STEREOTYPES OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN DECISION-MAKING: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to understand whether stereotypes of school administrators have an impact on the decision-making processes. The study group in the phenomenological model consists of ten school administrators. Interviews were made with audio recording and obtained voluntarily by school administrators. The data collected from the interviews were analysed by content. Codes were determined and interpreted by analysis. As a result of the study, it was determined that stereotypes of school administrators affect the decision-making processes of problem-solving, team building, and etc. It was observed that gender was a predominant factor emphasized in the answers given for all the questions. For this reason, the study suggests awareness of stereotypes which should be raised in order to perform more effective and healthier decision-making among school administrators.

Keywords: **Stereotypes, Decision Making Processes, School Administrator, Teacher**

INTRODUCTION

Individuals make continuous decisions in both their private and professional lives to reach their goals. In other words, economic, social and technological developments force individuals to make decisions on their relationships, domestic life, health, education and career with individuals today facing more personal and professional decisions than older generations can even imagine (Ranyard, Crozier and Svenson, 2001). It is therefore difficult to conclude one definition in the literature about the decision-making phenomenon. In addition, when the existing definitions of decision making are analyzed, the definitions of "decision," "decision making" or "decision taking" concepts are similar in terms of context. In this study, the concept has been dealt with as "decision making".

Decision making is a basic concept in modern life in terms of individual, social and corporate aspects. Decision making is about which action will be taken and this choice is generally made among other existing choices (Adair, 2010). Erdamar (1981) defines the concept as, "the choice individuals make which seems beneficial under the existing opportunities with the purpose of attaining a certain goal." In another definition, decision making is expressed as, "making, preferring a choice which seems like the best possible one among various courses of action under existing opportunities and conditions to reach a goal" (Fergan, 1974, quoted by Ates, 1989). The concept is defined as the sum of both physical and mental efforts related to choosing and preferring one aspect when there is more than one choice (Tosun, 1992). There are certain aspects in the timing of making a decision in this process which may result in different risks and it is important that these are taken into consideration. These aspects can be grouped as; not acting too hastily or too late in the decision-making process; not giving importance to the order of priorities; accepting mistakes; not consulting anyone in the decision-making process, etc. All of these aspects can create various risky situations (Dawson, 1995).

Decision making which is expressed as an important part of the planning process is studied as a process which is made up of successive stages. In order to be able to make accurate decisions, it is extremely important to know how the decision-making process is formed and through which steps a decision is made. In the decision-making process, firstly the existence of a problem which carries distinguishing characteristics should be recognized and then the problem should be defined with as much detail as possible to be able to produce sufficient solutions. In this stage, the responsibility of individuals or groups should be set clearly with a suitable environment to identify problematic issues. A good decision does not only involve the identification of the desired outcomes, but requires the identification of barriers which should be removed to reach predetermined goals as well. In the next stage, the other possible choices should be listed and the suitable choices should be identified. It should be remembered that each choice is a possible solution. It is considered that the more developed the choices, the better the solutions are. In the evaluation of the identified choices, certain criteria should be taken into consideration. These criteria are evaluated in terms of the applicability of these identified choices, cost, social desirability, chance of being successful, meeting the expectations of individuals or groups and expected outcomes, etc. After the identification of all these, a decision should be made. In the next stage, the decision made should be put into practice and finally, an evaluation stage should also be added to the process, because the existence of a management lacking an evaluation stage cannot be possible. In addition, doing a follow-up of the decision after the decision-making process is critical. The decision made should be put into practice in the best suitable manner whether the chosen solution works or produces the expected outcomes (Aepli, Ribaux and Summerfield, 2011; Kocel, 2003; Lippitt, 1969; Rausch, 2005). The follow-up and evaluation of the decisions can shed light to future decision making.

The decision-making process is extremely important for organizations besides individuals. The concept of decision making on the basis of organizations has emerged in the 1930's with the concept of "participative management" and has begun to take an extensive place in the administrative sciences literature. During that period, it was suggested that productivity would increase with the inclusion of organization members in the decision-making process and it was argued that there was a direct relationship between decision making and organizational productivity (quoted by Ates from Hicks, 1989). Simon has explained the importance of decision-making by organizations saying, "decision making is the heart of management" (Simon, 1997).

As it is known, formal organizations are founded with a certain purpose and work towards achieving this purpose. In the process of realizing predetermined goals, organizations can come face to face with different situations. In such cases, administrators of the organizations assume roles such as decision makers. In fact, administrators are defined as people who are closely related to the decision-making process to be successful (Tosun, 1992). Administrators make decisions on behalf of their organizations. In 1975, Mintzberg has defined the ten roles which can be valid for all administrators and separated these roles into three main categories: interpersonal relations, gathering information and decision making (Kumar, 2015).

The decision-making process has a very important function in the activities of educational organizations just like other organizations. The decision-making process in schools, which are the most important organization of the education system, is accepted as one of the most important activities of school administrators which is carried out daily. An organization's success is related to the quality of the decisions made (Robbins, Bergman, Stagg and Coulter, 2009). The success of a school mostly depends on the making of efficient decisions (Lunenburg, 2010). How efficient decisions are made in schools depends on administrators, because school administrators are generally people who are responsible for the decision-making process (Nutt, 2008). According to Nozick (1991), the decisions made by school administrators determine the quality of education given in schools.

