

# Primary School Principals in Turkey: Their Working Conditions and Professional Profiles

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**Abstract**—In order to achieve effective management, the professional and individual characteristics and qualifications of school principals and their system-oriented perception is very important. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct regular comprehensive studies into the profiles of school principals. The purpose of this study is to determine the perceptions of primary school principals about their working conditions and to present their professional profiles. The questionnaire was distributed to 1475 respondents and 1428 valid questionnaires were evaluated. The results of the research were discussed and compared to other similar studies.

**Keywords**—education, education management, primary school principal, principals' profiles

## I. INTRODUCTION

EDUCATION, training and thus schools have always been a priority in the development process of nations. For this reason schools have always been ranked highly among organizations in which the public, administrative bodies and scientific authorities all show interest. Rapid socio-economic transformations parallel to improvements in science necessitate the launching of new management models, in schools as well as in other organizations. Models with a greater emphasis on management participation, shaped via these changes, have deeply modified traditional expectations of school principals. Expectations are now less definite and more complicated. [1]. Similar changes in school management are expected at an accelerating pace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore, apart from the fundamental administrative skills, the principals of the future should be equipped for the new leadership roles shaping the schools according to the necessities of the community [2]. Thus, a well-arranged series of studies is demanded to enhance the educational level of future school principals [3]. The working conditions, problems, individual and professional qualifications and expectations of school principals situated in the system should be scientifically analysed beforehand, then. Given this analysis, it will be possible to train and recruit for schools in a manner which meets the needs of the new century.

Educational management has only recently been put on a scientific footing in Turkey. However, research has been

undertaken over the last twenty-five years, rendering remarkable findings concerning the efficiency of educational principals, especially in primary schools, their training necessities, the way they utilize their time, their job satisfaction etc. For instance Bursalioğlu conducted a study explaining the current and expected proficiencies of primary school principals [4]. Other similar research was conducted by Akdeniz on high school principals and by Sacir (1978) on the principals of girls' technical schools. [5] [6].

With the help of research conducted by Kaynakçı [7], Alkan [8] and Aksoy [9], the importance and the amount of time devoted to managerial affairs by primary school principals were examined. Similarly Başar [10] and Balcı [11] investigated the "Inspectional Duties of School Principals" and "The Job Satisfaction of School Principals" respectively.

A survey by Celik dealt with the state policy of training educational administrators in Turkey, establishing that training of school principals was not perceived as a governmental and educational priority, most of the educational directors did not receive any training in educational management and the training offered did not sufficiently prepare principals for managerial positions [12].

Another issue investigators have been working on is the resource problem in Turkish education. One study on this issue was conducted by Kavak, Ekinçi and Gökçe [13] under the title of "Resource Searching in Primary Education", revealing a wide spectrum of opinion about the financing of state schools, from governmental subsidy to privatization. The participants of the research all conclude additional resources (parents, municipalities, circulating capital, voluntary grants, government contribution), are there to be exploited.

As in the other levels of the Turkish Education System, there are many problems in the obligatory Primary Education stage. According to research conducted by Basaran in 1975, primary school management was deficient in pre-service and in-service training. Furthermore, financial constraint severely hampered provision of facilities (buildings/student equipment); and there is an imbalance between villages and cities concerning revenue and the quantity of the buildings; primary schools obtain most of their resources by money collected via public activities [14]. Another study by Akbiyik: "Application Problems of Eight Year Primary Schools" supports similar conclusions [15]. According to a study by Demirel [16] into the problems of eight-year primary schools,

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the two major problems remain inadequate buildings and poor equipment, especially in migration areas.

The body of research summarized above was mostly conducted on restricted samples by the Ministry of Education in just a few cities. Therefore it is necessary to have more comprehensive research into the perceptions, problems, personal and professional features and expectations of school principals.

