THE DIFFICULTIES FACED BY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS WORKING IN DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS AND THE EFFECTS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR ROLE THEY EXHIBIT ON THE SUCCESS OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to identify the difficulties faced by school principals working in disadvantaged schools in order to raise students with 21st century skills and to ensure the continuity of school success, and to examine the effect of the role of school principal on teacher and student success. The study group includes 10 school principals from primary schools located in disadvantaged regions of Istanbul. In the study, a phenomenological qualitative research design was used and the snowball sampling method, a purposeful sampling method, was employed. In order to achieve the aim of the study, participants were asked the following questions: 1. What kind of problems do you encounter in your school? 2. What methods do you use to deal with the problems? 3. How do you support your teachers who cannot cope with their problems? 4.How do you support troubled students to cope with their problems?

Through the study, several problems faced by the principals emerged: financial constraints, lack of commitment to the school, socio-economic structure of the school environment, and the socio-cultural structure of the school environment. The study also shows that to address these problems, school principals lead teachers' professional knowledge by displaying "correct communication", "resilience", "flexibility and positive thinking", and they try to create a positive school climate. In addition, it was determined that principals' approach problematic students caringly, gaining their trust and trying to find solutions to their problems. Such an approach creates positive changes in teachers' and students' attitudes and behaviors toward the school and increases academic success. The main finding in this study is that school principals' experiences in dealing with difficulties can be a guide to other colleagues in how to deal with difficulties.

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Keywords: Disadvantaged school, school leadership, resilience, school principal, leader school principal

1. INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of a school and its ability to achieve its predetermined goals depends on the leadership skills of the school administrator, who is primarily responsible for the execution of the education and training program (Balcı, 2014).

Urbanization and migration, which started with the acceleration of industrialization since the end of the 19th century, greatly affected the economy and population structure. As a continuation of this, the great social changes seen in the 20th century significantly affected schools. Until this period, the role of technical-human manager, which was the management role of school leaders, was left to the role of professional manager. In our age, schools are seen as the center of social problems and solutions related to education.

In particular with the increasing schooling in cities, an instructional leadership role has emerged that can respond to the problems of students' low academic achievement. Then, with the effect of rapid urbanization, the concept of transformational leadership role emerged, which can provide holistic change of a school in parallel with the change and transformation of the school environment (Gümüşeli, 2014).

Globalization, a characteristic of the 21st century, has increased human mobility, causing large migrations both nationally and internationally. As a result, changing family structures, changing school environments, and rapidly increasing environmental problems make it difficult for school communities to adapt. These changes impact school leaders, diversifying and increasing their workloads.

According to the 2008 OECD Report, expectations from schools and education are increasing in OECD countries and, as a result, school leaders are experiencing more and more difficulties in adapting to new demands and changing environments. The transformation of education systems in response to rapid technological change, economic globalization, and increasing migration mobility is radically changing the role of school leaders.

The function of school leadership in OECD countries is now defined by a challenging set of roles that includes financial and human resource management and learning leadership. For this reason, there is a need for leading school principals who comply with the expectations of the age and behave according to the conditions of their environment.

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School principals should not only supervise the education and training processes of the school, fulfill tasks such as education visionary, curriculum and evaluation expertise, budget analysis, but also create an educational environment that can meet the requirements of the 21st century for all communities around the school. They are expected to provide educational services to all children around them.

The expansion of education systems has not enabled all young people to reach their full potential. The OECD's PISA assessments show that an unacceptably large number of young people in many countries fail to acquire basic skills.

As countries move rapidly toward becoming knowledge societies with new learning demands and new citizenship expectations, strategic choices must be made not only to reform but also to explore education systems that can teach today's youth to cope with tomorrow's challenges. To this end, school leaders must constantly adapt their schools to the demands of the outside world and redefine their roles in response to a changing environment.

Leadership at the school level is increasingly responsible for guiding teachers to respond to uncertain futures and new challenges. Therefore, an important role of school leadership is to ensure that both students and teachers continuously learn, develop and adapt to changing environments (Pont et al.,2008).

The effectiveness of teachers in the development of students is greater than that of the school principal. Principals, however, fulfill many indirect tasks in order to influence education and training and to ensure student development. Among these tasks, the main ones are monitoring, evaluating, and developing teachers in the classroom, creating high expectations of students and teachers, providing the necessary resources for effective teaching, and creating a school climate that supports learning (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

Effective school leadership is important but alone it is not sufficient for successful schools. International evidence points to the importance of joint implementation of the two leaderships, both transformational and educational/pedagogical, pointing to the impact of teaching leadership at all levels of schools, but particularly as a critical determinant of the quality of the school's psychological, physical and social environment, and conditions. What kind of teaching and learning takes place in school is important. This affects students' motivation, expectations, attitudes, and behaviors in the classroom.

