

COMPETENCIES OF EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS AND EDUCATIONAL INSPECTORS REGARDING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ASSESSMENT

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to assess the competencies of school administrators and curriculum inspectors concerning educational programs and measurement evaluation. In line with this objective, a literature review methodology was employed, and studies containing key terms such as "roles and competencies of school principals" and "roles of school inspectors" were examined. The findings obtained through the literature review were interpreted, leading to the conclusion that school administrators and inspectors need to be educated and trained to possess competencies in both educational programs and measurement evaluation.

Keywords: School principal, inspector, educational program, measurement evaluation.

Introduction

With the rapid advancement of science, individuals' and societies' social lives are undergoing continuous change and development. Concurrently, changing environmental conditions, government policies, and technological advancements force institutions to undergo changes in their structures and functions. Thus, the continuous renewal and development of existing systems affect all elements, including educational institutions. The expectations of society from educational institutions also vary according to the conditions of the day (Arabacı and Namlı, 2014). The importance of services such as supervision, measurement, evaluation, and guidance increase even more for educational institutions to adapt to changing conditions.

In our era of globalization, along with the development of concepts such as change, accountability, competition, and transparency in the school environment, the expectations of the environment, parents, students, and the community from school principals and supervisors have also increased. In the face of these expectations and changing circumstances, the job areas, definitions, and roles of school principals have changed. The role of the principal has become not only to maintain the existing structure but also to change, develop, and transform the structure in line with new conditions (Sağır, 2011). In this context, Williamson and Blackburn (2010) listed the new roles of school principals as program development and management, vision creation, redesigning the institution, effective planning, monitoring student success, data-based management, sharing based on curriculum and decision making, effective communication, managing differences, developing human resources, effective use of technology, managing the learning environment, creating a positive institutional culture, organization, providing feedback, and leading.

At the same time, the concepts of quality and productivity are gaining importance in institutions. The responsibility of the administrator in the institution is seen as ensuring the improvement of the system (Çalık and Dağlı, 2011).

Objective of the Study:

The purpose of this research is to assess the competencies of education administrators and supervisors in educational programs and measurement evaluation. In line with this objective, studies containing key terms such as 'school principal roles, competencies, school supervisor roles' have been reviewed.

Methodology:

In line with the objectives of the research, a literature review was conducted to access articles for examination. In this context, the majority of the articles retrieved were primarily studies conducted between the years 2009 and 2015.

Findings:

In the face of evolving and changing conditions, the management of schools, particularly the competencies and standards of administrators, leads to the discussion of schools that are constantly changing and often at the forefront of change. In accordance with the demands of the era, plans and policies for the future of the school and its management should be redesigned (Kavak, 2010; Koşar, 2012; Matthews and Hill, 2010; Sağır, 2011). Today's school leadership requires school administrators to perform roles such as data analyst, public relations specialist, communicator, and change expert. Developing clear and consistent standards for school leadership in fulfilling these roles can assist school administrators (Aslan and Karip, 2014).

Instructional leadership, unlike other leadership areas, requires direct involvement with students, teachers, instructional programs, and teaching and learning activities. Therefore, school principals need to take on the role of instructional leadership (Gümüşeli, 2014).

Research and studies emphasize the necessity of leadership competencies and certain standards in the selection, appointment, and training of school administrators in line with the requirements of the era (Bursalioğlu, 2008; Hoy and Miskel, 2010; Ağaoglu, Altinkurt, Yılmaz & Karaköse, 2012). These studies highlight the changing effects and importance of competencies in the roles of administrators. Changes in the school environment, with increased and diversified expectations, create pressure on the school principal. Aslan and Karip (2014) have identified the need to develop specific competencies and standards based on these competencies for training school principals as educational leaders, replacing their traditional roles. To cope with problems and reduce pressure, school principals should possess competencies for effective leadership rather than relying on managerial behaviour using legal authority.

The appointment of school principals without adequate qualifications can be cited as a reason for them being unable to fulfil the necessary leadership roles for teachers (Altun, Şanlı, Tan, 2015).

In research, three key characteristics stand out in the process of managing schools by principals: (1) the administrative superiority and sustainability of the principal's role, (2) focus on instruction and learning, and professional leadership, (3) strengthening existing skills and developing new skills (Southworth, 2008).