To be able to improve policies for school principals, research into the educational system should be conducted in an integrated and regular fashion at every level. In most developed countries, especially in the USA, regular comprehensive studies are undertaken with the cooperation of universities and experts in order to improve the educational system. For instance, the NAESP conducts research into the expectations and features of school principals in the USA every ten years. The seventh of these studies, "The K-8 Principal in 1998", conducted by Doud and Keller [17], was the basis for the study presented here. There has been a considerable increase of interest in research regarding school principals in recent years, due to improvements in arrangements in the training of qualified teachers and administrators, and in assigning them. This progress in school management is inspiring for Turkey; however, to make the system work contemporarily, the Ministry of Education should also support Masters and Doctorate studies in this field. This is vital for scientific development, so that coherent and rational decisions may be taken. Taking wise political decisions is more difficult in education compared with other fields. However if chief executives have access to scientifically rendered data, this will help them take more rational decisions and lessen risk [18]. Therefore, the main goal of this study is to create a profile of principals working in state primary schools in Turkey.

## II. OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this research is to determine the boundaries of a school principal's authority and responsibility. It also examines how they use their time, their experience and professional improvement needs, the appointment processes involved, their main problems, their personal and professional profiles, their career goals and the characteristics of their working environment, based on the perceptions of a cross-section of state primary school principals.

## III. METHOD

### A. Population-Sample

The data were collected from a body of school principals, 1474 of whom were chosen by stratified sampling, working in 14737 state primary schools affiliated to the Ministry of Education Primary Education General Directorship.

### B. Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed to 1475 primary school principals and 1442 responses were received. Out of the returned questionnaires, 14 were removed and 1428 questionnaires were evaluated.

In order to do this, reports of studies made on the subject in foreign countries and Turkey and other written and published sources were overviewed. Afterwards, a questionnaire to help get the basic data was developed. The revised questionnaire was sent and applied twice in two weeks, from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> of January, to teachers, vice-Principals, principals and inspectors working in private and public primary and secondary schools and also to a group of 35 students studying for their Masters at Y.T.U. Social Sciences Institute in 2001. Additionally, reliability tests were applied by two half-test methods after the questionnaire was applied. The calculations made after these applications showed that the reliability coefficient of this questionnaire is 88. Again alpha values of questions in questionnaire were calculated and it was found out that alpha values vary between 79.27 and 90.36.

James L. Doud and Edward P.'s tool "NAESP 10 Year Study Questionnaire" was used to develop the questionnaire. Permission of James L. Doud was granted on written application. The questionnaire was translated into Turkish then presented to the Ministry of Education Primary Education General Directorship and EARGED (Department of Educational Research and Development), and revised in accordance with the ideas and suggestions of these units.

The questionnaire form was presented for evaluation to the Ministry of Education EARGED Directory, who gave permission and signed the support protocol. Then questionnaire forms were submitted to the same body, duplicated and sent to education workers in the sample cities in the middle of April 2001.

### C. Analysis and Interpretation

1442 of 1475 questionnaires were overviewed and 14 spoiled questionnaires were removed. Then, 1428 questionnaires were processed. Data were entered to computer via a package program called SPSS. Afterwards, arithmetic mean and standard deviation values were calculated to determine the frequency and percentage of subjects' perceptions, the level of any characteristic or perception.

## IV. RESULTS

Findings obtained with this research can be summarized as below, according to the order of sub-aims.

### A. Authority and responsibilities

When perceptions of primary school principals regarding their authority and responsibilities are examined, it is understood that 68.4 % of them perceive their decision authority at an average level, authority and responsibilities of 31.2 % are imbalanced and 70.4 % participate in decisions at city level on average.

Again, 47% of primary school principals claim that they have the basic authority to inspect and evaluate the personnel in their school and 58.2% of them say that they share the responsibility of educational development and instruction with teachers. On the other hand, 63% of them claim that teachers are the most effective people for decisions about school. 57% perceived an increase in their authority and responsibilities regarding "development of educational applications", 55.9% in "programme development", 53.8% in "Developing a public relations policy to support schools and education", and 44.7% in "cooperation with social service organizations".