Most of the research on effective schools has defined school leaders as "strong" and "purposeful". However, the IMPACT Research (2009), which focuses on school leaders who want to improve, emphasizes the importance of focusing on the work and lives of successful school leaders, their values, knowledge, skills, wants, capacities, and practices (Day & Sammons, 2015).

The above research findings suggest school principals should hold themselves responsible for all aspects of the school and aim to sustain the success of the school by developing a proactive leadership style regarding the problems they will encounter. On the other hand, the school leader should be aware that there is an important relationship between the quality of classroom teaching and the quality of student learning and achievement in order to create a successful school. However, the question of the magnitude of the effects of leadership and how it works directly or indirectly to increase student outcomes is still a matter of debate.

While measurable outcomes of successful leadership such as student development and achievement are recognized as key indicators of effectiveness, they are insufficient in themselves to ensure success. In addition, it is of great importance that principals working in schools in disadvantaged areas create a school climate that supports students' learning by promoting positive values such as honesty, compassion, and justice, and encouraging lifelong learning in order to ensure full access to education. Promoting citizenship and personal, economic, and social abilities is considered just as important as fostering students' academic outcomes and is therefore a key aspect of successful leadership.

The environment where the school is located, its physical location and economic factors are important factors affecting the implementation of an education program (Gümüşeli, 2014). It is possible to come up against difficulties in the implementation of a targeted education program due to a rapid increase in the number of students, especially in disadvantaged environments exposed to rapid migration, and the limitation of physical space. In many countries, it cannot be said that the state fully meets the financial resources that school need.

This situation is quite evident in countries with a large school age population. Turkey is experiencing a rapid increase in the school age population. Over recent years, economic difficulties arising from agricultural policies have accelerated migration from rural areas into cities. People move to the cities hoping to find employment and a better standard of living

and they settle in slum areas, creating a new life style that sits between village and city life. These communities, which find it difficult to adapt to city culture, are prevented from giving the necessary importance to education due to their primary problem: employment.

The children in these communities, therefore, do not benefit sufficiently from quality education opportunities. The success rates of these students in central exams are very low. In addition, students with low academic success often leave school because of lack of motivation or to help with family finances by working in daily, irregular jobs (Özcan et al., 2018). Students who leave school after basic education in Turkey have been found to be mainly children of disadvantaged families. 63% of students who leave school have at least one child worker in their family and are generally under the age of 15 (Özdemir et al., 2010). According to Tabcu (2015) this situation suggests that students are born into congenital deprivation.

In addition to these children's low educational achievement due to being in school for only a few months of a school year, they have little belief in education and few expectations that they will enter a profession through education. The children of disadvantaged families that lack material, moral, and emotional resources are unlikely to benefit from their rights, are unable to fully develop their potential and cannot participate in society as equal citizens (Özcan et al.,2018). Additionally, The Education Assessment Report (2019) report revealed that socio-economic factors affect student achievement in international exams (Tosun et al., 2020).

In order for students to be academically successful and fully take part in society, schools need to be equal in the opportunities they provide. In practice, the opportunities and facilities provided by schools differ: for example, 51% of students in science high schools and 42% of Anatolian high school science students in Turkey are children of families from the highest socio-economic level (Özcan et al.,2018) argue that inadequate physical and technical infrastructure and education staff play an active role in the academic failures of socio-economically disadvantaged students.

However, the future success of children living in disadvantaged regions is possible with quality school education, strong guidance, and psychological counseling (Oral & McGivney 2014). Therefore, making schools in disadvantaged areas stronger in terms of physical and human resources is important for equal opportunity in education and social justice.

Every individual has the right to equality of opportunity through education (Ural, 2012). However, economic, political, and social inequalities continue to exist, for example, in access to services and the distribution of goods. This inequality significantly affects students' access to education, which is a fundamental human right. The right to education is guaranteed by both national and international studies, policies, contracts and directives.

The 2015 PISA report socio-economic and cultural status index (EKSD), which considers parental occupation and education level and the education resources and equipment available to students at home, defines 64% of students in Turkey as socially and economically disadvantaged. The OECD average is below 18% (Yaşar & Amaç, 2018).

