

## School Violence: School Administrators' Perspectives and Ways of Solution in Turkey\*

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the ways primary education administrators solve events of violence as a problem. To this end, sample cases of violence were derived from the school violence news appearing on media organs in the last four years. They were categorized based on the type of violence. Data were collected via a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher and administered to school administrators. In-depth data were collected in regard to the ways they would solve problems. The content formed by the obtained data was evaluated via systematic, descriptive analysis. To determine the problem of violence in school, school administrators mostly turn to teachers' and students' views and video-recording and sound-recording. To solve the problems, on the other hand, they resort to family/parent training and implement what is prescribed in the legislation. The administrators did not express any opinion about predetermined possible solutions.

**Keywords:** School security, school violence, problem-solving techniques

### Introduction

In today's world, violence is an important social problem. Violence in school and in the vicinity of school has become widespread recently. Violence in school, which is one of the important institutions of social life, is not something new, but its frequency and scope grow every passing day. In this regard, more and more research is conducted to determine reasons for violence and prevent and reduce it (Council of Europe, 2002; Dönmez, 2010; Eisenbraun, 2007; Furlong and Morrison, 2000; The Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2007; Kızmaz, 2006; Noguera, 1995; Öğülmüş, 2006; The Grand National Assembly of Turkey [GNAT], 2007).

School violence, which is a part of general violence in the society, has become one of the frequently encountered problems in education. It should always be taken into consideration that school violence has negative effects both on the educational process and on the mental health of individuals and society and there is a substantial need for preventive efforts, activities, and processes (Terzi, 2007). School climate and culture, students' and school personnel's characteristics, and school's physical and social features are influential on aggressive and violent behaviors in schools (Lauderdale-Littin & Brennan, 2018; Yavuzer, 2011). As violence is an issue that concerns the entire society, events of violence have a coverage on media organs immediately after they take place. Efforts and works for preventing and reducing school violence are very important. The solution-related views and behaviors of schools and school administrators that are mostly considered to be directly associated with events of violence play a key role in the solution of problems of violence.

The primary three reasons for the emergence of events of violence can be listed as follows (Johnson and Johnson, 1995):

i) Changes in family life and social life, ii) Consideration of

violence as something normal and acceptable, iii) Easy accessibility of instruments of violence. When these three factors are considered, it is clear that schools should first acknowledge that physical or verbal violence is not a stage of transition for disciplinary problems and pay attention to events of violence. According to Güçlü (2003), school administrators ignore problems of violence as they may arouse a negative perception regarding administration or due to the obstacles and difficulties likely to be encountered. At this point, it should be noted that all the disciplinary problems must be taken into consideration whether they are small-scale or large-scale. Knowing the causes of violence may prevent future events of violence. In this way, events of violence can be prevented and possible negative results can be minimized. On the other hand, the ways the problems of violence contained in the events are solved following their emergence and the perspectives people that have a say in this matter hold are important to prevent these events and reduce their negative effects.

### *A Problem of Schools: Events of Violence*

The concept of violence is defined and classified in different ways. The word "violence" means "using brute force against people who have opposing views" and "extremism in emotions or behaviors" (TDK, 2015). World Health Organization defines violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" (WHO, 2002). School violence is described as a multidimensional issue that involves criminal actions and aggressive behaviors in schools which harm school climate and negatively affect students' development and learning processes (Furlong and Morrison, 2000).

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By its nature, violence has different categorizations based on the way it is committed and the person it is committed against. Based on the way it is committed, it may be physical, sexual, psychological, or economic. However, it may also involve deprivation or neglect. Based on the person it is committed against, it falls into three categories: self-directed violence, interpersonal violence, and collective violence (WHO, 2002). These categories indicate that violence can be committed in different ways and by different people and communities. As social institutions, schools have a potential to be affected by events of violence by their nature and functions. Non-solution of problems of violence in schools may cause these problems to continue and become widespread from generation to generation, thereby leading to important problems in individuals, families, and societies. Deeming violence as a crime to be punished rather than an educational problem, educators' treating events of violence in schools as if they were others' problems, and their statements implying that there is no violence in their schools cause events of violence in schools to be ignored (Morrison, Furlong, and Morrison, 1994).

