Managerial Roles of Public Education Center Administrators: An Analysis Within the Scope of Mintzberg Managerial Roles

Aylin KİRİŞÇİ-SARIKAYA

Izmir Democracy University

aylin.kirisci@idu.edu.tr

Tuba SÖNMEZ

Buca Halk Eğitimi Merkezi

Buca-Izmir

tuba_elt_83@hotmail.com

Abstract

Clear knowledge of managerial roles allows for understanding the various functions and responsibilities that administrators undertake daily. Additionally, this knowledge offers a balanced perspective on management work, acknowledging that managers must do several responsibilities at once. This study reveals how the Public Education Center (PEC) vice-principals who work with a busy schedule perceive their managerial roles and how they operate their tasks rather than the statements on the formal regulations. This research study utilized a qualitative, phenomenological research design to explore the roles and workload of PEC administrators. We conducted in-depth interviews with four PEC vice-principals who all had worked in Izmir. We aimed to elicit detailed descriptions of their managerial experiences and thoughts on their work. The data were analyzed with the qualitative content-analysis method to identify the patterns and themes. Findings were shaped within the framework of Mintzberg's managerial roles and gathered under three main themes, namely Interpersonal, Informational, and Decisional responsibilities. These results showed that PEC vice-principals were active in all three primary responsibilities. Moreover, according to the participants, the most crucial roles were the roles of leadership, problem-solving, negotiation, dissemination, and representation. The study makes a few implications and recommendations, such as that PECs could use Mintzberg's managerial roles as a framework for assessing performance or that PECs could ensure that their managers have the necessary knowledge and abilities to carry out their duties successfully by understanding their managerial roles.

Introduction

Management plays a central role in achieving the organization's objectives and ensuring its long-term success. It is doing business through others (Koçel, 2020); it is the sum of activities and efforts to ensure cooperation and direct all stakeholders towards a goal (Tosun, 1992). It is

a complex and multi-faceted process including planning, organizing, communication, decision making, leading, controlling, etc. The manager connects all these complex structures to fulfill a variety of roles. Managerial roles are defined as the functional behaviors of the manager (Bursalıoğlu, 2016). When we look at the historical process, we could see that the notion of managing functions of (Fayol, 1916), which described the usual tasks performed by managers, was the predecessor to the idea of managerial roles. Mintzberg (1973) in his doctoral thesis studied the managers of five businesses and analyzed the management process. His research, unlike previous studies, revealed the situation not only for organizational structure, employee behaviors or teams, but also for the processes that managers always encounter in daily life. Based on his substantial study, he established ten management roles that could be grouped into three categories, namely interpersonal, informational, and decisional roles (Table 1).

Table 1

Mintzberg's Managerial Roles

Interpersonal Roles	Informational Roles	Decisional Roles
• Figurehead	• Monitor	• Negotiator
• Leader	• Spokesperson	• Resource Allocator
• Liaison	• Disseminator	• Disturbance Handler
		• Entrepreneur

The title of interpersonal roles includes figurehead, leader, and liaison sub-roles. Managers who serve as figureheads represent their organizations in a variety of contexts and carry out ceremonial obligations. As a leader, a manager leads and inspires their staff to accomplish organizational goals. Building and maintaining connections with stakeholders both inside and outside of the business is the responsibility of a manager acting as a liaison. Informational roles are composed of sub-roles which are monitor, spokesperson and disseminator. To keep up with changes both inside and outside, a manager monitors information from a variety of sources. Managers transmit information about their organizations to the outside community as spokespersons. A manager who acts as a disseminator, communicates information to their employees or other parties involved. The decisional role of a manager is composed of sub-roles of negotiator, resource allocator, disturbance handler and entrepreneur. A negotiator manager

represents a company in negotiations with other businesses or individuals. Resource allocator manager makes decisions on how to distribute resources like people, money, and time. A manager who handles disturbances handles unforeseen issues or crises. And an entrepreneur manager actively searches out and implements new prospects for the organization (Mintzberg, 1990; Schermerhorn & Bachrach, 2023).