Decision making in the organization of schools is defined as a complex process in which various factors play a role. The most important rule of this process is to include all aspects which can affect the decisions of the decision-making process. The school administrator, as a leader of education, is expected to plan and communicate with and coordinate the teachers and other personnel who can contribute to the implementation of these plans to make it possible for the school to reach its goals. In addition, the school administrator should take the beliefs, attitudes and prejudices of all the other members into consideration when making decisions, because the efficiency of the decisions made in the organization of the school are about the administrator's objective and subjective dimensions. The decisions to be made involving impartial, objective phenomenon and aspects define the objective dimension. The individuals' depending on their emotions and liking and adopting the decision expresses the subjective dimension (Yildirim, 1989).

In order to be able to make speedy and accurate decisions in the decision-making process in both their daily life and professional life, individuals create various stereotypes. This concept which is etymologically made up of the words 'stereos' and 'tupos' has been first used by Walter Lippman. According to Lippman (1922), the concept within a socio-psychological framework of understanding, stereotypes express the "fixed pictures in minds, thus in thoughts". Stereotypes are defined as characteristics thought to be related to specific human groups or categories. These characteristics involve expected behaviors and roles (Schneider 2004). According to Schweinitz (2011), stereotypes are prejudices and wide-spread ideas about foreigners. In another definition, stereotypes are expressed as behaviors and attitudes which we believe the individuals in the society should have (Onur, 1997). Stereotypes are defined as "simplifications created through extreme generalizations" about both a group or a society and the members of a nation (Fischer and Wiswede, 1997, quoted by Isik, 2012). According to Leyens, Yzerbyt and Schadron (1994), stereotypes are defined as; the basic characteristics of the individual and all of the common opinions shared about the personal characteristics of special behaviors attributed to a group of people." Stereotypes are accepted as exaggerated beliefs about a certain category as well. Their function verifies our behaviors related to these categories (Allport, 1954).

Stereotypes express images formed in the mind as a whole of predetermined impressions and attributions which fill knowledge gaps about a specific object or group and thus facilitate making decisions about them (Goregenli, 2012). According to Quasthoff (Quasthoff, 1973, quoted by Isik, 2012), stereotypes are "the verbal expression of a belief about social groups or the individuals who are the members of these social groups. This belief is not based on a valid reason, is simplified and generalized and is of a logical form which accepts or rejects certain characteristics or behavior forms to the members of a class with an emotionally charged tendency. Grammatically, it can be defined as a sentence." It is expressed that stereotypes have emerged as a reaction to environmental

factors. For instance, in a study carried out by Fiske (1993), it was concluded that differences in power cause stereotypes to emerge. It was determined that individuals with strong positions do not give sufficient attention to people in lower positions and that this lack of attention leads them to form stereotypes.

Stereotyping a person means that the person is attributed some of the characteristics seen in all or most of the people in his/her friend group (Brown, 1995). Stereotypes are beliefs about the behaviors, characteristics and personalities of the members of certain groups. It is thought that these beliefs are formed in two ways. The first is the mental depiction of the real differences between groups. In such a case, stereotypes act like a diagram and facilitate the processing of knowledge and make it efficient (for instance, food preferences and cultural stereotypes, etc.). The second consists of beliefs formed independent of the real group differences related to various groups (such as race, religion, gender) and carry a high potential of being inaccurate (Hilton and VonHippel, 1996). Regardless of whether it involves prejudice or not, a stereotype is the association of a social category with certain characteristics in the cognitive level. Therefore, when a person who has a stereotype about a group meets a member of that group, he/she may be expected to attribute the characteristics of the person in question or the group (Brown, 1995). Categorization simplifies a high amount of existing information, saves people from a cognitive burden, and presents a knowledge organization about the social world (Hamilton 1989, quoted by Hinton, 2000).

Studies on stereotypes mostly involve the conflicts between minority and majority groups by being a concept which is the subject of interdisciplinary studies and focus on the relationships of women/men and successful administrators (Limon, Kara and Antalyali, 2019). It is considered that stereotypes might have an influence in the decision-making process of administrators in school organizations which are dynamic and have humans as input and output. In fact, it was expressed in studies that stereotypes had a great influence in the decisions of the participants (Katz and Braly, 1933, quoted by Smith and Griffith, 1980; Alvarez, 2011).

When the literature was reviewed, it was seen that there are various studies which deal with the decision-making process of school administrators (Alver, Ada and Cakıcı, 2006; Burukoglu, 2015; Bute and Balci, 2010; Izgar and Altinok, 2013; Kurban, 2015; Sezer, 2016; Tekin, 2018; Yaylaci and Beldag, 2015; Yildirim, 1989). However, there are different studies which deal with the subject of stereotypes as well (Aktan and Bilim, 2016; Altıntas and Aytac, 2019; Bakan and Canoz, 2017; Baykal, 1991; Isik, 2012; Tutkun and Koc, 2008). However, a study finding dealing with the subject of stereotypes in the decision-making process of school administrators was not seen in the literature. Therefore, it is hoped that this study will partially fill this gap in the literature and light the way for researchers who will be dealing with this subject in the future.

It can be stated that it is difficult for people who are administrators or leaders in a given group to make decisions about the members of the group they lead, their duties and in general the process which sometimes involves risky behavior. It is known that administrative work is actually based on decision making behaviors. When considered in the context of educational organizations, it is known that the decisions made by school administrators can positively or negatively affect all the components of the school organization. How the administrator makes decisions in this process, whether he/she acts in a rational or emotional manner can create different effects on people who are affected from these decisions. In this respect, it is important how the school administrator makes decisions and whether he/she has stereotypes in the decision-making process. Within this scope, this study aims at determining whether school administrators have stereotypes and the roles of existing stereotypes in their decision-making process.

Within the scope of the research, answers to the following questions were sought:
1) What criteria should a school administrator have to determine the vice principal or assistants to the principal, and why?
2) What criteria should a school administrator, as a joint project coordinator, follow to select assistants for the project?