#### *B. Time Utilization*

It is understood from this research that the four main areas in which principals spend most of their time in a week are: "relations with personnel" ( $\bar{x}$  = 9.14), "student control and discipline" ( $\bar{x}$  = 8.65), "providing equipment and management of school building" ( $\bar{x}$  = 7.24).

#### *C. Experiences Before and After School Management*

When experiences before and after school management and professional development needs are examined, it is understood that; the experience period of the majority of school principals (58.9 %) working in primary schools varies between 1-5 years. It was found that the majority of them were teachers (58.1%) and vice-principals (31.4%) in primary schools before they became principals. Besides, the majority of primary school principals (67.9%) did not have any certificates and more than half of them (55.3%) did not have in-service training before they were assigned. No age standard on assignment was found.

#### *D. Professional Development Needs*

64.6% of school principals explained that they need in service training for "Developing and Applying Education Technologies", 58.8% of them need in-service training on "Developing and Applying Education Programmes", 57.1% of them need in-service training on "Development of Schools" and 53.5% of them need in-service training on "Developing Teacher Performance". At the same time, they have stated that the most important factors for successful primary school principals are; "participating in programmes for principals" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.80), "Management experience" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.70), "sharing information with other colleagues" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.67), "teaching experience" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.66), "vice-principal experiences" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.64).

#### *E. Main Problems They Encounter*

The leading four problems of primary schools in Turkey are; "inefficiency of physical sources" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.70), "inefficiency of equipment and technology" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.60), "inefficiency of classrooms" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.55) and "inefficiency of salary" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.50). On the other hand, according to school principals, the problems most frequently encountered are "inefficiency of

education regarding poor students" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.07), "irregular attendance" ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.43), "inefficiency of personnel" ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.12), "inefficiency of support services such as; maintenance, repair, updating and etc." ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.08).

#### *F. Personal and Professional Characteristics*

When personal and professional characteristics of primary school principals are examined; it is understood that, 93.2% of them are men, 88% are older than 35, 79.4% are married, and the spouses of 46.5% do not work, 73.7% think their salary is inefficient or excessively inefficient, yet 47% of them don't plan to work in an additional job. It was found that 67.3% of them have their own houses, 62.6% have their own car, 55% live in their own houses, 76.8% live in the city centre and 60.3% are not members of any professional organization or union.

#### *G. Career Goals*

It is understood that 60.6% of primary school principals like their jobs even if they are hesitant to admit it, 64.4% of them do not consider being school principal as their last career and they aim to work at the Ministry of Education as chief executive officers or become a branch manager at a Provincial/District National Education Directorate. It is realised that 42.8% of primary school principals do not fix their retirement age and 22.8% of them plan to work in volunteer organizations after retirement and 22.35 % of them plan to go on working at a private school as a principal.

#### *H. Characteristic Features of School and Environments They Are Working in*

When the work-environment characteristics are examined, it is found out that 30.7% of principals work at primary schools with 100-500 student capacity, 29.3% with 501-1000 student capacity, and in 53% of these there are a maximum of thirty permanent teachers; 66.6% of the teachers work at Grades K1-5 ; a minimum of two vice-principals are assigned in 66.35% of them; teachers are at A group status in 80.6% of the schools and 59.7% of them provide two shift education. Additionally, 60.7% of these schools have an annual budget of 1-5 billion TL, and the budget of 58.3% of them consists of donations, additive portions, courses, etc. A large minority of principals (45.2%) think parents and society support schools at a moderate level.

#### *I. Suggestions on Effective School Management*

Primary school principals have made 1044 suggestions, including 252 different ideas, for the effective management of primary schools.