As school rules and expectations change as a result of rapid changes taking place in the society, it is very important and influential for reducing negative effects and ensuring secure educational environments that school administrators and teachers understand and analyze how such changes occurring in the society affect students (Çalik and Kurt 2006). This also concerns the professional competences of the teachers and opinions on problem solving skills (Yıldırım, Tabak, Yavuz, 2012). There is a need to employ strategies that are appropriate to the characteristics of the environments offered and the behaviors displayed in schools so that violence is prevented and problems of violence are solved (Sugai, Sprague, Horner, and Walker, 2000). It just contributes to the emergence of violence more that schools and school administrators ignore or impose sanctions on students' undesirable behaviors as part of their efforts to reduce violence (Hyman and Perone, 1998). Besides increasing security measures, using advanced technologies, and seeking other ways of solving problems of violence, school administrators must ask and try to find an answer to basic questions such as "Why have schools become so open to violence?", which is a question to be answered within the context of school's objectives and social function (Noguera, 2010). Primary school administrators define violence in three categories: physical violence, verbal violence, and psychological violence. Mostly, they attribute violence to familial reasons such as domestic violence, lack of education of parents, broken family, lovelessness, neglect, and socio-economic situation. They also indicate visual and printed media, the cultural structure of the society, and social environment among the reasons for violence (Dönmez, 2010).

Individual factors, familial factors, social factors, and school-related factors are influential on events of violence in schools. The first event experienced must be taken into consideration while determining the reasons for violence (Kızmaz, 2006). The way the solution process of events of violence as a problem is evaluated is of great importance. Certain basic stages of problem-solving process must be used in this evaluation (Hoy and Miskel, 2012). School administrators, who are responsible for school administration, are at the center of problem-solving process (Aslanargun and Bozkurt, 2012; İnandı and Yıldız, 2014).

School violence is affected by events taking place in schools, besides environmental and social factors. At this point, school administrators and educators have a challenging task: to analyze data about previous tendencies and situations concerning violence in schools. In addition,

to solve this problem effectively, they must have a holistic perspective rather than focusing on individual students and events at every turn (Angkaw, 2006).

#### *Problem-Solving in School Administration*

A problem is an unknown situation that refers to the difference between what is desired and what exists. Problem-solving process, on the other hand, involves finding the unknown. Hence, solving a problem requires detecting and analyzing it first (Jonassen, 2000). There are a great variety of definitions of problem-solving, but all of them have a common point: problem-solving is a process of struggling with undesirable situations in a systematic way (Kruger, 1997). Solving the problems emerging in real world is referred to as social problem-solving process (D'Zurilla and Nezu, 1982). Here, problem situation, problem-solving, and implementing a solution are taken differently. A problem is defined as a situation in which individuals or groups encounter obstacles while continuing their lives or duties. Moreover, solving a problem and implementing the solution are defined as different concepts and require different skills. While problem-solving involves the process of generating solutions to specific problems, implementing a solution refers to the processes that actually put these solutions into practice (D'Zurilla, Nezu and Maydeu-Olivares, 2004).

The concept of problem is differently defined for individual, organization, and administration. It is described as obstacles to fulfilling a person's desires and needs in terms of individual; as obstacles to the accomplishment of goals in terms of organization; and as an annoying situation that is heard, seen, or felt by administrators in terms of administration (Taymaz, 2003). Defining administration as a problem-solving process, Başaran (1984) lists the steps of problem-solving as follows: i) Considering solving a problem necessary, ii) Defining the problem, iii) Seeking solution options, iv) Deciding the action, v) Implementing the decision, vi) Evaluation. Based on the idea that administration is a problem-solving process, school violence can be deemed as a problem that needs to be solved in every aspect. Administrators' thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors concerning the problem are important in the solution process (Yıldırım, 2011).