According to the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), more than half of teachers in Turkey (50.4%) work in rural areas. The percentage of newly qualified teachers working in socio-economically disadvantaged schools in Turkey is 40.4%, the highest of 48 countries, while the OECD average is 22.2% (Karip, 2019).

According to Milner (2015) school leaders and teachers committed to creating the best educational opportunities for their students introduce effective practices at school and individual classroom level in disadvantaged schools that consider students' standard of living and their life experiences. Poverty is probably the most pressing problem throughout the world and significantly affects educational status. People living in poverty have limited access to important resources. Parents may not have access to adequate or reliable transport to reach schools, and many may not have had positive school experiences themselves making them uncomfortable during direct contact with teachers and school staff. It is therefore the school's responsibility to create inviting environments that are comfortable and engaging for all parents to keep them connected to the school.

As is apparent from the above description, more than half of the number of students present in Turkey are from disadvantaged groups. This situation makes it necessary for school administrators working in disadvantaged regions to make more effort in their leadership roles (Yalçınkaya, 2002). Disadvantaged schools have limited opportunities. Educating students to meet the needs of the 21st century requires school administrators to have an understanding different from the usual management roles.

Undoubtedly, administrators can achieve this by first getting to know the school organization she/he is responsible for, becoming familiar with all its stakeholders, accurately

identifying their problems, and allocating resources in the best way possible. To address this, the research focus of this study is: "The difficulties faced by school principals working in disadvantaged schools and the effects of the manager role they exhibit on teacher and student success."

2. METHOD

2.1. Study Model

The aim of this study is to examine the difficulties faced by principals in disadvantaged schools and the effects of their role as school administrators in the face of these difficulties on the success of students and teachers. The study uses a phenomenological qualitative research method design.

Qualitative research is created through a long and intense interaction process applied to a slice of a social life or a field. These processes reflect the daily lives of individuals, groups, societies or organizations. The aim of the researcher is to look at the features of the environment in which she is working in a holistic way. With this systematic, inclusive and integrated view, the philosophy of the research, its arrangements, secrets or explicit rules, with a very rigorous and empathetic approach, collects data from the participants and the main themes and statements are evaluated in accordance with the naturalness of the data (Wolcott, 1992; Akbaba & Ersoy, 2016). This study was conducted with face-to-face interviews through reflective listening. Expert opinion was used in the preparation of interview forms, which was made up of semi-structured questions.

2.2. Research Participants

The participants of the study, selected on a voluntary basis, are 10 school principals who were working in primary schools in Istanbul in the 2019-2020 academic year.

Some participants were selected using the snowball sampling method, a purposeful sampling method very effective method for finding individuals and situations that can be a source of data related to the researcher's problem. Where the researcher has difficulty obtaining some information, she asks the participants, "Who would you recommend I should talk to about this issue?" Starting from this question, a working group is obtained, growing like a snowball (Patton, 1987; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

The interviews were conducted in the participants' own environments. Participants and schools are given pseudonyms in order to maintain academic and institutional confidentiality.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of principals

School Name	Principals' Name	Gender	Seniority in the Profession	Year in current school	Branch
A	Atıf	Male	21	11	Class teacher/ undergraduate
B	Serhat	Male	23	8	Class teacher / undergraduate
C	Ferhan	Male	19	5	Class teacher / undergraduate
D	Ayşenur	Female	22	4	Class teacher / Master
E	Aylin	Female	19	7	Class teacher / Master
F	Naci	Male	23	6	Class teacher / undergraduate
G	Yılmaz	Male	25	5	Class teacher / undergraduate
H	Aydın	Male	21	3	Class teacher / undergraduate
I	Âdem	Male	22	3	Class teacher / undergraduate
J	Haluk	Male	19	6	Class teacher / undergraduate

2.3.   Procedure and Process: Data Collection Tools

Invitation letters were sent to the principals inviting them to take part in the study group. These letters explained the purpose of the research and asked whether the recipient would voluntarily participate in the study. After receiving approval for participation, the participants were interviewed with the help of interview forms consisting of semi-structured questions prepared using expert opinion.

During the face-to-face interviews, reflective listening was used and records of the interviews were taken with the permission of the participants. The data obtained was deciphered and put into writing. These transcripts were shared with the relevant participants for confirmation. The study, which started on January 3, 2019, was terminated on January 28, 2020.