Among these suggestions, budget and budget management suggestions (224) take first place. Others are: improvement of economical and social conditions (209), authority and responsibilities (196), selection and assignment of the principals (159), personnel management (79), management of

the buildings and facilities (66), other works (34), working conditions (32), education programme and the management of instructions (17) and suggestions on inspection and evaluation (17). Management of student affairs accounts for the fewest suggestions (11). This listing shows us that the five main subjects which school principals see as crucial are: sufficiency of the school budget; improving the economical and social conditions of the school principals and the educational staff; increasing the authority of the school principals and so providing the balance between authority and responsibility; reviewing the assignment and improvement system; finally, giving principals more rights in personnel management.

## V. DISCUSSION

There should be a clear and effective balance of authority and responsibility for primary school principals, just like in other professions. However, according to this research, the authority of the average primary school principal in Turkey is limited and their responsibilities are imbalanced. According to the results, primary school principals' participation in decision-making at provincial/district level is also quite nominal. A major reason for this is the centralised nature of the Turkish education system. However, over the last five years more than half of school principals have perceived an increase in their responsibility for the implementation of education programmes and cooperating with the social services, which shows us that central management in Turkey is becoming more inclined to transfer some of its authority to the provinces. It is possible to explain this as the result of principal training courses and total quality management studies conducted by the Ministry of Education helping school principals realise their responsibilities and authority. Yet, it is not possible to say that applications have changed in accordance with the change on the perception of responsibilities.

When the results are analyzed with respect to decision-making in Turkish primary schools, teachers are the most effective agents for this task, parents coming second and students third. But, it is realised that the business environment of the school has no effect on decisions. These results show that decisions are taken in cooperation with teachers in primary schools. Parents and students have little effect on them. It can be said that this situation will bring benefits in respect to teachers, students and parents' all assuming some measure of responsibility for school. Besides, the ineffectiveness of the business environment on decisions shows that school principals don't take their contribution and support into consideration. Other people and organizations' not participating in decisions indicate that school principals have perceived their increased responsibilities about cooperating with public relations and social service organizations but they have not fulfilled the necessary applications properly.

On the other hand, the priority given by principals to the order of work shows that they spend most of their time on teacher/student relations. Findings of this research are

consistent with earlier studies undertaken by Kaynakci [7], Alkan [8], Aksoy [9], and Basar [10]. This situation shows us that the work priority for school principals has not changed much in twenty years. Then, although school principals believe their programme-development responsibilities have increased, it is clear that they give importance to work directly related to education and instruction; other matters are of secondary importance. However, school principals' not spending enough time on educational and instructional work is still a problem, not only in Turkey: similar results are found in the research on school principals by Doud and Keller [17] in the USA. Additionally, from the research conducted by Garton and McIntre (1978) in the USA, it is understood that school principals spend most of their time on bureaucratic procedures although they accept programme development as the most important responsibility [18]. Again research done by Bredeson [19] shows that school principals desire to be programme leaders but cannot because of their other work and feel disturbed about it. On the other hand, researches conducted by Martin and Willover [20] show that school principals spend 18% of their time on instructional subjects. So, the consistency between these studies indicate that not giving priority to the tasks such as, programme development and planning is a universal problem, not specific to school principals in Turkey.

When findings on pre and post-school experience of primary school principals are analyzed, it can be understood that more than half of the primary school principals have 1-5 years experience and they are mostly chosen from teachers and vice- principals of primary schools and bachelor's degree graduates, although having work experience as a vice-principal is not required to be assigned. Again we realise that two of three are not chosen by examinations and more than half did not have any courses or seminars on the subject. This situation shows that most principals working in Turkey now were assigned before the present selection and assignment system was put into effect and it also shows that some of them are working as representatives. Whatever the truth is, this situation proves that the management qualifications of most primary school principals in Turkey are doubtful. Moreover, there are significant similarities between this research and the studies undertaken by Celik [12] and Kaya [21]. Celik shows that the training of educational administrators is not a government priority. Most educational administrators do not take any courses related to their position; in-, pre- and post-service training of principals is insufficient. Also, regarding in the selection, assignment and promotion of educational administrators, the respondents of his research give more importance to experience than educational background. Similarly, the research conducted by Kaya [21] shows that education and school management in Turkey is not organised professionally: successfully assigned administrators rarely have the necessary education for the post. The similarities between these studies demonstrate that proper standards for selection, training, assignment and development are yet to be formulated and applied.