The problem emerges as an increased tension in the school or in the vicinity of the school. It should be noted that problem-solving in schools takes place in a rational, predictable, controlled, and productive bureaucratic environment where there is also a need for autonomous, flexible, and creative professional processes (Hanson and Brown, 1977). School administrators are expected to have a multidimensional perspective on events, properly define problems, generate appropriate solutions to them, and make attempts to solve them. At this point, it is important for individuals to have knowledge, but they mostly fail to give expected reactions in the face of instantaneous, complicated, and far-reaching problems. The ways individuals perceive and use the existing information underlie the ways they solve problems. An effective problem-solving skill may involve transferring information and changing a person's point of view. Framing a problem and the individual's view of the problem and his role in the problem-solving process are important for his sense of competence for solving it (Bardwell, 1999).

School violence concerns many people, groups, and institutions in the society, and thus various solutions are proposed for it (Astor and Meyer, 2001). However, violence emerges in different ways every day. The reason may be that violent behavior is used as a way of expressing one-

self or a way of solving problems, thereby turning into a problem that cannot be solved within itself. To prevent school violence, school administrators are expected to have a high-level competence in terms of students, teachers, parents, surroundings, and educational environments (Inandi and Yıldız, 2014). Violence is not a phenomenon that emerges due to a single reason. It occurs as a result of a combination of certain individual characteristics, interpersonal relations in the family and society, the socio-cultural structure of the society, and environmental factors.

What school administrators do depends on what they think. Leithwood and Steinbach (1991), who state that what school administrators think is a result of their interactions with their surroundings, intellectual background, beliefs, values, abilities, and characteristics, offer stages of solving administrative problems for school administrators. Interpretations: What is understood in relation to the nature of the problem; Objectives: Primary purposes in consideration of the interpretations of the problem; Principles and values: Longer-term objectives and their principles, assumptions, basic laws and regulations; Constraints: Obstacles to be overcome to solve the problem; Solving processes: What the administrator does in accordance with the interpretations, objectives, and principles associated with the problem by dealing with the constraints; Emotions: Feelings, mood, and sense of self-confidence derived from problem-solving experiences.

A successful school administrator must have skills of understanding, formulizing, and solving problems. Problem-solving in educational administration refers to creative processes in which solutions are generated to problematic situations. The basis of developing an effective solution in these processes is to establish a definite framework for the problem. According to Copland (2000), definition, interpretation, and analysis can be made based on such framework.

Violence in educational environments involves physical, psychological, or social deliberate attack or intervention in students or teachers and may involve physical or mental suffering in individuals (MoNE, 2006). In its unit report on school violence problems, the Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education (2006) mentions violence in educational environments as follows (Kılıç, 2006):

*"Research covering several provinces of Turkey (i.e. Adana, Ankara, Diyarbakır, Istanbul, Karaman, Kars, and Sivas) shows that violence in educational environments has reached a point non-ignorable. While some of the studies take violence in a way covering all of the dimensions indicated above (i.e.*

*physical, verbal, emotional, and sexual), some others only focus on physical violence. Research results demonstrate that violence in educational environments involves verbal violence, emotional violence, physical violence, and sexual violence in a descending order by intensity. A lot of students state that they are exposed to violence by their peers, teachers, school administrators, family elders, and other people in the immediate vicinity of the school."*

Two of the agenda topics of the 19th National Education Council gathering pursuant to the decision of the Turkish Education Board dated 18/07/2014 and numbered 64 were *improving the quality of educational administrators and school security* (MoNE, 2014). In this regard, the present study aims to explore school administrators' ways of solving problems of violence that disrupt school security and social security through problem-solving. It is known that problem-solving is both a phenomenon and a process by its very nature. To complete this process with success, it is necessary to accurately define the problem and effectively manage the process from the beginning to proposing feasible suggestions and taking appropriate measures. Presenting school violence, which has frequently been encountered in recent years, to school administrators through sample cases is considered important to obtain concrete research results and generalize the ways school administrators approach problem-solving process. Based on the above-mentioned primary purpose, the present study seeks to answer the following questions: (1) How do school administrators define the events of violence they encounter in schools as a problem? (2) How do school administrators interpret the events of violence they encounter in schools as a problem? (3) What kind of paths do school administrators follow in solving the events of problem they encounter in schools as a problem?