2.4. Data Analysis

A content analysis was made of the study data. Miles and Huberman describe the data analysis process as processing data, visualizing data, drawing conclusions, and confirming (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). By analyzing the data in this way, concepts and relationships that can explain the data are reached. While coding the data, themes and concepts that are important to the research problem were used. The important data was then selected and presented in figures, tables, graphics, etc. Related concepts and themes were identified and interpreted. The findings obtained according to the results of the study are explained in detail in accordance with the nature of the content analysis, and direct quotations are included.

3. FINDINGS

This section contains the findings and interpretation of the research data.

3.1. Findings Regarding the First Problem

The principals were asked the first sub-problem question: "What are the problems you have in your school? The problems faced by the managers were coded and the main problems emerged as "financial constraints", "lack of commitment to the school", "socio-economic structure of the school environment" and "socio-cultural structure of the school environment".

3.1.1. Financial Constraints

Financial constraints emerged as the main problem for all school principals. School principals stated that they had financial difficulties in meeting the needs of the school. They stated that the state did not provide sufficient funding to their schools and that they felt abandoned in this regard. Haluk said he felt very helpless when he took over the principal's position as the school funds were empty and that the previous principal had had some renovation work done by the local tradesmen but left without paying some bills.

"….. In fact, the beginning was a very troubling process. Parents? What could I ask from poor people? Also, I was new to the school and didn't know anyone." (Haluk).

In addition, principals complained about problems with the school cleaning staff being employed as contracted personnel which was a serious burden in terms of paying salaries and social security premiums. All of the principals are responsible for materials, tools, training materials, paint, renovations, etc. They stated that they spend time looking for financial

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support to meet their needs and this shortens the time they can spend on education and training.

3.1.2. Lack of Commitment to the School

All of the school principals stated that the teachers assigned to schools in disadvantaged regions wanted to leave the school as soon as possible. Generally, newly qualified teachers are appointed to these schools. Since these teachers are inexperienced, they have trouble dealing with difficult students and parents. Atıf stated that a problem with the parent of a student who does not do homework led to a threat on a teacher's life on the social media account set up by the teacher with his class's parents.

Newly qualified teachers have a lot of shortcomings in terms of human relations and the ability to manage as they do not demonstrate appropriate response or patience. Therefore, they stated that instead of finding solutions to problems, they tend to quickly give up and look for appointments elsewhere. Some participants stated that this situation harmed the students and left the institution in a difficult situation.

".... For a commitment to have something there must be something that attracts you. I thought a lot about how to connect my teachers to the school. I sympathize with teachers; there is no magic formula for poor schools with limited opportunities, students who do not come to school regularly, and parents ready to attack the teacher. We try to give responsibility to children who are surrounded by poverty and indifference, who are subject to violence and who are forced to work in order to contribute financially to the home. Teachers cannot adapt to the school. Once they realize the problem, they see the only solution as running away from school."(Atıf).

3.1.3. Socio-economic Structure of the School Environment

All school principals stated that the socio-economic difficulties of the school environment reflect on the school. It was emphasized that families from Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia with poor financial means come and settle in these regions. Most parents are unemployed or trying to survive with short-term jobs. The absenteeism of the children of families suffering from poverty is very high.

It was stated that some students go to different jobs on a daily basis due to poverty and often ran away from home. Some families saw the school as an "aid distributing institution". Teacher are responsible for theater trips, school trips, museums, etc. Low

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participation in such activities where learning and cohesion can be achieved are important symptoms of poverty. According to the principals, it is not possible to expect financial support from parents or for them to cooperate with the school for these reasons.

"We asked for very small contributions for some consumables and personnel expenses, and we got a response. Most of the students are neglected and have no equipment. If we ask them for money, they don't come to school. 'The state says the school is free of charge. Why do you want us to contribute?' We are even threatened with complaints to the national education ministry." (Serhat).

3.1.4. Socio-cultural Structure of the School Environment

Another problem faced by school principals is the socio-cultural structure of the school environment. According to the principals, families' lack of education, indifference to education and poor behavior deeply affect their children and these problems are reflected in the school.

Many fathers and family members are drug addicts or dealers. The children of these families face poverty, lack of ownership and apathy, as well as violence and harassment. In addition, they are constantly influenced by the bad habits they witness in the family. Ferhan expressed his experiences as follows:

"... Domestic violence is extremely severe. Children do whatever they see at home, so that's why they are constantly fighting each other. For example, they don't know how to do such a thing as set up a game or play together. They imagine normal life this way. Fights in the classroom reflect on the home. They do not hesitate to exhibit violent behavior even to teachers." (Ferhat).