As mentioned, developments and changes in school management force principals to double as instructional leaders. This obligation requires school principals to be efficient in subjects like education and instruction, supervision, programme development and programme coordination, on top of their own technical fields. This research shows many principals, desiring to execute their duties more effectively, concede a professional-development need in this respect: to improve themselves regarding development and application of educational technology, programme development, school and performance improvement. It is possible to say that their perception of the changes in their responsibilities in recent years have an important role in these preferences. However, these findings show that primary school principals in Turkey mostly concentrate on regular management duties more than leadership. One of the main reasons for this is that school principals do not know the relationship between effective school and leadership. Another reason is that the upper management expects a managerial role but not leadership from them. Survey results concerning the professional qualities and inspection criteria of school principals also support this idea. School principals accept experience and exchanging ideas with colleagues as sufficient and mostly don't think of having a B.Ed. or M.Ed. These findings show that the primary school principals in Turkey still believe that "the essential qualification for the post is being a teacher" so a good teacher can also be a good principal.

On the other hand, perhaps controversy arises when school managers, believing that having a B.Ed. or M.Ed. does not necessarily make one suitable for such a position, see management training programmes as the most important factor for success.

In most developed countries school management is considered a separate profession and administrators are chosen from people who have a B.Ed. or M.Ed. For instance, in the USA, 56,7% of teachers in primary and secondary schools have a master's degree and 12,7% of them have their doctorates [17]. In Turkey, although having a M.Ed. is taken into consideration on assignment, research findings show that more than half of the primary school principals are assigned according to their experience. Although M.Ed. without thesis is a requirement for branch teacher; it is a blatant irregularity that just a two-year degree or bachelor's degree is accepted as sufficient for education administration. This surely must cause school managers to lose their credibility with teachers. To prevent this and ensure schools are administrated by principals versed in school administration, all education administrators will have to have an M.Ed. in the medium term.

On the other hand, findings show that primary school principals believe the present assignment system does not give importance to competence. These findings also show current primary education legislation as unclear and concerned with responsibilities not applied in most supervision. Besides the vaguaries of the legislation, political pressures on the selection of school principals lessen job security even if the incumbent

works effectively. This factor must affect their concentration negatively.

Another important finding concerns supervision. Support and guidance of provincial and district administrators are important for school principals to work effectively. But findings reveal that provincial and district management in Turkey has transferred almost all inspection responsibility to primary education inspectors, which is inefficient in that schools are inspected only once a year. This demonstrates that primary school principals work for the most part without professional support and guidance. Inspections generally measures principal-efficiency along classical lines, though recently more importance has been attached to leadership and total quality management. That not enough attention is paid to the concepts like mission and vision at the inspection level implies that inspectors regard the school principals as the individuals responsible for applying the prescience of the chief executives rather than the ones entitled to envisioning a future for their own schools. This situation causes a contradiction between the innovations the Education Ministry aims at and its criteria for measuring these innovations. Inspection laws and criteria should be changed to eliminate contradictions and inspectors should be regularly trained on these new applications.

Another finding concerns disparity of salaries. Principals in Turkey work as state officers and do not have any union rights; the public salary system does not take performance into consideration. Besides, the Turkish education system is deficient not only in simple verbal appreciation but also in monetary award and encouragement. This is perhaps in part down to economic limitations, but undoubtedly senior administrators could give greater importance to motivation.

