Determining the Leadership Potential of School Administrators Based on Data Triangulation

Şenyurt YENİPINAR
Aksaray University, yenipina@gmail.com

Kamil YILDIRIM
Aksaray University, kamilyildirim1@gmail.com

Hasan TABAK
Aksaray University, hasantabak@gmail.com

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Şenyurt Yenipinar
Aksaray University, Aksaray, Turkey

Kamil Yildirim
Aksaray University, Aksaray, Turkey

Hasan Tabak
Aksaray University, Aksaray, Turkey

Abstract

Aiming to describe the leadership potential (LP) of school principals, this study was carried out using the triangulation design of the mixed method. The study was carried out among 15 school administrators who were recruited using the purposive sampling method. Data were collected using an analytic graded measurement tool through a case-based, semi-structured interview. In this study, the LP of the participants was found to be low, and the main sources of this situation were determined to be maintaining the current situation, avoiding complexity and uncertainty, and inadequacy in managing decision-making processes.

Keywords: Leadership potential, school administrators, mixed method

Introduction

Educational management tends to highlight accountability, innovation, autonomy, and leadership (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012; OECD, 2018; Viennet & Pont, 2017). Leadership is one of the functional areas of management, as it is the launcher and sustainer of development in organizations and had been on the research agenda in the last 20 years. Leadership theories consider features, genres, processes, groups, and situational elements and are evaluated as the products of complex interactions of leadership, person (personality, intelligence, disposition, etc.), group, and environmental characteristics (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Church, 2014; Fiedler, 1967; Horton & Martin, 2013; Hoy & Miskel, 2012; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). Leadership studies are classified as *leadership styles and types* (democratic, autocratic, liberal; transformational, transactional, instructional, moral…) and *leadership approaches* (classical, behavioral, modern) (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Buchanan & Huczynski, 2017; Schermerhorn, 2012; Yukl, 2010). It is necessary to facilitate the understanding of the nature

of leadership within these general approaches. For this reason, it is a necessity to examine the leadership potential (LP) of individuals.

Pre-established processes and patterns cannot satisfy the demands of the school environment where continuous change and diversity prevail (Beycioğlu & Aslan, 2010; Schleicher, 2018). Because the effects of so many variables cannot be predicted and controlled beforehand, there is a need for people who can successfully pursue and manage these variables. This dynamic and multidimensional field requires school administrators to take on the leadership role (Hoy & Miskel, 2012; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). To improve the education system and the school, the leadership characteristics of school administrators should be improved (Bush, 2008; Church, 2014; Tuncel, 2013). However, it can be said that developed democracies give individuals the opportunity to influence events and participate in decisions (Şirin, 2010, p. 169). Although the concepts of administrator and leader have something in common, they are different from each other. An administrator works to sustain the current situation in the most effective way (Green, 2004), whereas a leader is change- and future-oriented. Within this context, acting with values and ideals; impacting others to achieve goals; building trust-based relationships, dedication, and sacrifice; making decisions under pressure; understanding and meeting the needs and expectations of members; coping with complexity and uncertainty; and instantly finding solutions to problems are common features of a leader (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2017; Bush, 2008; Dries & Pepermans, 2012; Green, 2004; Lee et al., 2015; Schermerhorn, 2012; Schumacher, 2018; Yukl, 2010). Studies related to the leadership characteristics of current school administrators report that the leadership qualifications of school administrators are already limited, individuals with leadership qualification do not work as school administrators, and current conditions do not let one exercise leadership. This is reported to have created some systemic conditions related to selection, training, motivation, and progress (Buluç, 2009; Bush, 2008; Schleicher, 2018; Viennet & Pont, 2017). The LP of school administrators is an appreciated and desired aspect of the development of the education system, including endeavors for developing schools (Bush, 2008; Dries & Pepermans, 2012; Lee et al., 2015).