Some families want to change teachers according to their religious beliefs. Principals had difficulties where parents did not want female teachers or teachers who wear the headscarf. In addition, it was pointed out that parents become defensive and aggressive when informed of their children's deficiencies, when suggestions are made, or when parents' requests are not fulfilled.

"One of our teachers reported that she noticed differences in a student's behavior and observed signs of autism, so she wanted to invite the mother to the school. She wrote a note. After repeated calls, I was able to bring the mother to school. However, he strongly rejected what the teacher was saying and insulted the teacher, and later we learned that our teacher

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complained to the district national education ministry. Our teacher was very scared and asked for another appointment, stating that he did not want to work at the school. They ignore the motivations of the employees." (Ayşenur).

Aylin, on the other hand, stated that they had problems due to parents' indifference, that she fought for a student who was subjected to domestic violence and harassment, and that she had to resolve the incident through the courts, but the family was hostile to her and they took the child away from the school.

3.2.   Findings Regarding the Second Problem

To address the second problem, the principals were asked: "What methods do you use to deal with the problems?" Coding of the data identified "correct communication", "resilience", "flexibility and positive thinking" as themes.

3.2.1. Correct Communication

School principals agree that the art of communicating correctly is an important skill for an administrator. According to Atıf, "a person who cannot use communication methods well should never be a manager." The success of a manager is related to their competence in human relations. If a manager is not successful in establishing relationships with people, she/he will have a hard time because there are a lot of people in and around the school in disadvantaged areas who cannot empathize or understand.

Most people, as they understand it, look at events in a narrow frame, so communication is very important. Atıf stated that he never brought parents and teachers together at first when addressing problematic situations. He first listened to the parents in his office to establishing good communication and calm them down and then looked for appropriate ways to solve the problem.

"A man came to the school with a crowbar in his angry hand, shouting loudly, "let the teacher come here." I took him to my room and tried to calm him down. If the teacher were to come, he would have used the crowbar. The parent had written a note to the teacher on WhatsApp. When the teacher angrily responded, an argument blew up. The parent had been a drug user and had been in prison. I calmed him down, offered tea, talked diplomatically and sorted the problem out. A few days after the conversation, he donated a small amount of money to the school in an envelope, which was not in a good economic

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situation. He said, "Sir, you saved me from being a murderer, thanks." My suggestion to my teachers and colleagues is: Listen, empathize and communicate well." (Atıf).

Adem said that his school was trying to maintain healthier relationships between students, teachers, and parents by using guidance counselors.

3.2.2. Resilience

According to school principals, the first condition for being successful in disadvantaged schools is resilience. Aylin said that you should make parents and school staff feel that you are "unyielding", determined, and self-confident.

"Usually administrators who cannot stand these schools either give up and leave or are removed due to complaints or other reasons. So the school community should recognize you as powerful. Employees who do not want to comply with the rules may try to intimidate you. For example, a teacher requested class hours that would negatively affect the course arrangements for all other teachers, so we could not accept. The teacher was very aggressive. It is not possible for everyone to have everything they want, you have to make the rules. (Aylin).

Haluk emphasized the importance of being determined and following the rules. Management is not easy. You can very easily be branded as a "bad person".

"When I took office, the exterior of the school needed painting. I received quotes from the firm we used and others and found out that the firm that I was working with was charging exorbitant prices so stopped using them. Two of my employees at the school have always behaved negatively and later I learned that when the tenders were given, their friendship relations were effective. I struggled and protected the school. Many seemingly small things can create unsolvable problems later on, but if you are determined, after a while, nobody can break your rules."(Haluk).

Principals stated that the school tries to overcome a significant part of its financial problems by using various non-governmental organizations, philanthropists, and personal relationships.

3.2.3. Flexibility and Positive Thinking

Management requires flexibility, that is, acting according to the situation. According to the principals, it is important to understand the different aspects of events and to understand them flexibly. Everything is constantly changing. If it is known that a correct decision made today may change over time or that more functional changes are required, the managerial task becomes easier.

"The people of the region we are in already feel themselves socially, economically, and culturally excluded. How will a teacher who is constantly trying to punish a student who comes from such a life win this student. The teacher who does not know how to be flexible and to produce solutions according to the situation loses that child, and our student absenteeism is high. Many of the kids don't like school. However, we can make success by evaluating each child within their own characteristics and by motivating them like "you can do it, you can also succeed, too", by revealing the good aspects. I take the student into my room and listen to their problems. I encourage them and try to win them over by showing some flexibility toward some of their behavior. Their trust in me builds, and then I see that they are among the beloved, hard-working children of the class. Having positive emotions, getting away from negative emotions, trying for psychological resilience, and developing good feelings for the future encourages children." (Ferhan).