As Mintzberg (1990) states, "No job is more vital to our society than that of the manager". Administrators are the ones who decide and lead the whole organization so that the employees can either realize their potential and feel satisfied with their organization or else they become inefficient by wasting their time. This is also true for educational organizations. Educational administrators are the key persons who bring together and direct all stakeholders in a harmonious and effective manner (Bursalıoğlu, 2016; Gümüşeli, 2014). The tasks of educational administrators are very complex, and they are mostly overworked and overburdened (Bursalıoğlu, 2016; Minzberg, 1990). Outsourcing or delegating tasks to other employees is uneasy as they are also very busy with their responsibilities. Therefore, it is quite crucial to figure out what they do daily to put forward which role they give the most importance to and whether their priorities are coherent with their organization's expectations and visions.

Public education centers (PECs) are state institutions established to meet the non-formal education demands of society. The purpose of PECs in Turkey is to provide a wide range of adult education and training programs to the public (MEB, 2018). The role of PEC administrators is supposed to manage resources, staff, and stakeholders effectively to ensure the center meets its goals and objectives. Vice-principals are essential to the effective operation of PECs. They provide support and guidance to students and teachers. They ensure that the institution is meeting its goals and help build a positive and inclusive culture. They support the principal in administrative roles overseeing the daily operation and maintaining the physical facilities (MEB, 2018). All these help ensure that PEC runs smoothly and effectively.

These responsibilities require strong leadership, communication, and organizational skills, as well as a commitment to lifelong learning and professional development. It is crucial to reveal the managerial roles of PEC administrators, who have such complex and intense management responsibilities, in line with their experiences and opinions. Mintzberg (1973; 1990)'s managerial roles in educational administration are significant as it provides a practical framework and guideline for understanding the responsibilities and tasks such as making

decisions, dissemination, organizing, and controlling. The study is significant in revealing how the PEC vice-principals who work with a busy schedule perceive their managerial roles and how they operate their tasks rather than the statements on the formal regulations. In addition, to our best knowledge, the study is unique in the literature in terms of in-depth analysis of the managerial roles of PEC vice-principals with a qualitative approach.

This research aims to reveal how vice-principals working in public education centers perceive their managerial roles and which managerial roles they tend to overtake. In this direction, the research questions are:

1) How do PEC vice-principals view their managerial roles within the scope of Mintzberg's managerial roles?

2) What are the managerial role tendencies of vice-principals within the scope of Mintzberg's managerial roles?

Method

Research Design

The research is qualitative research in phenomenological research design. In phenomenological research design the aim is to gain a deep understanding of the participants' experiences, and to develop a rich description of the phenomenon under study. The research findings are typically presented in the form of detailed narratives, which convey the complexity and richness of the participants' experiences (Creswell, 2012; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Research Participants

We conducted in-depth interviews with four PEC vice-principals working in three different PECs in Izmir to comprehend their managerial experiences and see their role's complexity and richness. We aimed to elicit detailed descriptions of their experiences and thoughts.

Data Collection

The semi-structured interview form was prepared by the researchers in line with the Managerial roles model of Mintzberg. A few examples of interview questions are as follows: What are your roles as vice principal? How is your relationship with teachers and other employees in your institution? What responsibilities do you undertake in terms of your institution's budget?

All the interviews took place during the 2022-2023 education year and at the offices of the vice-principles. They were all recorded. The participants approved the research and voice recording. We transcribed the data verbatim.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed with a directed qualitative content-analysis (DQICA) method to identify the patterns and themes. (Assarroudi et al., 2018; Kibiswa, 2019). This theory-based theme identification process started with reading and re-reading the data several times to get a sense first. Later we colored the text and assigned codes and sub-codes. We contrasted and compared them and linked them to theory-based themes of the study, which are themes of interpersonal, informational, and decisional roles.