The first condition for developing school leadership is to determine the LP of school administrators. Identifying LP considerably shapes subsequent initiatives such as selection, promotion, or commissioning in a different position (Church, 2014). The word "potential" is defined as "qualities that have not yet emerged, are hidden, are likely to occur and develop in the future, and [are] likely to occur under favorable conditions." Competence is defined as "the ability to perform something successfully as defined." Observing the performance of a job according to standards provides information about competence. The word "capacity" is different from the word "potential" because the former means volume, storage, and housing in terms of amount and quantity (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.; TDK, n.d.). Leadership capacity is a concept that explains a case in which organization members exercise leadership together at different times and in different areas (Kılınç & Özdemir, 2016). Leadership standards refer to definitions that guide the practices of school leaders and also the processes regarding education, selection, development, and supervision of school leaders (Aslan & Karip, 2014; National Policy Board for Educational Administration [NPBEA], 2015). Leadership potential (LP), on the other hand, centers on meeting future expectations beyond the defined, standard leadership behaviors that were exhibited before. LP is a concept that explains the level of leadership in a person and how much it can be developed. Everyone has LP to some degree, but it can have different dimensions and be at different levels (Dries & Pepermans, 2012; Lee et al., 2015; Schumacher, 2018). LP is based on a holistic and common ground that is uncovered by the experimental and theoretical accumulation related to

leadership and is, therefore, a dynamic concept. Another aspect of LP is that it is context sensitive. LP may appear in different forms and content in a profit- and competition-oriented business and in a school where professional norms, values, and skills are highlighted (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Buchanan & Huczynski, 2017; Church, 2014). The fact that LP is multi-dimensional and multi-level requires multi-dimensional, multi-level, and multi-method measurement procedures when it is measured (Silzer & Church, 2009).

The literature indicates that LP is studied mainly in fields other than education in Western and Far Eastern countries (Church, 2014; Dries & Pepermans, 2012; Higgs & Aitken, 2003; Lee et al., 2015; Mortlock, 2011). For example, Dries and Pepermans (2012) measured the LP of 179 business administrators in Belgium in four areas (analytic, learning, motivation, and impact) and 13 different dimensions (e.g., problem-solving, decision-making, adaptation, willingness, and dedication) and found the participants had a high level of LP. In their relational research, Allen et al. (2014) investigated the leadership potential of 1,232 military school students and found a high level of LP. Stress tolerance and tolerance for ambiguity were determined to be at moderate levels. In their study of 40 high-ranking public officials in New Zealand, Higgs and Aitken (2003) found a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and LP. In one of the studies in the field of education, Widodo and Sulistinah (2018) aimed to determine the LP of 46 teachers who were prospective school administrators in Indonesia, using the test and interview methods. Widodo and Sulistinah found that 24 candidates had a good level of LP on the basis of information and application performances related to the decision-making process. In South Korea, Lee et al. (2015) found the LP of higher school students to be at a high level in 12 dimensions (e.g. citizenship, global thinking, problem-solving, decision-making) that reflected skills, attitudes, and competencies which are proposed by contemporary leadership approaches and whose main theme consisted of "impacting." Harris and Lambert (2003) investigated the leadership capacity of school administrators. They argued that leadership capacity doesn't belong to individual administrators; instead it represents the whole school community, including administrators. The fact that the literature review could not find any studies focusing on a comprehensive and in-depth investigation of the leadership potential of school administrators, which points to a research gap in the literature.

There are many studies on leadership. Studies in recent years have increasingly centered on leadership types (transformational, transactional) (Bellibas et al. 2016; Çelik, 2013; Çetiner, 2008; Keleş, 2009; Kiriş, 2013; Tosun, 2015; Zengin, 2019). The most relevant studies investigating LP are related to leadership roles and leadership standards (Aslan & Karip, 2014; Sezer, 2018; Tahaoğlu & Gedikoğlu, 2009). For example, based on the opinions of school administrators, Aslan and Karip (2014) listed competencies such as decision-making, generating financial resources, making use of technological opportunities, predicting the future, and creating a vision as being among the dimensions of leadership standards that should be possessed by administrators of schools that can meet today's demands. Based on the opinions of teachers, Sezer (2018) examined the extent to which school administrators can meet educational leadership standards and found the administrators were inadequate in terms of student-centeredness, vision building, managerial practices, and ability to increase teachers' commitment to the profession. Studies on the leadership characteristics of school administrators have emphasized the attribute of sensitivity to a wide range of internal and external changes, which can ensure the best student learning and which can achieve individual, professional, and institutional change according to these changes. From this point of view, qualifications such as the tendency to create and change the accordingly-formed vision, running the decision-making process, impacting, and creativity emerge as the

indicators of LP. Another aspect identified in studies is that leadership is sensitive to the cultural context due to its social dimension (e.g. Antoniou & Lu, 2018; Bellibaş et al., 2016). Leadership practices of school administrators in Turkey has some limitations (Aslan & Karip, 2014). One of these limitations is the system of selecting and assigning administrators. In the current system, governors at the local level are authorized to supervise the work and operations of the Provincial National Education Directorate in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Provincial Administration No. 5442 (Eurydice, 2019).