"According to some, flexibility is like a weakness, it is perceived as a compromise, whereas to be flexible, to think in a versatile way, is to adjust according to circumstances.

"Each student is different and each problem has different solutions. I see flexibility as an important skill. It is necessary to focus on good things by thinking positively." (Naci).

3.3.   Findings Regarding the Third Problem

To address the third problem, the principals were asked: "How do you support your teachers who cannot cope with their problems?" Coding with the data identified "professional knowledge leadership" and "creating a positive school climate" as themes.

3.3.1. Professional Knowledge Leadership

According to school principals, we are in a society where thoughts and beliefs are constantly changing. Education is a dynamic structure. School principals have to manage

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their school well by being open to innovation and developing new strategies in line with these changes.

"Our job used to be to just follow the instructions to complete routine work. Now, we have to consider the interior of the school, its environment, the parents, the student's life outside school, teachers' expectations, that is, many things together, and manage the school well as a whole. If you cannot share responsibility with your teachers, you will have to deal the problem on your own. You have to be a leader for this. You should try to listen to teachers, get to know them and meet their needs. The solution to problems in the classroom becomes easier when they feel close to you." (Yılmaz).

All of the principals stated that they want to support teachers and the importance of helping each other. They see teachers' success as school success. Newly qualified teachers are usually appointed to disadvantaged schools. Since these teachers do not have experience, mistakes can be made that are difficult to overcome.

"Some teachers who think that they can do their teaching profession with beautiful dreams during their student years realize that their dreams cannot be realized in such difficult conditions. Students, parent profiles, and physical inadequacies of the school demotivate them. That's why we need to lead. I wish more experienced teachers were assigned to these schools.

They would be role models for newly qualified teachers. However, it is up to us to fill this gap. It is necessary to be a guide. Talk to the parent like this, talk to the student like this, let's watch the program like this. It is necessary to train the personnel, go around the classes regularly, check and complete the deficiencies." (Adem).

According to school principals, after seeing the conditions of the school and the levels of the students, most of the teachers look for employment in another school.

Atıf stated that he was frequently in the classroom environment and observed the levels and progress of the teachers and led the teacher in the light of the information he gathered. Similarly, Adam states that he spends most of his time guiding teachers in parent-teacher cooperation.

"Inexperienced teachers learn by trial and error, which can be waste of time, wasted effort and damaging. I have a non-judgmental attitude This gave them confidence in me. I

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lead every teacher who wants to learn and be informed. Current teacher training institutions do not give enough professional knowledge. Field knowledge alone is not enough.

What does the teaching profession require; as if characteristics such as patience, tolerance, understanding and handling are not taught." (Adem).

According to Serhat, the teaching profession requires knowledge, courtesy, being a role model for the student, and the ability to work in harmony with parents and other staff. Ferhan stated that he assigned teachers with specific projects, tried to get to know them, and in this way, he was able to provide help where needed. According to Aydın, parents of disadvantaged school children generally do not expect academic success from their children. They see this as impossible. They only aim to keep them off the streets.

"I direct my teachers to home visits, it is very effective. There are teachers who cannot benefit enough from the guidance service." (Aydın).

Referring to the importance of in-service training, Aylin stated that teaching is a profession that constantly learns and that the importance of teamwork is guiding teachers to training and seminars.

3.3.2. Creating a Positive School Climate

All school principals stated that they are trying to create a positive school climate and ensure the participation of all school stakeholders in decisions. Success cannot be achieved purely through the effort of the manager or the teacher. Every person, from the staff cleaning the classroom to the clerk, should do their job well. This makes the teacher's job easier. Providing this depends on the initiative of the manager.

Atıf stated that, when he started his duty, he organized many areas of the school that had been standing idle, such as the gymnasium and conference hall, and made use of them, and created different areas and opportunities for students and made the school attractive:

"Innovations at school affect students and parents. For example, there are students from different cultures at the school. We formed a school choir and assigned different roles to each of them. Children from separate cultures who had been constantly fighting suddenly began to get on. Listening to each other's voices and listening to themselves made them feel valued and equal. The pride, joy, and applause of being in public was the compliment they had perhaps never had before. We enabled parents to see the talents of their children. For

example, we did a project with a group of foreign countries. Our project won and our parents couldn't believe that the project their children participated in won. We tried to get all parents to school and show them success boards. I wanted their children to see the good side. Next came the process of foreign project partners in Turkey. We hosted them in our school. We also gave roles to parents and asked for small contributions. The parents cleaned the school. They made pastries and cakes and brought them in. It is imperative to see the school as a whole with its parent, students, drivers, cleaners, and teachers. "(Atıf).