**Method**

This is a qualitative research employing phenomenological design (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008), in which an attempt is made to evaluate school administrators' perspectives on events of violence in schools and the ways they solve these problems through sample cases.

*Study Group*

The study group was determined through homogeneous sampling, which is a purposeful sampling method. Purposeful sampling aims to make an in-depth examination of the situations that are considered to contain rich information, and homogeneous sampling aims to determine whether there are any common or shared phenomena in the varied situations (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, p.107-

**Table 1.** *The Participants' Demographic Characteristics*

Participant Code	Gender		Tenure in Teaching	Tenure in Administration	School Level	
	Female	Male	Year	Year	Elementary School	Middle School
Administrator1		+	6	6		+
Administrator2	+		16	3		+
Administrator3	+		16	2		+
Administrator4		+	19	7	+	
Administrator5		+	5	5	+	
Administrator6	+		6	3	+	
Administrator7		+	17	5	+	
Administrator8		+	18	8	+	
Administrator9	+		8	2		+
Administrator10		+	14	5		+

110). According to the statistics published by Turkish Statistical Institute (2014), a great majority of the news about school violence in Ankara province appearing on media organs in the last four years are about the events of violence taking place in Altındağ and Mamak districts of Ankara. These districts are known as the lowest socio-economic level of Ankara. Thus, the study group was formed out of primary school administrators working in Altındağ and Mamak districts.

The study group consists of 10 primary school administrators (four female and six male) working in Altındağ and Mamak districts of Ankara province. The administrators' tenures in teaching range from five to 19 years, and their tenures in administration range from two to eight years. Of the school administrators, five work in elementary schools while five work in middle schools.

*Data Collection Tool and Process*

Data were collected via a two-part semi-structured interview form. The form consists of (1) interview acceptance form and (2) interview sample case and question form. *Interview acceptance form* contains demographic information including the interviewed school administrator's gender, tenure in teaching, tenure in administration, and school level. *Interview sample case and question form* consists of two sections. While the first section is made up of sample cases, the second section is composed of questions investigating the ways the school administrators would solve the sample events as a problem.

At the beginning of the process of forming the sample cases, school violence news appearing on media organs in the last four years were examined. At the end of this examination, a pool of sample cases was created consisting 30 events, and the sample cases were categorized based on the source and type of the violence taking place. The sample cases were created by changing some descriptive details of previous school violence events having a coverage in the news such as the names and ages of the characters committing a crime or of those exposed to violence, the scenes of the events, and the times of the events. Through the literature review, types of violence were determined to be (i) physical violence, (ii) psychological violence, and (iii) neglect (Krug et al., 2002). One sample case was chosen for each type of violence from the pool of sample cases. In this way, three sample cases were chosen in total.

In the process of posing the sample case questions, such stages of problem-solving as defining the problem, determining the causes of the problem, planning the solution, implementing the solution, and reviewing the solution were taken into consideration in general. Then the posed questions were submitted for expert opinions. The questions that were found appropriate by the experts were used. The used questions were finalized through a range of updates. By this means, a five-question question form was created.

Appointments were got from the school administrators included in the study group. In this way, interview dates were determined. An attempt was made to raise the school administrators' awareness levels by sending the semi-structured interview form to them via e-mail. Probes were asked to explore the opinions expressed by the school administrators during the interviews in detail.

*Data Analysis*

In the data analysis process, the written texts were checked first. Then they were sent to the school admin-

istrators for them to confirm their final versions. After the school administrators gave approval, themes relevant to the problem-solving steps (Copland, 2000) identified through literature review as indicated in the Table 2 below were determined. Descriptive analysis was made for obtaining numerical data concerning the themes determined, and content analysis was made for identifying what the school administrators thought and under which theme their opinions fell. In this way, an in-depth analysis process was conducted to see the ways the school administrators would solve the relevant problems. In the process of creating themes, three experts independently themed the school administrators' opinions. Whether the emerging themes were shared by the experts was investigated through calculation of correlation. At the end of the calculations of correlation, total inter-theme internal consistency was determined to be high ( $r = .79$ ).