3) What criteria should a school administrator use and prioritize to organize a team for a national organization event held at school?

4) What factors should a school administrator consider in choosing whom to take on a student-parent visit outside of work hours, and why?

5) What criteria should a school administrator use to organize a Board that will implement the rearrangement of the cafeteria and a change in Cafeteria Management Regulation?

6) What criteria should a school administrator consider when forming a Crisis Management Team, where teachers will have the right to directly intervene during a school crisis situation?

METHODS

Research design

A qualitative research model was used in this study, which was conducted to determine whether stereotypes had an effect on school administrators' decision-making processes. Qualitative research in social sciences refers to research aimed at answering questions such as the causes of human behavior, processes of being affected by the environment, developments, and why and how changes occur (Sayim, 2017). In line with the purpose of the study, a phenomenological approach from the qualitative methods was used. The phenomenological approach is described as defining any phenomenon in terms of the experiences of one or more individuals (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2015). The main purpose of this approach is to reveal the experiences of individuals regarding any phenomenon and the meanings they attribute to these experiences (Creswell, 2007). In this context, stereotypes that affect school administrators while making their decisions have been determined, examined, and evaluated as a phenomenon.

Participants

The study group of the research consists of ten primary school administrators working in Ankara city in the 2017-2018 academic year. The maximum diversity sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used to determine the school administrators participating in the study. According to Punch and Etoz (2005), purposeful sampling means pre-considering and determining the sampling for the subject or purpose of the study. The purpose of using maximum diversity among purposeful sampling methods is to create a relatively small sample and to reflect the diversity of individuals who can be a party to the problem studied in this sample at the maximum level and to reveal the different dimensions of the problem with this diversity (Yildirim & Simsek, 2016). Demographic information for the participants is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Information for the Participants

Participants	Gender	Age	Marital status	Education level	Branch	Seniority
A1	Male	52 and above	Married	Bachelor's degree	Primary school teacher	35-40 years
A2	Male	32-36	Married	Master's degree	Primary school teacher	11-16 years
A3	Male	47-51	Married	Bachelor's degree	Primary school teacher	23-28 years
A4	Female	32-36	Single	Bachelor's degree	Branch teacher	5-10 years
A5	Male	37-41	Married	Master's degree	Branch teacher	11-16 years
A6	Male	37-41	Married	Bachelor's degree	Branch teacher	17-22 years
A7	Male	47-51	Married	Bachelor's degree	Primary school teacher	17-22 years
A8	Male	42-46	Married	Bachelor's degree	Primary school teacher	17-22 years
A9	Female	52 and above	Married	Bachelor's degree	Branch teacher	35-40 years
A10	Male	52 and above	Married	Bachelor's degree	Branch teacher	29-30 years

Data Collection Tool

Semi-structured interview form was used to collect data in the study. Before preparing the interview questions, national and international literature on the research topic was reviewed and studies on the subject were used. After establishing the theoretical foundations of the study and reaching comprehensive information about the subject with the literature review, the questions to be asked to the participants were determined, and with these questions, it was aimed to analyze the effect of stereotypes of school administrators in the decision-making process. In order to ensure the content validity of the semi-structured interview form, the opinions of field experts were consulted and the form was finalized in line with the recommendations received.

Data Collection

School administrators were informed about the study with a pre-interview, and it was stated that an interview was requested to collect data at a suitable time and place and that the interviews would be recorded if they gave permission. After the preliminary interviews, the appropriate time and place were determined with the volunteers. The interviews were conducted at the school administrators' schools, lasted an average of one and a half hours, and the duration of the interviews was shortened because the correct answers to the last interviews were similar and the answers started to repeat. Voice recordings were made in line with the permission of the participants, after the interviews, the audio recordings were written on paper, and the holistic structure of the data was analyzed. In addition, participants were informed about the ethical process and the Informed Volunteer Approval Form was signed.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of data obtained in the study, content analysis technique was used. Content analysis is defined as a systematic, repeatable technique in which some of the words of a text are summarized with smaller content categories through codes based on certain rules (Buyukozturk et al., 2011). In the process of data analysis, the interview records were decoded and analyzed and the excess data were reduced. The common points in the answers given to each question were taken into consideration and various codes were created.

In this study in which a qualitative research approach was adopted, concepts of plausibility, consistency and verifiability were used instead of concepts of validity and reliability. Plausibility begins with the researcher presenting his/her position openly throughout the study and ends with reaching results, interpretations and inferences by remaining faithful to the collected data (Yildirim & Simsek, 2016). With this purpose, firstly all of the interviews in the application process of the research were recorded with a recorder. Then, the records were decoded and presented to the analysis of the participants and the necessary corrections were made by getting the verification of the participants. The expressions the participants did not wish to be included in the evaluation were excluded from the interview text. In order to strengthen the plausibility of the study, two school administrators were interviewed again and they were asked whether the findings were significant and reflected the existing situation.

In terms of establishing internal consistency, coherence analysis method was used. In this stage, an expert who was not a part of the research group was given information about the whole of the study and was asked to analyze the resulting publication as a whole in terms of consistency. The replacements of the independent educational sciences expert and the replacement of the researcher were compared and the reliability of the study was determined. As a result of this comparison, it was seen that there was a 92% consensus. This rate was calculated using Miles and Huberman's (2016) reliability formula (Reliability Formula: (consensus/consensus + disagreement) x 100).

RESULTS

The results obtained within the scope of the research are shown below, respectively. Results regarding the first question are presented in Table 2.

1. What criteria should a school administrator have to determine the vice principal or assistants to the principal, and why?