3.4.   Findings Regarding the Fourth Problem

To address the forth problem, the principals were asked: "How do you support problematic students in coping with their problems?" Coding the data identified the theme of "love and trust."

3.4.1. Love and Trust

Principals emphasized that they are intermediaries and solution providers in addressing the problems students have with their teachers in the classroom. Violence, fighting, harassment, drug use, drug dealing, murder, stabbing, theft, and imprisonment are common in the environment and at home. So, the school should be an assurance for them. Children should be loved, they should be made to feel cared for. Complaining to the father of a child who is constantly beaten at home for this or that situation at school simply means the child is subjected to more violence, so ends up running away from school or hating us.

"The teacher brings the child by the arm saying this child is naughty, does not do homework, is quarrelsome, etc. This is what the child sees at home and around them. How do we turn this around? It is necessary to focus on this. Talking down to his level I make him trust me. Dealing with the problem in the classroom by asking, what shall we do? What do you say? I let him know that I listen to his requests and feelings and give him advice so that he knows I love and care about him. He can control himself when he is given responsibility in the classroom. Expectations or behaviors should be considered, knowing that these are children." (Naci).

"Success is not expected from a child who is constantly scolded. The child should be motivated, encouraged, 'you can do it!'. For example, there are immigrant children in our school. I thought what can I do to motivate them. I tried to balance the groups. I gave them responsibilities and they needed each other to finish the job. Sports games, project studies,

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the simplest methods of integration, even establishing a choir or a sports team. It is important to hear, listen, and understand love." (Serhat).

Yılmaz emphasized the importance of understanding and encouraging children as well as being a role model for them.

" I have improved the lives of many unsuccessful and unwanted children by treating them with love. We can develop each child by finding and highlighting a side to be proud of. We dealt with problematic children with our guidance service and produced solutions. Later, these children became more confident and more enthusiastic. "(Yılmaz).

4.   CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study was conducted to examine the difficulties faced by administrators in disadvantaged schools and the effects of their role as school administrators in the face of these difficulties. The principals were asked the first sub-problem question: "What problems do you have in your school? The problems faced by the managers were coded and the main problems emerged as "financial constraints", "lack of commitment to the school", "socio-economic structure of the school environment", and "socio-cultural structure of the school environment".

All of the school principals whose data were collected in the study stated that they had economic problems and could not get enough financial support from the state. The majority of the parents are poor, unemployed families who have migrated to the area. Principals are responsible for the school's infrastructure, materials, maintenance and repair, tools, etc. They try to meet their needs by appealing to charities and donors. Tosun et al. (2020) revealed that disadvantaged schools have limited physical infrastructure, materials and technological equipment, and that the budgets allocated to these schools are quite insufficient.

In the study, school engagement emerged as one of the important problems faced by school principals. Participants stated that disadvantaged schools do not have enough loyalty from teachers, students and their parents due to their lack of appeal.

The high dropout rate is an important issue in disadvantaged schools. School dropout is caused by the socioeconomic status of the family, gender, ethnicity, academic failure, and exclusion and neglect arising from the approach of the school administration or teachers. According to Köse (2019) schools in this region are very important not only for these children but also for the large community groups around them.

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In the research, principals tried to ensure commitment to the school. They tried to make the school a center of attraction. Involving students in projects, competitions, and social events: choir, sports, folk dances, etc. They succeeded with this method by encouraging their commitment to the school.

According to school principals, schools located in socio-economically and socio-culturally disadvantaged regions attract students from poor families. The limited opportunities of the environment and families prevent their children from seeing their education as a priority. First of all, meeting their economic needs is their main issue. Many students even have to work at home to take care of their siblings or contribute to the home economy.

To address the second problem, the principals were asked: "What methods do you use to deal with the problems?" Coding of the data identified "correct communication", "resilience", "flexibility and positive thinking" as themes.

Communication is important for healthy harmony of the school organization. The first condition of communication is to listen effectively and to empathize. Principals take care to spread this habit in the school. Principals stated that they overcame problems by listening to their parents and students effectively and making them feel they understand.