Findings

The demographic information of the participants was listed in Table 2:

Table 2

Demographic Information of the Participants

Participants	Gender	Age	Major	Education	Experience in teaching	Experience in administration	Year of duty in the PEC
P1	Male	41	Printing technologies	Master	15 years	1 year	1 year
P2	Female	43	Social Sciences	Master	15 years	1 year	1 year
P3	Male	41	Special Education	Undergraduate	17 years	14 years	1 year
P4	Male	40	Music	Undergraduate	9 years	3 years	2.5 years

As seen in Table 2, three participants were male, and one participant was female. The interviewed PEC administrators were all over 40 years old. Two administrators owned master's

degrees, and the rest were undergraduates. Two participants had 15 years of experience in teaching and one year of experience in administration. One participant had 17 years of teaching service and 14 years of administrative experience, whereas the other had nine years of teaching and three years of administration experience. Three of the participant administrators worked for one year in PEC, and one administrator worked in PEC for two and a half years.

The findings were shaped within the framework of Mintzberg's managerial roles and gathered under three main themes, namely Interpersonal, Informational, and Decisional responsibilities. Below are some direct quotes from participating PEC administrators on these three key managerial roles.

Interpersonal roles

Interpersonal roles are fundamental to management efficiency because they need a direct connection with individuals at various organizational levels as well as external stakeholders. Strong interpersonal relations skills, the capacity to develop relationships, and knowledge of and experience with the dynamics of human interactions are all necessary for success in administration. Some statements of the participants that fall within the scope of interpersonal roles theme are presented below:

P1: *As a vice principal, I fulfill the duties offered by the principal. There are commission presidencies that I have been assigned to, I am the chairman of these commissions, and there are courses that I need to supervise... I take part in the openings, besides being a supervisor. I am fulfilling the duties given in this regard in official correspondence. In official ceremonies, in the inspection of exhibitions, if there is any deficiency, this may be a physical deficiency. If there is any problem, such as heating and shelter, we try to solve it as an institution.*

P2: *Since we provide adult education, we touch the public directly. That's why I'm happy, in this sense. The workload is already too much here... I enjoy working, but my health is not allowing it anymore... On the one hand, there are projects across the district in which we try to participate, there are exhibitions and meetings throughout the province... For example, now a magazine will be published about public education. It will be written; an exhibition will be held. Of course, I am not doing these alone. I am building a team. We are trying to do the necessary work based on volunteerism, among my friends who can support me. I'm asking my female*

friends, what can we do on March 8, give me an idea, let's create a program throughout the district, etc.

P4: I like to socialize, so this is so in my work. I think that I have good communication skills with my colleagues and teachers. I see it as a good point. I think I can convince and influence people with my speeches. I think I can motivate people.

P2: Unfortunately, there is a lack of communication in our institution. This is partly due to the lack of a teachers' room. The lesson hours are not common for everyone. We do not have much in common in that sense. We can only come face to face when there is a meeting. I do not think that communication among teachers is healthy for everyone. I guess this is a disadvantage of being a public education center. I try to communicate with my friends in a friendly manner, without too much hierarchy, considering human values. I try to get things done sweetly with my subordinates and other employees. We generally communicate via WhatsApp. Other than that, I make a phone call or invite them to my room when I see them or if there is a very urgent situation. We meet like this.

According to the statements, though they are eager and active, vice principals are assigned by the principal in terms of their PEC representation roles. And so, they often represent their institutions. They care about the communication role and use it frequently and effectively. Some participants stated that they fulfill their leadership role with the authority they receive from the principal. There is a vice principal who takes the initiative and cares for teacher motivation.

Informational Roles

Under the Information roles theme, we see that the participant PEC vice principals heavily benefit from information management systems and collect and analyze information from different channels, so they can always stay up to date.

P2: *I think the new system is efficient. I make all announcements from the document management system (DYS). There is a law to protect information, and I am aware of it. Accordingly, I always get in contact with the person concerned. We do not share anyone's phone number without his permission. We do not share private information, address, phone number, or e-mail address without consent. In this way, we ensure communication within the legal framework.*

P3: *Generally, we use social media and web pages intensively. Apart from that, we also use visual advertisements for those who cannot reach such opportunities. We try to inform people by producing posters and hanging them in different parts of the district. These are our communication channels. Besides, necessary communication and data sharing are via WhatsApp groups. We use them in general. We disseminate formal information from the Provincial National Education, District National Education, or the Ministry via DYS, and we need to be sure of them.*

Vice principals stated that they are not active in the context of the spokesperson role, and they become involved when it is necessary or required.