Table 2

Criteria Determined by School Administrators when Deciding who the Vice Principal Should Be

N	Coded thoughts	N
1	Administrator's experience (Seniority, experience, Having a seniority of 5 to 25 years; A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A10)	8
2	Gender (Equal distribution of men and women, mixed group; A2, A4, A6, A7, A8, A9, A10)	7
3	Personality traits (friendly, tolerant, fair, strong character, empathetic, non-arrogant, cool, devoted to work, well-intentioned, open to improvement, willingness, being energetic; A1, A2, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9)	7
4	Professional Competence (Field knowledge, ability, communication, problem-solving ability, time management, technology management; A4, A6, A7, A8, A9, A10)	6
5	Postgraduate education (A2, A7, A8, A9)	4
6	Team Work (Tendency to teamwork; A5, A6, A9)	3

The answers of the school administrators who emphasized experience in the selection of the vice principal are as follows: School administrator A2 expressed his views as: *"I would want this person to be experienced. If you ask me how many years of experience is necessary, if I am to choose among teachers who have 3, 5, and 10 years of experience, I would choose the one with 5 years of experience, because that person would be more energetic compared to someone with 10 years of experience and more experienced compared to someone with 3 years of experience – shortly, experience and energy should be balanced."* A6 answered as follows: *"The first 5 years are very important in marriages. If you have a balanced marriage in the first 5 years, you can cope with all sorts of problems. Administrative work is similar; you need to spend the first five years in teaching and see the problems and solutions in teaching. After this 5 year of experience, you may be a candidate for administrative work. In brief, I would like to work with someone who has at least 5 years of experience in teaching."* The administrator with the code A8 supported A6: *"I would like that person to have at least 5 years of experience in teaching in terms of seniority. That person should have experienced what teaching is like and not go through hardships in administrative work. I feel the lack of this kind of experience myself greatly."* When descriptive findings were analyzed, it was seen that administrators with the codes A6 and A8 have been working as school administrators since the first year of their careers. School administrator A1 with the highest seniority stated: *"I believe that it is best for a teacher who is kind, willing and energetic to be the vice principal regardless of his/her seniority, branch, higher education degree and gender."*

A2 who is among the administrators who underlined the gender code stated, *"As a man, I would prefer one of my administrator colleagues to be female"* and A8 stated, *"I would like one of the assistants to the principal to be female. Because we have female assistants to the principal in middle-school and there should be a female assistant to the principal with whom our teenage female students can share their problems."* A7, who expressed that 85% of the school consists of females, stated: *"I would like that person to be male. Women can be whimsical in their view of events. They can complicate even simple problems. Since women constitute the majority in the profession of teaching, communication between women can be a bit disadvantageous,"* and underlined that the gender factor is important in administrative work. On the other hand, female administrator A9 underlined that the gender distribution of administrators should be equal and stated, *"I would like to see more male administrators, because a male administrator is necessary in terms of dealing with problems such as leaky roofs, gutters and construction work as they are more experienced in these areas. In addition, since male teachers do not have much responsibility in their own households, they can commute easily for night and weekend shifts. If an alarm goes off at the school at night, we have to go there. Is it right for me to go to school at that hour or a male administrator? When we consider all these, I would choose a male assistant to the principal."*

A2, who is among the administrators with a master's degree in administration, stated: *"When choosing my vice principal, it is very important for me that that person is working towards his/her master's degree. This person would at least know how to do research. I would rather work with a person from my branch rather than another branch,"* and underlined that the vice principal should be competent in the field. A5, who is continuing his/her doctorate in the area of administration stated, *"Of course, it is important that this person has a postgraduate degree, but it is more important for me that this person is open to education and development. A person can have a postgraduate degree, but may not be open to development. Therefore, my priority would be for that person to be open to development"* and A7 supported A5 as follows: *"If that person has in particular a postgraduate degree in our area, then I would prefer such a person, but on the condition that he/she is open to development."* Administrator A8 underlined that one of the assistants to the principal is continuing his/her doctorate and stated, *"If the vice principal that I choose is receiving postgraduate education only to prioritize his/her own career, then this has no meaning for me. Is he/she reflecting his/her postgraduate degree to the school environment? This is what is important for me. I know many administrators who have postgraduate degrees that do not reflect this. And we also have administrators who do not have postgraduate degrees, but are competent in administrative work"* and emphasized that the personal characteristics of the individual are more important compared to postgraduate degrees. Administrator A9 stated, *"There are teachers working with me who have graduate and postgraduate degrees. I give importance to superiority in character and not to superiority in degrees"* and expressed similar views

with A8. When the administrator was asked what he/she meant by 'superiority,' the answer was as follows: *"Self-confidence, being successful in getting others to accept him/her within a group and working in harmony with people."* Administrator A4 underlined that the personal characteristics of the person are more important than a postgraduate degree by saying, *"I give importance to postgraduate degrees, however that person's communication manner, relationship with others and being solution oriented are more important for me."* It was seen that the administrators with postgraduate degrees considered this factor as a criterion.

Results regarding the second question are presented in Table 3.

2.   What criteria should a school administrator, as a joint project coordinator, follow to select assistants for the project?