Having a sufficient number of guidance counselors in disadvantaged schools is very important for compliance and communication. Principals have tried to increase the number of guidance teachers in the school. In addition, attempts were made to make teachers more understanding tolerant of the children by encouraging classroom teachers and guidance counselors to visit students' homes.

In the study, school principals stated that they encountered resistance originating from school employees and parents in the process of creating the corporate culture in their schools. In order to convince their employees, participants stated that they use different strategies to make decisions that will benefit the school organization, and that they try to establish school rules by showing decisive and determined behavior.

According to Linquanti (1992) resilience is the state of not being affected by the negative consequences of the anxiety and distress people face in their lives. Resilience is not an innate quality, but rather a relative, developmental, and dynamic structure in which individuals can combine their positive adaptation and development in difficult conditions

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(Henderson & Milstein,1996). According to school principals, the resilience of administrators and teachers sets an example and encourages students to cope with problems.

One of the methods school principals use to solve problems is to think positively. According to Fredrickson (2004) people turn into more creative, knowledgeable, flexible, socially integrated, and healthy individuals with the acquisition of positive thinking behavior. School principals attached importance to the spread of this understanding. In the "age of diversity and sustainability" created by the current process, being a manager and teacher is a challenging job (Hargreaves & Fink, 2003).

The shift in focus on success from teacher stress and burnout to resilience provides a promising perspective for principals and teachers in understanding the ways in which they manage and maintain their motivation and commitment in times of change.

To address the third problem, the principals were asked: "How do you support your teachers who cannot cope with their problems?" Coding of the data identified "professional knowledge leadership" and "creating a positive school climate" as themes.

Good leadership is important in disadvantaged schools. According to school principals, the professional knowledge provided in existing teacher training institutions is not sufficient. They stated that the teaching profession can be improved by practicing and observing experienced expert trainers. According to Yaşar and Amaç (2018) creating projects where teacher candidates can come together with disadvantaged students can make it easier for them to obtain information about this student group. Principals try to address deficiencies with in-service training. However, they stated that the constant change of teachers negatively affects these efforts and the school.

The formation of a positive school climate positively affects the success of teachers and students, and school management is responsible for creating this positive learning environment. Participants increased their motivation by encouraging teachers to take part in various projects. This situation is reflected in the academic success of the students. The friendships established with the schools in foreign countries in particular mean teachers have become aware of perspectives to the outside world, made them aware of innovations which they then apply in their classrooms.

These developments, which are brought home by students, have been important activities that make school more appealing for disadvantaged people and enable parents to

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value their children. School principals learn about their functions by observing classrooms in various ways, and by chatting with teachers and students.

To address the forth problem, the principals were asked: "How do you support problematic students in coping with their problems?" Coding the data identified the theme of "love and trust".

Principals emphasized the importance of the school in the psychological, social, and academic success of the students. It is necessary to approach students and parents with love and empathy in order to overcome the negativities that affect their lives. Participants try to have positive effects on their psychological, academic, and social success by showing them love and gaining their trust. By inviting students to their rooms, they try to listen, understand, and strengthen their relationships with their teachers and families. Despite the limited opportunities, the activities created at school make more students resistant to difficulties.

As a result, school principals of disadvantaged schools are responsible for coping with the negative aspects of their environment as well as their managerial roles.

Therefore, rewarding self-sacrificing principals and teachers in various ways and preparing success stories as a handbook can be a resource that can be useful to all educators. Appointment of more experienced teachers to disadvantaged schools would enable students to receive more qualified education, helping them integrate into society.

Also, assigning newly qualified teachers to schools with better conditions at the beginning will be beneficial in terms of developing their professional experience.

Disadvantaged schools should be supported economically and their infrastructures should be strengthened. Teachers and principals working in these schools can be motivated by being rewarded in various ways.

Providing skills workshops or pilot schools that aim at student development in disadvantaged schools can make these schools a center of attraction and these practices can contribute to the awareness of the importance of education in the community in the region. Undoubtedly, this study is limited to the experience and opinions of 10 school principals working in disadvantaged schools in Istanbul.

It is not only school principals who are affected by the problems in these schools and who affect the solutions. Deputy principals, group heads, teachers, students, and families are

also affected by the problems in disadvantaged schools and they have a significant effect on student success.

In this respect, more comprehensive research can be conducted with the participation of all stakeholders in different regions regarding the problems experienced in disadvantaged schools and the success of students and teachers. Problems related to disadvantaged schools and students can be revealed in many different dimensions and applicable solutions can be developed.

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