Identifying LP of current and prospective administrators is essential to start the relevance implementations for developing school leadership. The results of this study are important to the process of selecting and assigning school administrators. Despite its gains and importance in practice, LP, which has not been given the value it deserves in the research field, can be regarded as an untouched topic that can add richness to the leadership research as a dynamic concept. In addition, introducing the LP of current school administrators in a different cultural context and a highly centralized education system may contribute to LP studies at the international level. This study aimed to describe the LP of school administrators in line with both application and research-based needs. For this purpose, the following research questions were determined.

1. What is the status of the leadership potential of school administrators?

2. What is the level of the leadership potential of school administrators?

3. How can the leadership potential of school administrators be described when the level and status of their leadership potential are associated?

Method

Design

This study is mixed-method research in which quantitative and qualitative methods were used together. It was carried out using the triangulation design. In such studies, first qualitative data and then quantitative data are collected; more realistic descriptions of the issue can be made by combining and interpreting the collected data (Creswell, 2017, p. 38). Mixed-method research provides a better understanding of the issues by blending quantitative and qualitative data (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2015, p. 15). Accordingly, as shown in Figure 1, findings about the LP of school administrators were obtained by combining qualitative and quantitative data. To confirm these results, additional qualitative data were collected and analyzed.
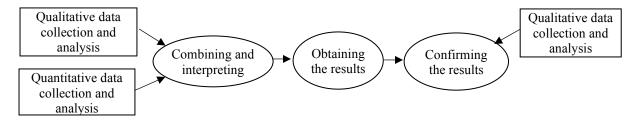

Figure 1. *Research design*

Study Group

In the study, data related to LP were collected from vice principals and principals. According to Creswell (2017, p. 38), qualitative and quantitative data can be collected from the same study group in the triangulation design. In the study, first, the group from which qualitative data would be collected was determined. Quantitative data were collected from the same group. Purposive sampling and maximum diversity methods were used to identify the participants (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 136). The participants of the study were assumed to be willing to receive and provide information (Merriam, 2015, p. 78). According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2015, p. 217), the sample size can be determined based on expert opinions in the collection of quantitative data in mixed research. The study consisted of 15 school administrators with varying years of experience working in different-sized elementary, middle, and high schools in villages, counties, and the central county of Aksaray province, which is located in the Cappadocia region of the central part of Turkey, between April and July 2019. The data were in accordance with research norms and reliability. Also, five school administrators were interviewed for confirmation and control of the results obtained in the study. Additional interviews underwent content analysis.

One of the participants in the main study was female, while 14 were male. They were all married and all had children. Five of them were aged between 35 and 45; eight were between 46 and 55, and two were aged 55 and over. Of the total participants, 10 were principals and five were vice principals. Three of them had master's degrees, while 12 had undergraduate degrees. Eight worked in schools with a lower socioeconomic status (SES), five worked in middle SES schools, and two in high SES schools. Also, eight worked in elementary schools, two in middle schools, and five in high schools.

Table 1

Demographic Information about Participants

Characteristics and Codes	1	2	3	4	Total
Gender 1: Male, 2: Female	14	1			15
Marital Status 1: Married, 2: Single	15	0			15
Age 1: 35–45, 2; 46–55, 3: 55+	5	8	2		15
Position 1: Vice-Principal, 2: Principal	5	10			15
Education Level 1: Undergraduate, 2: Master's Degree, 3: Doctorate	12	3			15
Membership of union 1: Member, 2: Not member	15	0			15
School location 1: Centrum, 2: Rural	12	3			15
School size 1: Small, 2: Medium, 3: Big	3	7	5		15
School level 1: Pre-primary, 2: Primary, 3: Lower Secondary, 4: Upper Secondary	0	9	3	3	15
School SES 1: Low, 2: Medium, 3: High	8	5	2		15

