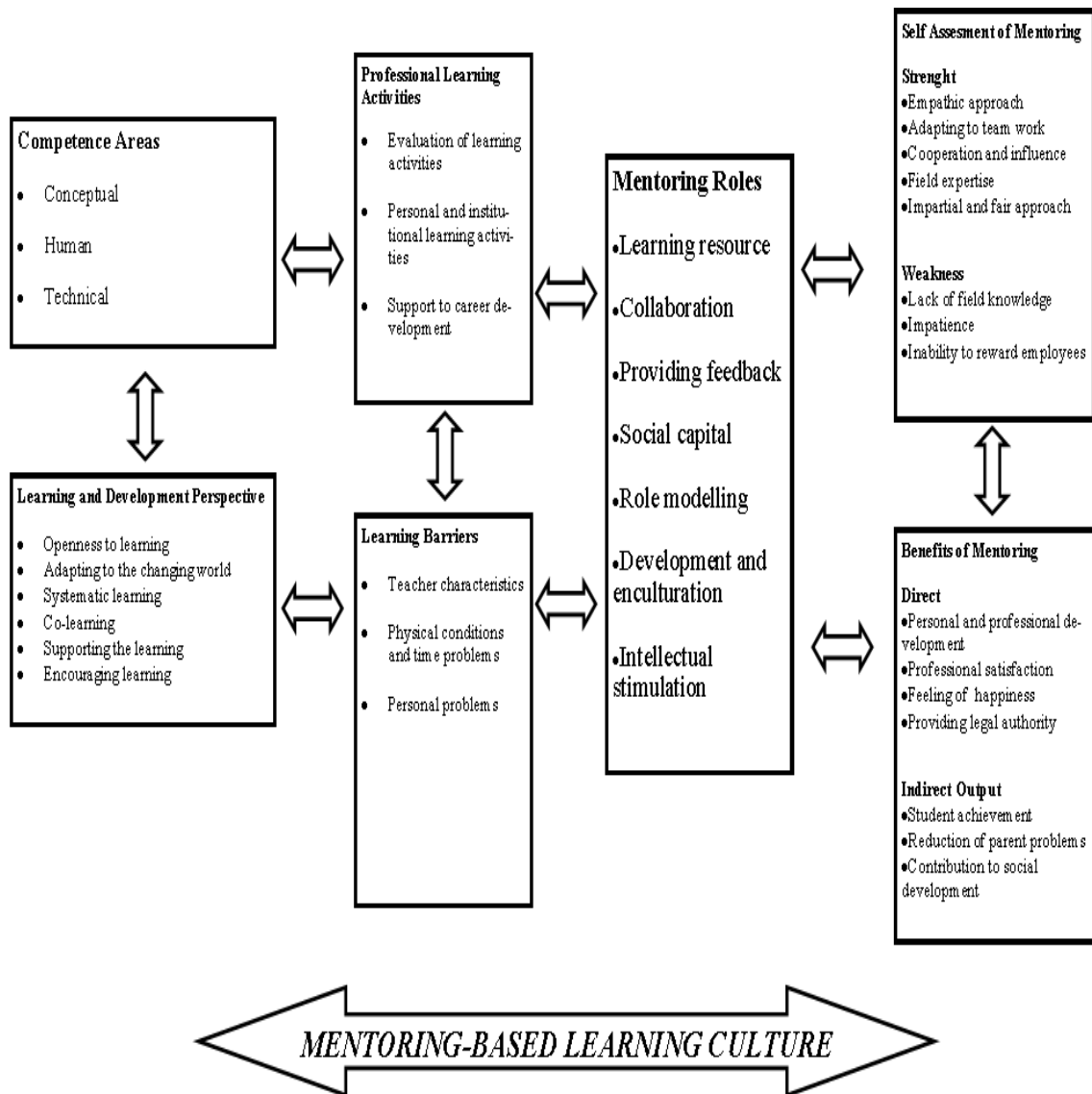
In the category of 'benefits of mentoring' the school administrators stated that the mentoring process has many direct and

indirect benefits both individually and organizationally. Direct benefits stated by school administrators are the personal and professional development of them and the teachers, the happiness of raising someone, the professional satisfaction and the rising legal authority power of the administrators in the school. According to the administrators, one of the essential components of the mentoring process is the personal and professional training of the mentee. In the mentoring process, administrators have emphasized that they have made themselves accepted by employees through the transfer of knowledge and experience. Thus, they stated that their legitimacy of authority was ensured at school. The indirect benefits were emphasized as the increase of student achievement as a result of the teacher's self-training, reduction of problems experienced with parents and rising social development. Some participant views within the scope of this finding are as follows:

Reduction in problems with parents, complaints are reduced. My mentoring for teachers makes them grow. The more the teacher develops himself, the less problems with the parents are experienced and I get less complaints and less problems. (SA5)

Figure 1

Mentoring-Based Learning Culture Model (How mentoring was used by school administrators to support a professional learning culture)



Discussion and Conclusion

This study aims to examine the mentoring roles and behaviors exhibited by school administrators in the context of creating and the development of learning culture in schools comprehensively and holistically. The findings of the research were discussed in the context of mentoring and learning culture with the theme of administrators' competence areas, perspectives and contribution on learning and development, professional learning activities, mentoring roles, learning barriers, self-assessment, and benefits of mentoring. The conclusions of the study primarily were handled according to the findings of themes, and then holistically. The mentoring of school administrators, the learning culture in schools, and the mentoring experiences and benefits of school administrators in the creation of this culture have been utilized in the analysis of the conceptual framework. In the study, a mentoring-based learning culture model was created (Figure 1).

In the theme of competence areas as conceptual, human and technical is emphasized by school administrators in this study. The administrators who have conceptual competences set high goals, take initiatives for creating shared goals and evaluate whether the goals have been achieved. The conceptual competences can be stated as the ability of the school administrator to think abstractly and to look at the organization as a whole. Also, it may be said that the school administrators adopt a distributive leadership approach and care about making joint decisions with this competence. This conclusion is consistent with literature. Tahir et al. (2016) stated that in the model they developed, distributive leadership must be practically applied for successful mentoring. Lim (2012) stated that the role of school principals who are mentors in Singapore is to observe, to be a role



model, to work in collaboration and to provide opportunities for employees. In the findings of the human competence area of administrators, the emphasis has been placed on giving psychological support, motivating, and valuing the individual. The human competences can be seen as the ability to work in harmony and effectiveness with other people and to guide and help them come to the fore in the school. It can be said that the codes regard to human competence area are partly consistent with the literature (Kram & Isabella, 1985; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Töremen & Kolay, 2003; Yılmaz, et al., 2015). Under the heading of technical competencies, the technical knowledge and skills that the administrator must have in order to perform his / her administrative duties are explained. In this direction, the knowledge, methods, and techniques of the mentor school administrator about the internal and external processes are emphasized. It can be said that the codes regard to technical competence area are largely consistent with the literature (Töremen & Kolay, 2003; Kondakci & Zayim, 2013).

In the theme of mentor school administrator's perspective and contribution to learning and development, two categories were identified as perspectives and contributions to learning and development. In the category of 'learning and development perspective', the emphasis was placed on mentoring school principals being open to learning in general and adapting to change. According to the mentor school administrators, the point of view to learning and development and the concrete contributions provided are the guiding factors in the formation and development of learning culture in organizations. In this context, mentor school administrators should be individuals who are open to learning and change, have continuous learning skills, renew themselves and learn to learn. The importance of the view of "being open to learning" is expressed in the literature

(Hawkey, 1998; Sinclair, 2003). The mentors must be selected among those willing to develop themselves with a professional perspective and to contribute to the development of others (Daloz, 2012). The idea of “adapting to the changing world” is explained by the concept of “boundaryless career” as an awareness of change. The ability to change through normal development and learning is indispensable for a successful career (Hall, 1996). The administrators’ views on the learner reveal that the importance given to the learner as a mentor opens the doors of communication towards the culture of learning and development in the school. This approach, which one of the school administrators (SA7) expresses as ‘valuing or caring’ has been expressed in Bakioğlu et al. (2013) study as ‘showing care in the mentoring relationship’. The prominent view in administrator views on co-learning and development is that firstly personal development and then learning, and development together will emerge. This finding is consistent with the literature (Kutsyuruba, 2012; Margolin, 2011; Mullen, 2003; Mullen & Tuten, 2010). The understanding of ‘there is much to learn from colleagues (SA1)’ constitutes a mentoring perspective based on the teachers ‘and administrators’ efforts to develop their colleagues as a professional responsibility. Thus, a school culture based on participatory, open to learning and development, cooperative and cooperative learning is formed, and the professional development of teachers is supported.