Table 3
Criteria Created by School Administrators

N	Coded thoughts	N
1	Competence (mastery of the subject, suitability for needs and purpose, technology mastery, communication skills, foreign language; A1, A2, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9, A10)	8
2	Personal traits (diligence, willingness, excitement, positive energy, courage; A1, A2, A3, A4, A7, A10)	6
3	Representation, Image (A2, A3, A4, A8)	4
4	Gender (A1, A4)	2
5	Career, postgraduate (A2, A10)	2
6	Seniority, experience (A6, A9)	2

School administrator A1 stated, *"It is important to select a person who is suitable for the purpose,"* and underlined the importance of the individual's competency and sufficiency in the field. Similarly, A2 stated, *"I would do a benefit and need analysis. I would choose the most beneficial person who will serve the purpose to the team. I would even find the person who will complete my insufficiencies, so that we become stronger."* Administrator A5 stated, *"I would consider whether that person has project ideas. I would choose among people who know what a project is, how it is prepared and which steps it consists of"* and A6 stated, *"I would choose the person who brings me the project and not my best and close friend, because a person who comes up with a project is more competent in the area."* Administrator A7, A8, A9 and A10 underlined that it would be best to choose the teachers who are knowledgeable about preparing projects to the project team. Additionally, A9 stated, *"I have such a project. I would primarily choose a vice principal and teachers who are competent in the area, know what they are doing and are able to carry out the steps of the process throughout the year. Still, my main principle is as follows: I order the teachers starting with the highest seniority to the lowest seniority. For instance, I have been working in this school for 10 years and I have had the same assistant for 10 years. I cannot make that person do the same thing for 10 years just because he/she knows the job"* and expressed that he/she will take seniority as a criteria while choosing among the teachers. A1, who stated, *"Language competency is important for better communication"* and underlined the importance foreign languages and competency in the area and administrators A5, A8 and A10 who have similar views also stated, *"The most important criteria are knowing a foreign language."* Additionally, A10 stated, *"One of the most important factors is in fact the willingness of the teachers besides foreign language, regardless of having knowledge about projects or not."*

Within the scope of the study, some of the school administrators expressed that making a choice and identifying criteria without omitting the fact that teachers who will represent their schools in projects abroad will also be representing their country will give better results. The views are as follows: Administrator A4 stated, *"I would like to choose people who have a sense of representation, self-confidence, competency and success in their careers. Because they will be representing my country;"* A3 stated, *"That person should have some kind of representation skill. That person needs to be self-confident, because he/she will be representing Turkey;"* A2 stated, *"I would prefer someone who can reflect positive energy to others with his/her external appearance in all aspects, because that*

person will be representing Turkey there;" A8 stated, *"The person should be able to express himself/herself in a good way in the country he/she visits; therefore, his/her communication should be good. It should even be at a level to promote our country, city in a good manner. You are an example. You go there and you are from Turkey. Therefore, you will be seen as all of the people in Turkey. So, they need to be people whose clothing style, attitude and behaviors are good."*

Administrator A1 stated, *"I would give importance to having teachers with different genders in the team. We can have richer team work with different points of view,"* and underlined that different genders add richness to the experience, while A4 who is a young administrator similarly expressed, *"I would choose a female and a male teacher to benefit from different points of view. I would also choose young teachers who are dynamic, good at keeping up with the world. The new generation has more self-confidence; our self-confidence is more developed compared to the older generations. I believe that we are more grounded, more curious, more eager, more interested in research. I believe that we are less scared of visiting new places."*

Results regarding the third question are presented in Table 4.

3. What criteria should a school administrator use and prioritize to organize a team for a national organization event held at school?

Table 4

Criteria Created by School Administrators

N	Coded thoughts	N
1	Competence (team spirit and teamwork, relevant competence, communication; A1, A2, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9, A10)	9
2	Gender (A2, A3, A5, A6, A7)	5
3	Personality Traits (Smiling, extraordinary, marginal/original, creative, practical, self-confident, energetic, willing, responsible, A2, A3, A4, A7, A8)	5
4	Visuality (A2, A3, A4, A8)	4
5	Age (A2, A3, A4)	3

Administrator A2 expressed the importance of the competencies of the teachers saying, *"A team consisting of people who are knowledgeable about the rules of protocol and know what to do should be built."* In addition, this administrator stated, *"Communication and being genial, how one portrays himself/herself in greeting others is important. Therefore, I would definitely give importance to having women in the team. There may be a 60-year-old and a 35-year-old woman. Since the 35-year-old can be more presentable, I would select her to the team,"* and underlined the communication skills, age and physical appearance of the teachers as well. A3 stated, *"People who are knowledgeable about the rules of protocol, dynamic enough to take on duties, physically presentable and easy going should be in the team. They need to be young and healthy to be able to tolerate exhaustion. They need to have the potential and energy like you to be able to take on this task,"* and underlined competency in the area, besides appearance, age and energy.

Administrator A4 stated, *"I would choose people who need to be in the team in accordance with the legislation. But I would choose teachers who can think outside the box as well. We understand this quality from their manner of speaking and clothing style. They are the more marginal ones. They have a higher chance of being creative. When we gather these people in a team, we do brain-storming and thus, acquire more original ideas. In addition, they need to be eager, young and dynamic as well, because these are activities which require rushing around. Appearance is important. I would choose people who are visually presentable and well in terms of speaking and elocution. The team also needs to believe in team spirit and its members should be "go-getters"* and expressed that

creativity should be considered as a criteria in choosing the teachers and that they should be dynamic, eager, go-getter type of people who are also presentable.

Administrator A8 underlined the quality of being go-getters, team spirit and competency in the area and as different from the others stated, *"Women think about everything in great detail and their aesthetic perception is better. I would give importance to having more women than men in the team."* Administrators A5, A6 and A7 also agreed that women are more skilled in this area, pay attention to details and that there should be more women in the team since they embrace their duties more. While administrator A9 underlined that there is a need for job distribution, A10 stated that as a person who has dealt with protocol a lot in the past, competency in the area and experience are important as well.