**Table 2.** Theoretical framework used in content analysis

Type of violence	Problem-Solving Steps	Theme
Physical Psychological Neglect	Defining	1. A clear definition of the problem
		2. Formulating interpretations about possible solutions of the problem
		3. Interpretation of cognitive and personal assumptions about the problem situation
	Interpreting	4. Asking others' opinions in the face of the problem
		5. Decision-making process concerning the predetermined possible solutions
		6. The way conditions are evaluated to solve the problems
	Solving	7. Redefining the problem in terms of personal values in the problem-solving process
		8. Prediction of the obstacles likely to emerge in the problem-solving process
		9. The way the obstacles emerging in the problem-solving process are overcome

**Findings**

The ways the school administrators define the events of violence they encounter in schools as a problem. Under the theme of "A clear definition of the problem", the participating school administrators defined the sample case of physical violence in school in different ways. The definitions of the participants expressing their opinions about physical violence can be listed as follows: "An event that is not directly related to school" ( $n = 4$ ), "Broken family" ( $n =$

2), "Low socio-economic level" (n= 2), and "Requiring heavy penalty" (n= 2). The participants mostly defined the sample case of psychological violence in school as "Failure in establishing empathy" (n= 5). The definitions suggested by fewer school administrators are as follows: "Psychological support" (n= 2), "Not accepting special situations" (n= 2), "Consulting experts" (n= 2), and "Parents' different perspectives on school and staff" (n= 2). Lastly, most of the school administrators defined the sample case of neglect as "Neglect of school administrator and class teacher" (n= 6). In this matter, fewer school administrators delivered the following definitions: "Lack of education in family" (n= 2), "Behavioral disorder" (n= 2), "An unfortunate result" (n= 2).

The ways the school administrators interpret the events of violence they encounter in schools as a problem. Under the theme of "Formulizing interpretations about possible solutions of the problem", the participants interpreted the sample case of physical violence in school as "Violation of human rights" (n=2), the sample case of psychological violence in school as "Adaptation problem" (n= 2), and the sample case of neglect in school as "Maintenance and inspection of physical structure" (n= 2).

Under the theme of "Interpretation of cognitive and personal assumptions about the problem situation", half of the school administrators expressing opinions about the sample case of physical violence in school interpreted it as "Ignorance of family" (n= 4). Other interpretations about the sample case of physical violence in school were "Lack of out-of-school experience" (n= 2) and "Lack of secure Internet use" (n= 2). Half of the school administrators expressing opinions about the sample case of psychological violence in school interpreted it as "Ignorance of family" (n= 5). Other interpretations about the sample case of psychological violence in school were "Parties' lack of problem-solving skill" (n= 2), "Inadequacy of physical structure" (n= 2), and "Lack of knowledge in the society" (n= 2). Under the same theme, some administrators interpreted the sample case of neglect in school as "School administration's deficiency in implementation" (n= 4), but there were also school administrators interpreting it as "Teachers' deficiency in implementation" (n= 2).

Under the theme of "Asking others' opinions in the face of the problem", the school administrators mostly stated

that they would ask the opinions of "Family/Parents" (n= 6) in the sample case of physical violence in school; however, there were also school administrators stating that they would turn to "Teacher" (n= 4), "Student" (n= 4), and "Video-recording and sound-recording" (n= 2). Similarly, the school administrators mostly stated that they would ask the opinions of "Family/Parents" (n= 6) and "Teacher" (n= 6) in the sample of psychological violence in school. There were also school administrators stating that they would resort to "Student" (n= 5). Additionally, some school administrators noted that they would try to reach interpretations from different perspectives by requesting "Experts' assessment of the situation" (n= 4), thereby following a different path going beyond just learning the way the relevant psychological event took place. Lastly, equal number of school participants mentioned the following elements to turn to in the sample case of neglect in school: "Family/Parents" (n= 2), "Teacher" (n= 2), "Student" (n= 2), "Assistant staff" (n= 2), and "Video-recording and sound-recording" (n= 2).