In the category of ‘contributions to learning and development’, the emphasis was placed on administrators’ supportive and encouraging understanding for their employees to participate in learning processes such as graduate and in-service training. The codes that regard to ‘contributions to learning and development’ category are largely consistent with literature (Knapp et al., 2003; Walker, 2010). However, the finding of reflecting the excitement of



learning code reached in the study was described by Bolam et al. (1995) in the literature as an important mentor manager characteristic of having an open, warm and enthusiastic behavior.

In the theme of 'professional learning activities in creating learning culture', the majority of school administrators stated that they attach importance to professional learning activities to institutionalize learning and create an influential learning culture. Additionally, they emphasized that they participate consciously and willingly in personal learning activities and are aware of the value of learning. These findings are consistent with Lim (2012) regarding personal and institutional learning activities.

The majority of school principals have argued that employees care and support their career development in creating a productive learning culture. In this context, they believe the importance of being exemplary in terms of learning and development, encouraging and facilitating career development was emphasized. Findings of 'support to career development' category are consistent with the literature. İbrahimođlu (2013) concludes that while the mentor's extensive network of relationships supports the employee to establish new relationships within the organization, career support and psychosocial support can also reinforce the employee's sense of constant effort and persistence. The supporting career development behavior of school administrators is partly similar to vision support role behaviors (Galbraith & Cohen, 1997) displayed in mentoring roles.

In order to create a productive learning culture in schools, school administrators stated that they exhibited various mentoring roles. These roles are being a source of communication, information and experience as an expert. As a communication expert, they

provide guidance to teachers when and where necessary, especially in the use of correct and constructive language. They have mentioned that they are a source of information, especially in terms of education and training issues, legislation and official correspondence and teaching field. Finally, as being a source of experience, they convey their daily routines and professional experiences to their staff. The views that regard to 'being a learning resource role' category are largely consistent with the literature (Aravena, 2018; Cohen, 1993, 2003; Galbraith & Cohen, 1997; Sezgin et al., 2014; Shakeshaft & Grogan, 2013).

In cooperation role, the school administrators stated that they took initiatives such as coordinating, creating colleague solidarity, supporting and promoting teachers for their learning. They emphasized that they matched experienced and inexperienced teachers in teams and formed certain rituals. Thus, they create suitable environments for teachers to build bridges for learning culture with their cooperation role. These views that regard to 'cooperation role' category is largely consistent with literature (Hopkins Thompson, 2000; Kuter, 2006; Tichnor Wagner et. al, 2016). Additionally, in Aravena's (2018) study, the role of school principals to be supporters to new principals includes a more general definition than the role of support in developing the cooperation described in this study. Similarly, empowering and supporting are some of the five main themes that Schechter and Firuz (2015) found in the metaphors of mentoring.

In the study, the providing feedback role is considered valuable to create an effective learning culture by administrators. And most of the administrators stated that they were careful about giving constructive feedback. Feedback (Bolam et al., 1995) and especially



constructive feedback (Naillioğlu Kaymak, 2017) are priorities of a good mentor. Galbraith and Cohen (1997) argued that a mentor in the context of interest-based mentoring offers descriptive observational feedback and constructive feedback in the confrontational role.

School administrators emphasized the importance of social capital provision and sharing as another mentoring role in the personal or institutional learning process. In this role, the administrator is the person who contributes to the social capital that s/he and her/his environment has. Most of the administrators want to share their social capital with the employees of the institution to provide public benefit and cooperation and coordination instead of their own interests. They stated that these social networks were formed through union works, graduate education process and personal social environment. This finding evokes Coleman's (1988) concept of solidarity social capital. The social capital provision and sharing role is similar to that of the mentor's definition of professional socialization and sponsorship role which contain to introduce the mentee with other colleagues and to support the career of the mentee (Aguilar Goxiola, 1984; Klopff and Harrison, 1981; Levinson, 1978; Noe, 1988).

The school administrators emphasized that they were trying to be role models to the employees in the mentoring process to create an effective learning culture as their educational leader. However, they strive to provide an exemplary life and become a role model from a professional perspective. In this direction, they stated that they are trying to present an exemplary life in cases such as being presentable, obeying working hours, being impartial and fair, paying attention to behaviors (being kind) and being sincere. Findings of being professional role model are consistent with the literature (Aguilar

Goxiola, 1984; Scandura, 2002). The finding of being sincere as a mentor administrator is consistent with Yildirim's (2013) study.