P3: *We generally communicate with other institutions over the telephone or similar communication devices. We also come face-to-face from time to time. We build a positive environment on behalf of my institution... We do our best in that sense. We do not have much mutual communication with the trainees, either. Usually, teachers communicate with them. But when they have problems, they come to us. We also do our best to solve them. At least they leave satisfied, and at least their problems are resolved. In this sense, our communication with other stakeholders is positive.*

Decisional Roles

The sub-roles of entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, and negotiator make up the decision-making role of a manager. The participant vice-principals' statements under these themes are below. Within the scope of the entrepreneurial role, the participants differ in terms of the tasks, innovations, and changes in the institution. They also have different views on the institution's openness to change. A participant vice-principle states that though they do not have much entrepreneurship as an institution, he is an entrepreneur and open to innovations personally.

P2: *Frankly, our institution is not an institution that is open to change. Unfortunately, we cannot do much to develop new physical environments, especially since our building will be demolished. But there are various projects that we carry out together with the district governorship and the university. We have found new course areas. And we are trying to spread our service to the citizens.*

While stating that the courses may be crucial for the future, a participant indicates that they have not taken any initiative in this regard.

P4: *Technology is advancing. Different courses and new classes could be opened by following the new century closely and foreseeing the future. Some courses that can affect the future can be added to our course list. I think we can do beneficial things... I'm just a viewer now.*

Within the scope of the disturbance handler role, all the participants are solution oriented. And they have a shared view on using communication skills as a problem-solving method.

P3: *In these situations, if I am not the person who is having problems, I adopt the role of bringing people together and first calming them down and then communicating. I take a break and then get together with my friends with whom I had communication problems, and then I talk about the problem again and solve it.*

Within the scope of the resource allocation role, three of the participants agree that the resources are insufficient. All the participants agree that they do not have any role in the budget.

P2: *I do not take care of the budget. We are already having a lot of trouble about the budget since our institution gives free courses in terms of service to the public. Since our school does not receive funding, we are trying to make things right with the support of the family union. In that sense, our physical conditions are not good either.*

P3: *The family union handles the budget. In this sense, if I was the vice principal responsible for the family union, I could carry out transactions such as buying and selling. These are the issues already set in the regulation, issues about the family union regulation. I can only offer support as a guide. Or I can support friends and family union members on how to keep accounts. Apart from that, I do not have any duties.*

Although all the participants differ in the frequency of experiencing interpersonal conflict problems within the scope of the negotiator role, they have a common opinion in undertaking the negotiator task in such a situation.

P1: *I try to solve the conflict officially by listening to both sides and managing it the way the official procedure works. Everyone must obey the rules because everyone must implement the official rules. If they do not comply, they commit a disciplinary offense. I communicate with the parties first.*

P4: *We do not experience conflicts very often. When it does, we try to make the necessary intervention. We talk to both sides and try to do our best to reconcile and bring them together. The administrator should be a negotiator, impartial, objective, and problem solver.*

Discussion, Implications and Recommendations

In this section, the features of the roles of the vice principals working at PECs, from the perspective of Mintzberg's managerial roles, and the findings about their thoughts and evaluations about these roles are associated and compared with the findings of the relevant literature and discussed in line with the purpose of the research.

In general, vice-principals deal with all kinds of correspondence, management, security, maintenance, and ceremonial events of the school. They fulfill the duties and responsibilities assigned by the principal and support the principal in school-related administrative affairs. But how do PEC vice-principals, in reality, spend their time at work? According to the results of this study, PEC vice-principals were active in all three primary responsibilities, namely interpersonal, informational and decisional. Moreover, according to the participants, the most crucial roles were the roles of leadership, disturbance handling, negotiation, dissemination, and figurehead. Whereas the least undertaken tasks for them were entrepreneurship and resource allocation. In Figure 1, the big balls are the roles the vice principals overtake the most, the small balls as the roles they take least, and the middle balls are the others.