Despite these negative aspects, it is interesting to note, morale amongst school principals is relatively high. After all, compared to many other professions, their work is not boring but enjoyable. School principals remain key figures in their locality and normally find their immediate and wider social needs provided for.

The main problems for primary school principals are budgeting and the management of general services, followed by educational management then personnel problems. The least problematic field is the management of student affairs. These findings show that the basis of these problems in Turkey is the inefficiency of resources. When we consider that only 2.18 of G.N.P. was allocated to education in 2001, we may conclude that the findings are in accordance with the budget. [22]. School fees and donations beginning with the application of eight-year continuous education, the quantity of which increases year by year, bring about problems as well as the inefficiency of the allocation, physical capacity and equipment. Again inefficiency of maintenance, repair and support services is basic problems impacting the performance of primary school principals. These problems are being solved with the help of the financial contribution of the parents; but according to the 42<sup>nd</sup> article of Constitution of Turkish

Republic, "primary education is obligatory for all citizens and it is free at state schools" and the applications are contrary to this decree and primary school principals feel really uncomfortable about this situation.

Inefficiency of the programmes for the students in need of special education is one of the major problems school principals encounter at primary education level. Besides, cultural problems caused by rural to urban migration in recent years have increased daily. In the coming decade, this will be the main problem in the suburbs.

The main problem for personnel management is the inefficiency or lack of managerial personnel and cleaners. This situation prevents school principals and vice-principals spending enough time on education. But teachers' trying to provide the ethical necessities of their profession and lack of destructive arguments eases the work of school principals.

Problems least effectively dealt with involve student-affairs, principally absenteeism and destruction of school property. Absenteeism has not been solved yet although studies are being carried out on this subject. The main cause of the former is working-children, and schools' disinterest in unsuccessful students. Destruction of school property, vandalism, is caused by the lack of pride in the environment.

When personal characteristics and career goals of school principals are examined, it is found out that most of the primary school principals consist of married men whose wives do not work. In spite of the increase in the number of female principals, the difference between the numbers of male and female principals seems to last for years in favour of men. One of the main reasons for this situation is women's generally not preferring to become school principals because of the heavy responsibilities it will bring.

Although school principals think that their salaries are inefficient regarding the work they do, they are not concerned about working in additional jobs. And another typical characteristic of primary school principals in Turkey is not being a member of any professional organization or union. The main reason for school principals' not preferring to be a member of an association or union is the bad reputation of these organizations in recent years. School principals are still unwilling to become members of such associations because of the previous negative experiences although there are some improvements on organizing of the workers. And it is possible to say that this negative idea about such unions will last for a long time.

Having analysed the responses regarding the attractiveness of the directorship post, more than half of the principals have been recorded as finding their posts attractive. However a particular portion of those finding their posts attractive regard it as a step devoted and utilized to getting promoted in the career. On the other hand, the portion of those aspiring to be employed in other various sectors for not finding their management unattractive does not constitute of an underestimated level. For the primary school principals, the

second most attractive post after directorship seems to be a senior-level managerial position in the Ministry of National Education. Provincial or district branch directorate of national education and district national education directorate also range high among the attractive posts. The primary school principals seeking a high-level career apart from school management are figured out to highly prefer to officiate as a member of a parliament or Mayor instead of the aforesaid three posts. Again from the findings in connection with individual characteristics and career goals, the principals are figured out not to assume a particular arrangement regarding the retirement age and it is been further discovered that they have a tendency to retire in middle ages. It is finally understood that after retirement, a great portion of principals seem to take part in educational affairs and a considerable portion seems to continue their active working life in voluntary organizations.

When the findings about the work environment of school principals are overviewed, it is found out that most of them are working in schools consisting of 100-500 students or 501-1000 students and the principals are generally managing 11-20 or 21-30 teachers together. And they have to assign other teachers because of the inefficiency of the teachers at schools. And the number of vice-principals in a school is changing between two or three. But the educational style and the number of managerial personnel of the schools are inefficient with respect to the number of the students. In the same way, it is understood that dual education is still applied in more than half of the primary schools. While this application is affecting the quality of the education negatively, it also causes inequity between school principals working with regular system and dual system.