In addition to the roles and competencies of school principals, in line with changing expectations and demands in the evolving era, the inspection systems of developed countries are also being discussed. Criticisms suggest that current practices are ineffective and do not contribute to teacher development and student success (Marshall, 2009). Those performing inspection duties need to have expertise in this regard. Simply having served as a teacher or educational administrator for a certain number of years does not naturally impart inspection abilities and expertise to an individual. However, practices indicate that this misconception is unfounded and emphasize the significant role of inspectors in the personal and professional development of teachers and administrators (Tok, 2013). The roles and duties of inspectors encompass determining whether the educational system is achieving its purpose, evaluation, and improvement. There are no formal education institutions for the training of responsible education inspectors. Currently, efforts are being made for the in-service training of education inspectors.

The roles and skills expected from school principals, along with the achievements in centralized exams, have been added. Principals face challenges in collecting data on the achievements of all students in exams, managing the data, and explaining how they will communicate the information effectively and validly about the situations of unsuccessful students to relevant parties. So much so that the roles of principals have expanded to include accountability for student success in national or international exams, towards students, parents, and upper management, and this role has started to be debated (Aslan & Karip, 2014).

It has been noted that school principals, despite being the first ones held responsible and accountable for any issues related to education and the school, face difficulties due to the lack of a training program and standards, both before and during their service, in terms of which strategies they will use in response to these new situations. It can be said that the job of school principals has become increasingly difficult and complex (Aslan & Karip, 2014).

In addition to exam success, the person responsible for school activities and integrating these activities with the community and studies is also the school principal (Şahin, 2015). It has been emphasized in studies that specific standards and competency areas need to be identified for the training of school principals at the national level (Gümüşeli, 2009). Efforts have been made on the international level for the training of school principals and the determination of standards and competencies related to them.

There is no consensus on what the values and approaches related to standards and competencies are for school principals. The focus of discussions is on the concepts of "competencies" and "standards." These concepts indicate a foundational function that the school principal should possess (Tomul, 2009).

Furthermore, since educational activities need to be continuously developed and renewed, more emphasis should be placed on inspection activities in educational organizations. Inspection, according to Yılmaz (2009), is now carried out to help individuals overcome knowledge deficiencies, develop their positive aspects, and guide them. In this sense, inspection has a mediating function in helping improve student success and plays a crucial role in making schools a more effective learning environment.

Program development is defined as the correction and improvement of the general and specific objectives, course topics, teaching methods, and evaluation methods of a particular education program or all programs through research. Because the program is one of the fundamental elements of the school, the expertise of school principals in this area becomes more important.

However, according to research, principals often perform program development roles despite their lack of knowledge about programs due to their teacher background. This situation can lead to insufficient fulfilment of school-related interests and expectations.

In recent years, changes in the roles of school principals also indicate the need for increased emphasis on inspection activities. Perhaps the most significant among these developments is the perception of school principals as instructional leaders. Accordingly, as instructional leaders, school principals should supervise teachers' instructional activities in the classroom and organize activities in a developmental direction. In other words, school principals need to leave their offices, visit their schools, supervise classroom activities, and establish a close relationship with teachers. Of course, the purpose of all these activities is to improve educational activities. All these developments increase the importance of the inspection activities that school principals will perform (Yılmaz, 2009).

Conclusion:

School principals must grasp the dimensions of the school management system to enhance teaching and student learning in the school. This process is assessed to be supported by five management elements. These include managing the school, shaping the future of the school, providing leadership, facilitating the professional development of teachers, focusing on individuals, and managing school-environment relationships (Balyer, 2014).

School administrators dedicate a significant portion of their time to administrative tasks, neglecting activities related to improving educational instruction. This situation can be interpreted as school administrators being more involved in the bureaucratic aspects of administration, such as supervision, evaluation, program development, and staff development, while engaging less or not at all in activities related to improving education.

Educational supervisors also need to be experts in their fields. It is important for them to gain observation, interpretation, and evaluation skills along with in-service training relevant to their areas (Akbaba, 2013).

In the centralized education system where school principals may not participate in the program development process, it is observed that principals only continue the task of implementing the program. In this sense, principals should consult teachers on goals, processes, and outcomes. To achieve this, principals plan effective management teams, supervise them, and ensure the distribution and coordination of educational activities according to the program. In this context, school principals fundamentally need to have a deep knowledge and competence in program development. Additionally, there are issues in program development that need to be addressed, and for the resolution of these issues, it is necessary to adapt educational programs to local conditions and involve principals in the program development process along with the central organization.

Like principals, school inspectors also need to be trained and developed to have the necessary measurement and evaluation competencies.

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