Figure 1

Managerial roles of PEC vice-principals
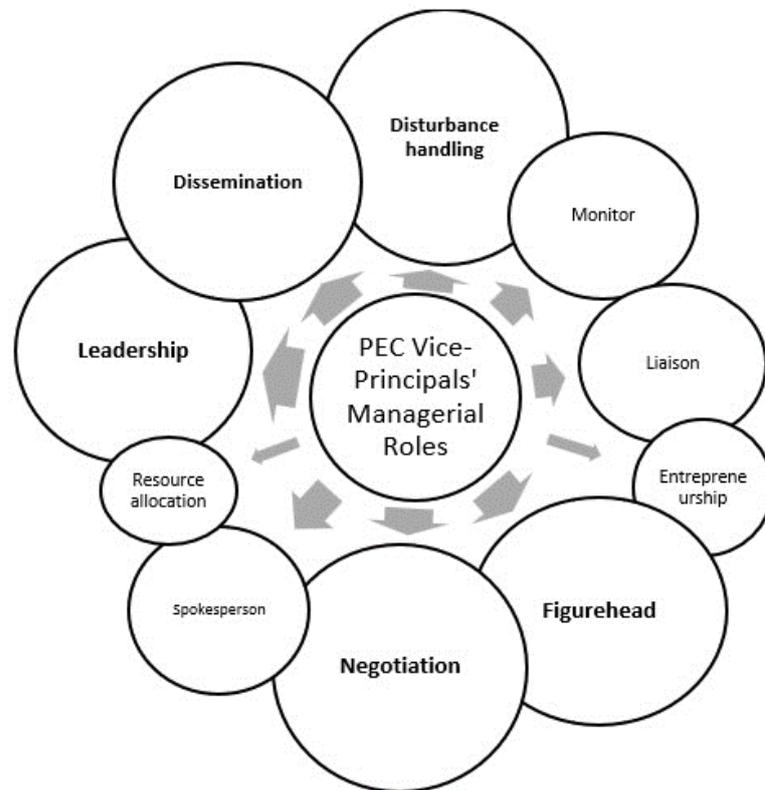
The most frequently repeated and emphasized issue by the participants regarding the managerial roles was the effective communication with the stakeholders within the scope of leadership roles. They stated that it was possible to establish a healthy relationship with the stakeholders through effective communication and it was important in terms of cooperation and collaboration. Institutional objectives could be achieved by providing effective communication between teacher-principal, teacher-student, and the school-community; and leadership skills are quite related to communication skills (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2000; Morreale et al., 2000; Şişman, 2021). Communication and interaction are among crucial factors affecting the personnel in an institution (Şener & Boydan, 2018). In Balıkçı (2021)'s research vice-principals expressed the importance of communication, too.

Another administrative role emphasized by the participants is dissemination. From the statements we understand that all the participants benefit from technology as a means of knowledge transfer. Similarly, in Doğan (2019)'s study, school principals show a high level of

dissemination roles according to teachers' perceptions. Effective follow of knowledge and information ensures trust in an organization and creates shared understanding and decision making (Simonin & Ozsomer, 2009). The participants stated that they represent the organization very well and have such roles in terms of figure heading. Welch (2002), in his study on the administrators of the PECs in the USA, found that the administrators exhibited high levels of figurehead roles with task-giving, liaison, and motivation roles. When the tasks related to disturbance handling and negotiation roles are analyzed, we see that vice-principals fulfill these tasks through effective communication. According to Mintzberg (1989), the negotiation role is inevitable for managers and an integral part of management. Kıran and Çetinkaya-Bozkurt, (2021) however indicated that the managers overtook negotiation role less often than the others. According to the statements of vice principals, they do not fulfill the entrepreneurship roles at the required level. That could be probably because of PECs' public status and a centralized structure. The least emphasized role by the participants is the allocation role. Similarly, the reason could be they are public institutions and centrally coordinated.