Another interesting point is about the formation of the school budgets. Research findings show that most of the school principals collect the money required from parents and donations. And the support of the parents and society is to the schools is very limited except those obligatory donations. Findings regarding the formation of school budgets show that primary education has become a paid kind of education although it is a rule for official schools to provide education for free of charge.

It would be profitable to talk about the suggestions made by school principals to make education more effective. As mentioned before, the suggestions about the improvement of school budgets are mostly mentioned. Emphasis on school budgets shows us that school principals consider the improvement of the budget as a must. In their opinion, the Education Ministry should provide the necessary budget to the school to help school principals offer a more effective education service at schools. On the other hand, another important suggestion is to have the Ministry provide this budget directly. This suggestion by school principals leads us to suspect there are injustices in budget distribution.

The main subject emphasized in the improvement of economical and social standards of school principals is the improvement of their financial status. This suggestion shows

us that primary school principals think that second important thing for them is the inadequacy of their salaries.

Another important suggestion is diminishing the imbalance between the responsibilities and authorities of primary school principals. According to primary school principals, the most important thing to be done to solve this problem is extending the authority of the school principals. But thinking that just extending the authority of school principals will solve the problem is wrong. Because findings show us that present primary school principals consist of former primary school teachers and vice-principals who did not have any courses on management. This situation shows that most of the principals are not exactly aware of their authority and responsibilities. So, training the school principals about using their authorities and responsibilities is a must.

Primary school principals also made suggestions about personnel management. School principals expect to have authority over personnel provision. However, the centralised nature of the education system along with certain political interests makes such a development frankly unlikely.

Undoubtedly, this study has both its strengths and limitations. On the positive side it is the first of its kind with such extensiveness of research samples and scope. Foregoing studies have been much more limited: this study covers half the cities in Turkey and helps to determine a detailed profile of primary school principals.

Another winning aspect of this piece of research is its being considered worthy of support by the Ministry of Education. The participation of the Ministry's *EARGED* data collection unit gained the study much credibility amongst school principals and undoubtedly expanded questionnaire response-rate. This support may also prove a valuable ally when it comes to applying whatever the findings have deemed necessary.

Another powerful aspect of this research is its inner coherence. There is great consistency between the suggestions, made by school principals, regarding improvement in the entire education system, and their answers on the problems of primary education. This coherence proves that primary school principals answered all questions conscientiously.

However, prompt survey analysis is hampered somewhat because of the largeness of its scope. The questionnaire consists of seven sub-fields. There are 65 questions for measurement. But, while some of these questions are in Likert form, others are questions with short answers. Questionnaire's consisting of many questions and different types of scales lengthen the answering time and make it difficult to organize the answers. For this reason, it will be helpful to review and simplify the questionnaire before further application.

Another limitation concerns the level of this research, which is prepared only for public school principals. Private primary schools, state schools, primary schools with mixed classes are not included to this research. To develop a policy of

educational administrators training in Turkey, a comprehensive, cross-level profile of education management should be put forth. For this reason, similar researches should be conducted in other primary and secondary schools, and their results be evaluated together. On the other hand this research is severely limited, since no similar studies have yet been conducted, and there has never been an opportunity to compare data or analyse change and development of school management.

To sum up, this research has revealed that primary school principals in Turkey have limited authority; their authority and responsibilities are imbalanced, their administrative qualities are mostly poor and they try to manage their schools with a very limited budget. The consistency of our research results is the most powerful basis for this judgement. Furthermore, this research has great significance since it is the first research of its kind with such purpose, scope and samples. However, future targets can only be reached by the regular and systematic application of such research, with the full cooperation of the universities and of the Ministry of Education.

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