All participants were members of a teachers union, and three of them had union duties apart from being members. Three of them worked in the village and 12 in the city. Three worked in small-sized schools (1–15 teachers), seven of them worked in medium-sized schools (16–30 teachers), and five worked in big schools (31 or more teachers). Of the participants recruited for the control and confirmation of the study results, two were female and three were male. They were aged between 35 and 44. One of them was a principal; the others were vice principals. Their average managerial experience was eight years, and their managerial experience in the current school ranged from one to three years. One had a master's degree, while the others each had an undergraduate degree. They were all members of a teachers union. Two of them worked in a county, while the others worked in the province center. Two of them worked in small schools, one worked in a medium-sized school, and two worked in big schools.

In this study, the representation of female school administrators was quite low. The proportional presence of female school principals in lower in Turkey is a contrast to that in European and North American countries. This situation was also stated in previous studies (Altınışık, 1988; Babaoğlan & Litchka, 2010; Çelikten, 2004).

Data Collection

The data were collected using the semi-structured interview method. For this purpose, the researchers developed a data collection tool (Appendix 1) which consisted of three sections. The first section aimed to collect demographic information about the participants. The second part included a scenario that was formed by the researchers and consisted of situations that can be used to measure the leadership potential of the administrators, as well as an open-ended question aiming to determine participants' views about this scenario. The last section was made up of an analytic graded scale. To determine the leadership characteristics forming the basis of the script in the second section of the data collection tool, the relevant literature was searched and the experiences in practice were determined. Two vice principals and five education inspectors who knew the school principals closely, who had the opportunity to observe them closely in the field, and who had a master's degree or PhD in the field of educational management were interviewed. In addition, a literature review was conducted on YÖK theses, Ulakbim, Web of Science, Ebscohost, Academic search complete, and Proquest using the keywords "leadership potential" and "Liderlik potansiyeli" (in Turkish). As a result of these reviews, items associated with LP found in Church (2014), Dries and Pepermans, (2012), Lee et al. (2015), and Widodo and Sulistinah (2018) were collected in a pool. Also, studies investigating differences between administrators andleaders (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Buchanan & Huczynski, 2017; Hoy & Miskel, 2012; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012) were utilized. After the pool of items was formed, the items were coded and sequenced. In this way, a total of 48 items were identified. The qualification of these items in determining LP was evaluated by three experts who each had a PhD in the field of educational management. In this process, the experts independently rated each item's distinguishing power in terms of LP between 1 and 10. When the scores were totaled, the 12 items with the highest scores were determined as follows: (a) feeling the critical point in a problem; (b) ability to propose a different solution to the problem instantly, creativity; (c) running the decision-making process under pressure and autonomy; (d) managing complexity and uncertainty; (e) being happy with working at school, devotion, perseverance; (f) understanding others' needs immediately, and commitment; (g) disclosing what to do, how to do it, and the results for everyone; (h) having the self-confidence to perform the job elsewhere and in other cultures, self-efficacy; (i) goal-orientedness and tendency to change; (j) impacting others and making efforts to

achieve the group's common goals; (k) developing processes and establishing the structure; and (l) trusting colleagues and delegating authority. Because intrinsic motivation is an indicator of LP (Robbins & Judge, 2015; Ryan & Deci, 2017), self-efficacy, goal-orientedness, autonomy, and commitment (which are the elements of intrinsic motivation) were matched with other qualities. A scenario was produced based on these characteristics. In this scenario, the strategy was that the above-mentioned 12 features would act as stimuli, and responses to these stimuli would be determined. The script was embedded in the semi-structured interview form. In this process, the school administrators were contacted through phone calls beforehand. They were informed about the study and, thus, the interview method was determined. Following the preferences of the school administrators, the interview form was delivered to them electronically and the completed forms were collected electronically. Only two participants expressed their opinions by filling out the printed form. The managers who delivered their opinions on the printed form were first asked to read the script. Then they were asked such questions as "According to you, what should Ahmet do in this case and why?" Another researcher instantly recorded the responses. During the interview, the script was given to the participant and the case was re-examined. At the end of the interviews, the participants confirmed the records. Each interview took an average of 25 to 30 minutes.