According to Mintzberg (1990), the effectiveness of managers is related to how they see their role as managers. So, administrators must be aware of their management roles. The administrative roles that vice principals care about and take up may not overlap with the ones the organization cares about. This situation can create organizational time and resource inefficiency, as well as a wrong perception and poor management that is unsuitable for the nature of the team. It will also affect the job satisfaction and performance of staff. Therefore, this study fills a gap by identifying how PEC vice principals spend their time in a working day and their most important roles. This study could also be carried out with a larger participant group using the observation method, which could serve deeper data. Ministry of National Education (MoNE) regulations could be clear regarding the roles of vice principals so that the vice principals' managerial roles in practice could be more parallel with the expectations of the organization and the principal, and there would not be unnecessary conflicts.

References

Assarroudi, A., Heshmati Nabavi, F., Armat, M. R., Ebadi, A., & Vaismoradi, M. (2018).

Directed qualitative content analysis: the description and elaboration of its underpinning methods and data analysis process. *Journal of Research in Nursing, 23*(1), 42-55.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987117741667

Balıkçı, A. (2021). Assessment of assistant principal in the context of Henry Mintzberg's views on the administrator's features. *Pamukkale University Journal of Education, 51*, 276-298.

Bursalıoğlu, Z. (2016). *Eğitim yönetiminde teori ve uygulama*. Ankara: PegemA.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design.* (3rd edition). Sage Publications.

Doğan, H. (2019). Yönetici rolleri ve etkileme taktikleri ile öğretmenlerin yöneticiye güveni arasındaki ilişkiler (Doktora tezi). Pamukkale Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.

Fayol, H. (1916). General principles of management. *Classics of Organization Theory, 2*, 57-69.

Gümüşeli, A. İ. (2014*). Eğitim ve öğretim yönetimi.* Ankara: Pegem Akademi

Kıran, F., & Çetinkaya-Bozkurt, Ö. (2021). Mintzberg'in yönetici rolleri modeli kapsaminda İş ilanlarinin analizi. *Uluslararası Yönetim İktisat ve İşletme Dergisi, 17(*2), 394-418.

Kibiswa, N. K. (2019). Directed Qualitative Content Analysis (DQlCA): A Tool for Conflict

Analysis. *The Qualitative Report, 24*(8), 2059-2079. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2019.3778

Koçel, T. (2020). *İşletme yöneticiliği* (18. basım). Beta Basım Yayım.

Lunenburg, F. C., & Ornstein, A .C. (2000). *Educational administration: concepts and practices*. (3rd edition). Wadsworth Publishing Company.

MEB. (2018). Millî eğitim bakanliği hayat boyu öğrenme kurumlari yönetmeliği. Retrieved from Başbakanlık Mevzuatı Geliştirme ve Yayın Genel Müdürlüğü (resmigazete.gov.tr)

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, M. A. (1994*). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications

Mintzberg, H. (1973). *The nature of managerial work.* Harper & Row.

Mintzberg, H. (1990). The manager's job: Folklore and fact. *Harvard Business Review, 68*(2), 163-176.

Morreale, S. P., Osborn, M. M., & Pearson, J. C. (2000). Why communication is important: A rationale for the centrality of the study of communication. *Journal of the Association for Communication Administration, 29*(1), 1–25.

Schermerhorn Jr, J. R., & Bachrach, D. G. (2023*). Management* (15 ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Simonin, B. L., & Ozsomer, A. (2009). Knowledge processes and learning outcomes in MNCS: An empirical investigation of the role of HRM practices in foreign subsidiaries. *Human Resources Management, 48*(4), 505-530.

Tosun, K. (1992). *İşletme yönetimi*. Ankara: Savaş Kitap ve Yayınevi.

Şener, G., & Boydan-Özak, M. (2018). Okul yöneticilerin iletişimci liderlik rolleri. *Journal of Anatolian Education Research*, 1-13.

Şişman, M. (2021). *Türk eğitim sistemi ve okul yönetimi*. (13. basım) Pegem Akademi.