The school administrators delivered no opinion falling under the theme of "Decision-making process concerning the predetermined possible solutions".

The ways the school administrators solve the events of violence they encounter in schools as a problem. Under the theme of "The way conditions are evaluated to solve the problems", most of the participants stated that they would solve the problem in the sample case of physical violence in school by "Training the family/parents" (n=6) and "Resorting to police force" (n= 6). There were also school administrators stating that they would solve it by "Using technology for security purposes" (n= 3) and "Implementing the disciplinary regulations (punishment)" (n= 4). In relation to the sample case of psychological violence in school, the participants expressed no opinion falling under this theme. In the sample case of neglect in school, on the other hand, some participants expressed "Implementing the disciplinary regulations (punishment)" (n= 2) as a way of solving the problem.

Under the theme of "Redefining the problem in terms of personal values in the problem-solving process", the school administrators stated "Training the family/parents" (n=2) in the sample case of physical violence in school; "Training the family/parents" (n= 6), "Training the teacher"

**Table 3.** The ways the school administrators define, interpret, and solve the events of violence they encounter in schools as a problem

Problem-solving step	Theme*	Types of violence	Participants' views	n
Defining	1	Physical	An event that is not directly related to school	4
			Broken family	2
			Low socio-economic level	2
			Requiring heavy penalty	2
			Failure in establishing empathy	5
		Psychological	Psychological support	2
			Not accepting special situations	2
			Consulting experts	2
			Parents' different perspectives on school and staff	2
			Neglect of school administrator and class teacher	6
		Neglect	Lack of education in family	2
			Behavioral disorder	2
			An unfortunate result	2

**Table 3.** (Cont.) The ways the school administrators define, interpret, and solve the events of violence they encounter in schools as a problem

Problem-solving step	Theme*	Types of violence	Participants' views	n	
Interpreting	2	Physical	Violation of human rights	2	
		Psychological	Adaptation problem	2	
		Neglect	Maintenance and inspection of physical structure	2	
	3	Physical		Ignorance of family	4
				Lack of out-of-school experience	2
				Lack of secure Internet use	2
		Psychological		Ignorance of family	5
				Parties' lack of problem-solving skill	2
				Inadequacy of physical structure	2
				Lack of knowledge in the society	2
		Neglect		School administration's deficiency in implementation	4
				Teachers' deficiency in implementation	2
		4	Physical		Family/Parents
				Teacher	4
				Student	4
				Video-recording and sound-recording	2
	Psychological			Family/Parents	6
				Teacher	6
				Student	5
				Experts' assessment of the situation	4
	Neglect			Family/Parents	2
				Teacher	2
				Student	2
				Assistant staff	2
		Video-recording and sound-recording	2		
5	Physical		-	-	
	Psychological		-	-	
	Neglect		-	-	
Analyzing	6	Physical	Training the family/parents	6	
				Resorting to police force	6
				Using technology for security purposes	5
			Implementing the disciplinary regulations (punishment)	4	
	Psychological		-	-	
	Neglect		Implementing the disciplinary regulations (punishment)	2	
	7	Physical		Training the family/parents	2
				Training the family/parents	6
		Psychological		Training the teacher	5
				Making sure that professional support is received	5
			Raising awareness through activities	3	
Neglect			Making sure that physical structure is improved	5	
			Holding meetings with parents	4	
		Holding meetings with teachers	4		

**Table 3.** (Cont.) The ways the school administrators define, interpret, and solve the events of violence they encounter in schools as a problem

Problem-solving step	Theme*	Types of violence	Participants' views	n
Analyzing	7	Neglect	Training the assistant staff	4
			Raising awareness through physical activities	4
			Raising awareness through drama activities	2
		Physical	Making a visitors' room	2
			Not accepting any visitor other than parents to schools	2
			Organizing internal (in-house) and external seminars	2
	8	Psychological	-	-
			Making up the deficiency of legislation	5
		Neglect	Increasing, inspecting, and maintaining physical structures	4
			Giving a verbal warning to the assistant staff	2
			Physical	-
	9	Psychological	Fulfilling the requirements of the legislation	2
		Neglect	Fulfilling the requirements of the legislation	4