Results for the fourth question are presented in Table 5.

4. What factors should a school administrator consider in choosing whom to take on a student-parent visit outside of work hours, and why?

Table 5
Criteria Created by School Administrators

N	Coded thoughts	N
1	Proficiency (Mastery of the subject, communication; A1, A2, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9)	8
2	Volunteering (A4, A6, A7, A9)	4
3	Cultural roles (Gender; A1, A3, A4, A9)	4

A majority of the school administrators agreed on competency in the area and distribution according to need. A5 stated, *"I would take the classroom teacher, the guidance counsellor and if the team will not be too crowded, the teacher of the lesson the student is most successful in."* Similarly, A6 stated, *"The classroom teachers, the guidance counsellor, an assistant to the principal and the teacher of a lesson the students enjoy. It won't be obligatory, because it is outside the working hours. Therefore, the teachers should be asked on a volunteering basis, as a request"* and underlined that it is important that the team is identified according to need and volunteering to come along. A1 stated, *"I would firstly take the classroom teacher with me and since it is a night time visit, it would be better if the teacher is female so as not to disturb the parent we will be visiting. If we are to visit a modern family, there is nothing wrong in all of us being male, but if it is a traditional family, then we need to have a female teacher with us as well,"* and expressed that he/she will take building a team according to need and the cultural status of the family into consideration as well. Administrator A3 stated, *"I would take a female teacher with me by the nature of the visit and our cultural structure. A male vice principal and I would go. This is the most appropriate method"* and expressed that the team should be built not according to need but according to social norms.

Administrator A4 stated, *"Since you said outside of working hours, I would decide on a voluntary basis. I would announce it to the teachers, choose the ones who volunteer; some may volunteer, but this can cause problems in their families. For instance, their spouse may not want them to go or they might have small children and cannot leave them. Therefore, firstly I would ask for volunteers; if no one volunteers, then I would choose one male and one female teacher. If there is a male teacher with me, I would also feel comfortable, because I don't know what I will encounter in the visits,"* and expressed that she would like to build a team based on volunteering rather than needs. The participant administrator also underlined the "protective" role of men attributed by the society and created an image of physical power.

A9 who is one of the female principals stated that she would build a team according to need and added that, *"I am a woman and since I would have no idea what kind of places, I would be visiting in times like these, I would give importance to having one or two male teachers in the team."* She also created the same mental diagram as school administrator A4 and attributed a "protective" role to men in terms of security.

Results for the fifth question are presented in Table 6.

5. What criteria should a school administrator use to organize a Board that will implement the rearrangement of the cafeteria and a change in Cafeteria Management Regulation?

Table 6
Criteria Created by School Administrators

N	Coded thoughts	N
1	Proficiency (Mastery of the subject; A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9, A10)	9
2	Personal traits (Stable, challenging, resistant, strong, careful, sensitive, follower, curious, cooperation, team spirit; A1, A3, A4, A5, A7, A8, A9)	7
3	Interest, willingness (Y1, Y7, Y10)	3
4	Gender (Physical strength, perspective; A2, A4, A5)	3

The views of the school administrators are as follows: A2 stated, *"What is important is the person's competency in cafeteria management; but I can still choose a male and a female teacher to make use of different points of view;"* A3 stated, *"I would choose a meticulous teacher who is knowledgeable about the very sensitive rules and the regulation. There are very routine and strict inspections; therefore, this person needs to be competent in this area;"* A4 stated, *"I would choose a teacher who has a hygiene training certificate and is knowledgeable about the area. If I need to create a commission of 3 people, then it should consist of me, a male teacher and a female teacher. There is a need for different points of view. I would choose people who have a sense of curiosity and can check the items one by one. So, they should both be competent and one should be male and the other female. We might have to pull something and check what is underneath; we need to make use of the strength of men. I would also give importance to having a team that works in harmony as I would not want to experience conflicts,"* and underlined the physical strength of male teachers as different from the other administrators, besides competency in the area and other characteristics. The same administrator added, *"There is always a need for male administrators in schools; as women, we cannot carry, push-pull everything or we cannot break up two students who are fighting. A male teacher can interfere with all that. And we are a patriarchal society; the enforcement power of a man and a woman is not the same. Children are more scared of their fathers rather than their mothers or wives are scared of their husbands. This is the situation in Turkey!"*

A5 who is one of the male administrators stated, *"The cafeteria regulation is clear. If there is a need to use strength to make the cafeteria manager implement the changes, then we have a vice principal in the team and he can use his authority. Secondly, I would like more women to be in the team. Women give more importance to health, nutrition and hygiene. And our cafeteria manager is also a woman and our cafeteria is very clean and nice. The previous cafeteria managers were male and not so clean. We had to let them go after a while,"* and expressed the difference the factor of gender makes in cafeteria management.

Results regarding the sixth question are presented in Table 7.

6. What criteria should a school administrator consider when forming a Crisis Management Team, where teachers will have the right to directly intervene during a school crisis situation?