Another mentoring role used by school administrators is 'development and enculturation role'. School administrators stated that they use strategies such as orientation, sense of belonging, and facilitating guidance to ensure teachers' personal and professional development and adaptation to school culture in the process of creating a learning culture. Some participants stated that they were working to develop a sense of belonging on teachers to the school to make the orientation process more effective. Also, the activities establish an enculturation environment for the school staff and administrators to transfer their culture to each other. Lydiah and Nasongo (2009) stated that the school's learning climate has improved with the participation of headteachers in the activities.

Finally, the role of intellectual stimulation mentoring was determined in this study. Within the scope of this role, codes about developing teachers' intellectual accumulation and to gain them intellectual rich perspective have emerged. These codes are compatible with various studies in the literature. In the study of Aguilar (1984), the number of grown in both sexes stating that mentoring has increased their skills and intellectual developments are 85% (highest rate). Similarly, 84% stated that mentors provided them with intellectual stimulation. According to Bakioğlu et al. (2013), the mentor, in the dimension of critical friendship, exhibits a sincere attitude in the communication with a mentee and uses strategies for the mentee to examine and criticize himself carefully. Aravena (2018) concluded that school principals play the role of a critical friend, who supports the development of intellectual inquiry into new principals.



In the process of creating an effective learning culture in schools, mentor administrators stated that they faced some learning barriers. These are personal problems with teacher characteristics and time and space constraints. When the participant views are examined, the most emphasized learning barrier is related to teacher characteristics as being closed to learning and change, the structure of old and discordant teachers. Bolam et al. (1995) and Luecke (2004) mentioned the importance of harmonious personality structure for the success of the mentoring process. A willingness to learn is defined among the characteristics of a successful mentee determined by executive mentors (Walker, Croy & Tin, 1993). School administrators talked about the physical conditions of the school and learning barriers related to the problem of time. School administrators stated that time and space constraints hindered learning processes. Time constrain is one of the most frequently mentioned problems in the literature during the mentoring process (Aguilar Goxiola, 1984; Nailliođlu Kaymak, 2017; Noe, 1988; Tahir et al., 2016). Similarly, according to Kuter (2016), the excessive workload of teaching affects the quality of mentoring support and slows down the mentoring process.

In this study, various strengths and weaknesses of school administrators in creating an effective learning culture and mentoring process has been stated with the views on self-assessment of mentoring. School administrators expressed their strengths in the mentoring process as showing an empathic approach, adapting to teamwork, cooperation and influence, field knowledge (their graduation fields), impartial and fair approach. On the other hand, school administrators have also indicated some weaknesses. These include knowledge of the field (outside their graduation field) and

adult education, impatience and inability to reward employees. It can be said that these findings are new for the literature.

The school administrators stated that the mentoring process has many direct and indirect benefits, both organizationally and individually. In this context, school administrators stated that teachers and themselves developed and renewed themselves personally and professionally during the mentoring process. The direct benefits of mentoring can be expressed as the happiness and motivation of raising someone, professional satisfaction and the rising legal authority power of the administrators in the school. The training of teachers in the mentoring process, like a butterfly effect, can contribute to the increase of student success, decrease the problems experienced with parents, and improvement of social development. The findings related to the direct and indirect benefits of mentoring are consistent with the relevant literature (Bolam et al., 1995; Crow, 2006; Lord et al., 2008; Ragins & Verbos, 2007; Schechter & Firuz, 2015).

According to the findings of this study, as a summary, the competence areas, perspectives and contributions of mentor school administrators are important factors for school administrators to exist as an effective administrator in the learning culture and to develop this culture among school staff. Professional learning activities act as a bridge in the creation and development of learning culture. Mentoring roles of the school principal revealed in this study as useful tools that will be used to create and maintain the learning culture among individuals and within the school organization.

Findings of this study are expected to contribute to the relevant literature on the development of educational administrators and the learning-oriented mentoring roles of the school principal.

Nevertheless, the learning barriers expressed in this study should be taken into consideration by administrators in the display of mentoring roles that will support the learning culture in schools. The learning-oriented mentoring roles identified in this study and contributions of the mentoring in developing the learning culture can be suggested as research topics for the researchers.

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