\*Theme:

1. A clear definition of the problem
2. Formulating interpretations about possible solutions of the problem
3. Interpretation of cognitive and personal assumptions about the problem situation
4. Decision-making process concerning the predetermined possible solutions

5. Decision-making process concerning the predetermined possible solutions
6. The way conditions are evaluated to solve the problems
7. Redefining the problem in terms of personal values in the problem-solving process
8. Prediction of the obstacles likely to emerge in the problem-solving process
9. The way the obstacles emerging in the problem-solving process are overcome

(n= 5), "Making sure that professional support is received" (n= 5), and "Raising awareness through activities" (n= 2) in the sample case of psychological violence in school; and "Making sure that physical structure is ensured" (n= 5), "Holding meetings with parents" (n= 4), "Holding meetings with teachers" (n= 4), "Training the assistant staff" (n=4), "Raising awareness through physical activities" (n= 2), and "Raising awareness through drama activities" (n= 2) in the sample case of neglect in school.

Under the theme of "Prediction of the obstacles likely to emerge in the problem-solving process", the school administrators proposed the solutions of "Making a visitors' room" (n= 2), "Not accepting any visitor other than parents to schools" (n= 2), and "Organizing internal (in-house) and external seminars" (n= 2) in the sample case of physical violence in school. Although the participants did not suggest any solution in the sample case of psychological violence in school, they came up with the following solutions "Making up the deficiency of legislation" (n= 5), "Increasing, inspecting, and maintaining physical structures" (n= 4), and "Giving a verbal warning to the assistant staff" (n= 2) in the sample case of neglect in school.

No solution proposed by the participating school administrators in the sample case of physical violence in school fell under the theme of "The way the obstacles emerging in the problem-solving process are overcome". On the other hand, they proposed "Fulfilling the requirements of the legislation" in the sample case of psychological violence in school (n= 2) and in the sample case of neglect in school (n= 4) under the theme of "The way the obstacles emerging in the problem-solving process are overcome".

### Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to determine school administrators' perspectives on events of violence and their ways of solving them. The sample cases about three types of violence indicated in the literature were focused on under the themes associated with the problem-solving steps suggested by Copland (2000) (i.e. defining, interpreting, and analyzing). The findings of the present study show that school administrators define physical violence in school as an event that is not directly related to school, a broken family, and low socio-economic level. They also regard it as violation of human rights. They think that ignorance of family, lack of out-of-school experience, and lack of secure Internet use are the causes of physical violence. To understand an event of physical violence, they turn to family/parents, teacher, student, video-recording, and sound-recording. They believe that the problem can be solved by training the family/parents, resorting to police force, using technology for security purposes, and implementing disciplinary regulations (punishment). To overcome the obstacles emerging the solution process, they suggest making a visitors' room, not accepting any visitor other than parents, and organizing internal (in-house) and external seminars. It is reported that the first precaution taken to prevent violence in schools is "Keeping a record book to record visitors upon their entry" (MoNE, 2007).

The school administrators define psychological violence in school as failure in establishing empathy, psychological support, not accepting special situations, consulting experts, and parents' having different perspectives on school and staff. In general, they regard psychological support as an adaptation problem and think that its reasons are lack of knowledge in the society, parties' lack of prob-