Table 7
Criteria Created by School Administrators

N	Coded thoughts	N
1	Personal traits (Leadership qualification, crisis management, calm, cool, foresight, practical intelligence, diligence; A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8)	8
2	Competence (Teamwork, cooperation, decision-making skills, command of the subject, intervention ability; A1, A2, A4, A6, A7)	5
3	Gender (A4, A5)	2

The views of the administrators are as follows: A8 stated, *"Firstly, they need to be calm and not act in panic. They need to know what they are doing and be competent people. Secondly, they need to act like an administrator, have leadership, job distribution and appointment skills. Thirdly, they need to be able to communicate with the administration right away and gain the trust of the administration. Lastly, they need to be able to clearly express the situations that arise. They should not exaggerate events and make overstatements; they should be able to express themselves clearly, accurately, in a short but to the point manner and not dramatize events"* and drew attention to being calm, having leadership, job distribution, crisis management and communication skills. Similarly, A1 stated, *"As criteria, I would like them to be able to intervene calmly to crisis situations and make decisions calmly as well. A team in which people can work in cooperation and form balance can be built."*

Administrator A3 stated, *"People who are knowledgeable about human nature, can remain calm and competent throughout a time of crisis need to be chosen. Gender is not important; a woman may do the job of 40 men at times. Sometimes a man is not able to deal with pressure,"* and expressed that these teachers need to manage crises and that gender is not that important, whereas A5 presented a different point of view: *"I would not choose people who panic; some women tend to panic. In this respect, I would try to choose teachers who can remain calm. I would also choose teachers with management and organization skills. They need to have the competency to intervene with crises,"* and expressed that gender is also important in this process besides competency.

DISCUSSION

In this study, we attempted to analyse whether school administrators have stereotypes and if they do, how these stereotypes affect their decision-making process. With this purpose, the related literature was reviewed, six questions were determined and these six questions were asked to the ten administrators through the convenience sampling method. As a result of the analysis of the interviews conducted with the school administrators, it was concluded that the stereotypes of the school administrators influence their decision-making process.

While a majority of the school administrators make decisions about solving problems, they elaborate on problems which are one of the distinguishing symptoms of decision making (Aepli, Ribaux & Summerfield, 2011), to resolve problems and produce alternative solutions. They list the solutions they produce, evaluate them and although it is seen that they make a decision after these steps, they also develop stereotypes about gender, educational status, seniority, physical appearance, marital status, number of children and age factors in the teams they build and situations they face and that these stereotypes influence their decision-making process.

The school administrators were asked which factors they would take into consideration in choosing the vice principals they would be working with and when their answers were analyzed, the frequency of the gender factor was high. The reasons underlined by administrators who prefer male administrators showed that they have stereotypes about gender. The school administrators stated that women's emotional fluctuations cause them to be capricious, they are not as strong as men in physical activities and their priority is always their own housework and caring for their children; therefore, they do not prefer women since they are not able to allocate sufficient time for school related work. It was determined that school administrators attributed strength, rationality and calm behavior to men, whereas they attributed weak and negative characteristics to women in terms of emotional matters and physical strength. In the literature, various studies were found whose findings are similar to the findings of this study. In these studies which deal with administration and gender roles, female and male administrator roles and existing relationships among all the variables were analyzed (Schein, 1973; Schein & Mueller, 1992; Schein, Mueller, Lituchy & Liu, 1996). It was expressed in the related studies that the "successful administrator" perception of both female and male participants was involved with characteristics of men and that the characteristics required for an ideal administration understanding were defined through masculine qualities such as trust, being independent, dominant and strong. In Schein, Mueller, Lituchy and Liu's (1996) study on the subject, leadership and management issues were in general dealt with in the context of masculinity, along with the dominant belief that the phenomenon of management and administration are related to men. This was defined by

the researcher as a universally accepted phenomena of "think manager – think male." In addition, in the following studies of the researcher, it was stated that women have the perception that they have the management skills required to be "successful" administrators like men and that men have an ongoing perception that masculine characteristics are suitable for administrative positions (Schein, Mueller, Lituchy & Liu, 1996). Additionally, in Brenner, Tomkiewicz and Schein's (1989) study, the relationships between gender role stereotypes and required management characteristics were analyzed. The findings showed that the dominant view was that men were much more successful compared to women in terms of management. In Sumer's (2006) study, the findings showed that stereotypes about gender are influential in terms of administrative positions and that such stereotypes prevent the employment of women in administrative positions.

The school administrators were asked who they would choose to be in their team, considering that the members would have to go abroad as well if the Erasmus + project they prepared was accepted and when their answers were analyzed, it was seen that a majority of the administrators gave the priority to the criteria of competency. In addition, knowing a foreign language, communication skills, representation skills, being hard-working and eager are also among the criteria determined by the school administrators. Although it was seen that a majority of the school administrators gave answers free of stereotypes, there were administrators who stated that choosing "teachers who are married with children" has negative sides as well. In addition, it was seen that a young school administrator stated that he would choose young teachers to his team and that he had a stereotype about young teachers being more self-confident and courageous and that as teachers get older, they lose their energy and productivity. It is considered that there are various reasons behind these answers. Today, "motherhood" is defined as women's most basic and prioritized social role in societies like Turkey and it is stated that family, children and house chores are the primary responsibilities of women (Erkanli, 2002). It can be stated that the classification of the primary duties of women in general as being housewives, mothers or spouses and the belief that activities related to developing careers are more related to men lead to such results. In fact, these findings have been supported with various studies (Ayan, 2000; Inandi, Ozkan, Peker & Atik, 2009; Gunduz, 2010; Usluer, 2000). In addition, the findings of numerous studies in the literature have supported that teachers who begin their careers at young ages and have lower seniority have higher motivation (Recepoglu, 2012) and new teachers in the profession give more importance to their careers compared to teachers with higher seniority (Demirkol, 2019). Therefore, it can be stated such stereotypes develop due to the idea that teachers who begin their careers at young ages and are in the first years of their careers are more self-confident and dynamic and as professional seniority increases, the energy to work will decrease and they will give less importance to their careers.