**Table 4.** School Administrators' Perspectives on and Ways of Solving the Events of Violence in Schools

Problem-Solving Steps	Theme	Legislation	Physical structure	Professional support	Family training	Organizing activities/ seminars	Staff training	Deficiency in implementation	Technology use	Social structure	Adaptation and behavior problems	Collecting opinions	Lack of knowledge
Defining	A clear definition of the problem	+		+	+			+		+	+		
	Formulating interpretations about possible solutions of the problem	+	+								+		
Interpreting	Interpretation of cognitive and personal assumptions about the problem situation	+	+					+	+	+			+
	Asking others' opinions in the face of the problem				+							+	
	Decision-making process concerning the predetermined possible solutions												
Analyzing	The way conditions are evaluated to solve the problems	+		+	+				+				
	Redefining the problem in terms of personal values in the problem-solving process		+	+	+	+	+						
	Prediction of the obstacles likely to emerge in the problem-solving process	+	+			+	+						
	The way the obstacles emerging in the problem-solving process are overcome	+											

lem-solving skill, inadequacy of physical structure, and ignorance of family. To understand the events of psychological violence, they turn to family/parents, teacher, and experts' assessment of the situation. According to them, the problem can be solved by training the family/parents, training the teacher, making sure that professional support is received, and raising awareness through activities. They suggest fulfilling the requirements of the legislation to overcome the obstacles emerging in the problem-solving process.

The school administrators define neglect in school as the neglect of school administrator and class teacher, lack of education in family, behavioral disorder, and an unfortunate result. They consider the maintenance and inspection of physical structure to be important. They think that the causes of the problem are school administration's deficiency in implementation and teachers' deficiency in implementation. To understand the event of neglect, they resort to the opinions of family/parents, teacher, student, and assistant staff and video-recording and audio-recording. To solve the problem, they propose implementing the disciplinary regulations (punishment), making sure that physical structure is improved, holding meetings with parents and teachers, raising awareness through physical and drama activities, and training the assistant staff. They state that they can overcome the obstacles encountered in the problem-solving process by making up the deficiency of legislation, increasing, maintaining, and inspecting physical structures, and giving verbal warnings to the assistant staff. They propose fulfilling the requirements of legislation to overcome the obstacles emerging in the problem-solving process.

It is striking that the school administrators did not deliver any opinion associated with predetermined possible solutions in any type of violence. School administrators and teachers regard violence as a social problem. They expect solution steps to be taken by other institutions such as law police office (Uzbaş, 2009). Likewise, the school administrators participating in the present study limit themselves by choosing to fulfill the requirements of the legislation in the problem-solving process.

It is reported that school administrators display attitudes such as questioning the causes of the events of violence in school, referring the relevant students to disciplinary committee, making contact with parents, and directing the students to counselling service (Dönmez, 2010). The measures taken by school administrators to reduce school violence include increasing the number of sports, social, and cultural activities, organizing seminars and conferences, providing family training, ensuring school security, and attaching value to students.

Consistently with the finding of the present study indicating that "training the family/parents" is an option for solving events of violence in schools and "ignorance of family" is one of the reasons for school violence, it is noted that reasons for violence among secondary education students (GNAT, 2007) are lack of family education, angry behaviors displayed by parents, poor financial situation of families, and parents' lack of love towards their children. Inadequacy of education in school and exhibition of violent behaviors by individuals who are taken as an example in school, which are stated to be among the problems leading to school violence, are consistent with the views of the

school administrators participating in the present study. Based on the news about events of violence appearing on media, the results of another research show that teachers' attitudes ranked first among the causes of school violence in 1998, but they were replaced by parents' attitudes and socio-economic problems in 2004 (Teyfur, 2014). The solution school administrators adopt most when an event of violence takes place in their school is stated to be directing the students involved in the events of violence to the school's psychological counselling and guidance service. It is stated that "school administrators have to exert more effort for dealing with violence inside and outside of the school than for education, teaching, and administration." (MoNE, 2007).

Events of violence in the society and events of violence in school should not be considered independent of each other. School and society are the mirrors of each other. More of what happens in school will take place in society. Hence, it is very important that school administrators are willing to take responsibility for preventing and solving events of violence in the first place. Then strategies should be determined for prevention and solution processes. As violence is a multidimensional issue, cooperation should be launched with other social institutions. The present study was carried out by receiving the opinions of administrators of 10 primary education institutions located in Ankara. Future research may include more school administrators from different educational levels. The opinions of all the stakeholders can be asked in regard to the events of violence. Awareness programs can be developed to prevent events of violence before they take place, to have minimum damage during these events, and not to experience such events again.

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