When the school administrators were told that a ceremony would be held with protocol attendance in their schools and asked according to which criteria they would choose the teachers to their team for this occasion, a majority of them underlined competency and the gender factor. While it is accurate to do needs analysis in the decision-making process and take competency as the basis, the school administrators displaying a tendency towards choosing female teachers to their teams and justifying this by saying that women's aesthetic concerns are higher shows that they are influenced by the society's stereotype about gender in their decision-making process. In addition, it was determined that young school administrators have a stereotype that young teachers work more productively. According to Dagabakan (2016), women act more selectively in terms of their expressions compared to men. In addition, it is stated that women are more emotional in their expressions, avoid harsh statements and prefer a gentler manner of expression. In this light, it can be considered that women who know and act according to rules of courtesy, use emotional language more and have strong communication skills are preferred to attend the ceremony at the school.

When the school administrators were asked who they would take with them to home visits to be made at night to the students, it was seen that almost all of them once again underlined the gender factor. The male administrators underlined the modernity/traditionality factor and stated that they would definitely include female teachers in the team to avoid causing uneasiness in the homes they would visit. The female administrators stated that they would definitely include male teachers in their teams since they do not know what they will face during the visits and the

visits are to be made at night. The image of physical strength the society attributes to men in terms of gender emerges with the protective role of men. In Ersoy's study (2009), it was expressed that men are suitable for social roles and duties since they give more importance to the future of their country, have had an image of carrying responsibility and being protective since the past times until the present time and have a greater sense of dominance compared to women. It is considered that such factors contribute to the development of stereotypes.

When the answers of the school administrators related to the cafeterias were analyzed, it was seen that although competency in the area was underlined, it was then emphasized that there is a need for male teachers' physical strength as well to have authority over the cafeteria managers since "the enforcement power of a man and a woman is not the same in our country." In addition, it was underlined that male strength is also needed to pull cabinets and check what is underneath them. "The cafeteria needs to be clean and since it involves cleaning, female teachers need to be in the team" idea derived from the social role "women are clean and cleaning activities are women's duties" attributed to women was also seen among the answers. It was observed that social sexism was evident in the stereotypes of the school administrators and that such stereotypes influence the decision-making process. In fact, Eagly (quoted by Altıntas and Aytac, 2019) stated that job distribution between the genders brings expectations about gender roles as well and that social gender roles are common beliefs which develop in the society about the skills of women and men.

The school administrators were told that a "Crisis Management Team" will be built which will intervene during times of crisis, make decisions and that this team will be able to directly intervene with the authority of the administration. The administrators were asked according to which criteria they would choose the team teachers who will have the authority to directly intervene. A school administrator, who answered that he/she would choose calm teachers, stated that "a woman may do the job of 40 men at times" and for that reason, he/she would not give importance to gender in choosing the teachers. On the other hand, a stereotype was determined about women being emotionally weak with the following answer of a school administration, "I would not choose people who panic; some women tend to panic." Generally, it is known that women and men have different emotional characteristics. It is expressed that the emotional characteristics of women and men are related to the emotional character attributed to gender roles by society (Lupton, 2002). The societal idea that women by nature are more sensitive, touchy and emotional can cause such stereotypes to develop.

When the findings obtained as a result of the study are taken into consideration, it can be stated that the school administrators are influenced by stereotypes in their decision-making process. Although stereotypes were seen about young age being accepted as being successful or as teachers' seniority increases competency increases as well, the most frequently repeated stereotype is the "gender" factor that the ten administrators underlined at certain points in the six questions. It can be stated that the stereotypes about the gender factor results from the roles women and men assume in the society. Goregenli (2012) stated that characteristics such as being soft-hearted, passive or weak attributed to women which easily validate gender inequality are not the result of the two gender's nature and they are the result of expectations about social sexist roles. Sexism is generally defined as an aspect which affects social behaviors in numerous areas. It can be defined as the separation of certain jobs in the workplace as female or male work. Sexism in the workplace is known more as barriers about female employees and it can be seen in every area of social life. Stereotypes about women are generally evident in the workplace and administrative processes as well. Findings that support this view were found in the studies in the literature on the same subject. In fact, according to a PwC Gender Equality in the Workplace Research dated 2018, which was carried out in Turkey with 943 participants, while a majority of men think that there is equal opportunity in the decision-making process, only half of the women agreed with this view.

The mission given to women and men over gender by the society emerges in the teams the school administrators build, in the solutions of problems and in numerous decisions that they make. Taking Simon's words that "decision making is the heart of management," it can be seen that decision making in management has a central function. It

is considered that isolating the action of "decision making" from our personal stereotypes is important in terms of carrying out a function in a healthy manner.

IMPLICATIONS

School administrators need to be given awareness training about "human behavior and psychology" stereotypes prior to getting appointed; studies should be conducted at the end of training activities to determine whether stereotypes influence the decision-making process and each administrator's rate of awareness should determine their suitability to be appointed. In general, it is considered that building social awareness is important in terms of removing stereotypes about gender in professional life. Although it is not easy to change this mentality socially, the experts need to be more sensitive and responsive about this issue. Studies need to be conducted with the aim of preventing the association of certain jobs with men in the school organization or removing the idea that certain jobs only belong to men. It should be kept in mind that school administrators' having certain stereotypes and these stereotypes being influential in the decision-making process can weaken the sense of trust within the school organization and this can harm the social relationships in schools. Therefore, it is considered that removing stereotypes related to gender is important.

LIMITATIONS

The research is limited to the data obtained from the analysis of the opinions expressed by the school administrators on the decision-making strategies. In addition, the fact that the majority of the administrators constituting the research group are male is a limitation due to the country's cultural characteristics. This limitation is also supported by the 2020 data, in which the Turkish Statistical Institute (2021) analyzed the managers in Turkey and determined that 82% of them were male.

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