After the semi-structured interview was completed, the participants were asked to fill out the analytic graded scale (Appendix 1), which was designed by the researchers and consisted of 12 items of leadership-related characteristics. Eight of the items were positive and four of them were negative. The maximum score that could be obtained from this scale was 80. Each item had a scale for scoring the item between 0 and 10.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured interview were analyzed according to the pre-established themes and their subcomponents. These themes and subcomponents are shown in Table 2. The themes were named as follows: (a) problem-solving/decision-making; (b) devotion-emotional leadership; (c) relationship-accountability-globalization; and (d) initiative and process.

Table 2

Themes/Dimensions and Subcomponents Used in the Analysis of Semi-Structured Data

Theme/Dimension	Subcomponent
A. Problem-solving and decision-making	(a) Feeling the critical point in a problem, (b) Ability to propose a different solution for the problem instantly, creativity, (c) Running the decision-making process under pressure and autonomy, (d) Managing complexity and uncertainty
B. Devotion, emotional leadership	(a) Being happy with working at school, devotion, perseverance (b) Understanding others' needs immediately, and commitment
C. Relationship, accountability, globalization	(a) Disclosure of what to do, how to do it, and the results for everyone, (b) Having the self-confidence to perform the job elsewhere and in other cultures, self-efficacy
D. Initiative and process	(a) Goal-orientedness and tendency to change, (b) Impacting others and making efforts to achieve the group's common goals, (c) Developing processes and establishing the structure, (d) Trusting colleagues and delegating authority

To analyze the data collected through semi-structured interviews, including interviews held for confirmation, first, the written records were transferred to the Microsoft Excel computer software by three researchers. The participants were given codes (e.g., P1, P2, P3). Then, one of the researchers read the records. The second researcher recorded them into the computer file, while the third researcher entered the pieces of information into the analysis matrix in Table 2. Comparison and matching processes were used to determine which theme and subcomponent the pieces of information belonged to. Qualitative data were analyzed on both a participant and a subcomponent basis. Thus, it was possible to see the LP status of the participants as well as to evaluate the status of LP in each subcomponent and theme. In the final stage of the qualitative analysis, the findings were handled in contextual terms to reach meta findings (Merriam, 2015, pp. 170–173).

Quantitative data were analyzed based on both participants (Pi) and items (Ii). The analytic grading scale was used to determine LP levels of school administrators at the participant level. The scale had a total of 12 items, including eight positive and four negative expressions. For positive items, LP increases as the score approaches 10, while for negative items, LP increases as the score approaches 0. Scores obtained from the scale were interpreted according to five-level reference values. Score ranges were determined as 0–16, very low; 17–32, low; 33–48, medium; 49–64, high; and 65–80, very high. Because each item was scored between 0–10 in item-based analysis, the mean scores of items were evaluated as 0.00–2.00, very low; 2.01 to 4.00, low; 4.01–6.00, medium; 6.01–8.00, high; and 8.01–10.00 very high. The mean scores of the negative items were evaluated contrarily to the positive items (e.g. 0.00–2.00, very high). A common table (Table 6) was utilized to combine and interpret the qualitative and quantitative data. The table presented both qualitative and quantitative findings. Using this table, the fit and unfit between qualitative and quantitative data at the participant level were determined and interpreted.

Validity and Reliability

Because this study was carried out using a mixed method, information about the validity and reliability of each of the qualitative and quantitative data collection tools was given separately. In qualitative studies, credibility and consistency criteria are used to determine validity and reliability. In this study, independent expert opinions determined that the fit between the results of the semi-structured interviews, the ensuring of participant diversity, and the presenting of different opinions with direct quotations supported its credibility (Merriam, 2015). The different positions of the participants in the educational institutions (teacher + vice principal + principal + inspector) and their long-term involvement in the school environment during the research process met the criterion of average long-term participation, which is one of the basic principles of credibility. The factors supporting consistency were that interview records were sharable, the questions and the methods of determining questions were established, the data collection and analysis processes were described, and analyses preventing bias were conducted. In addition, purposive sampling, information about the participants, and the description of the interview environments supported credibility and consistency (Christensen et al., 2015; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The validity was supported by the confirmation of the study results by the five school administrators who were not involved in the study sample and by two faculty members who each had a PhD in educational management and who had conducted studies on leadership. The validity of the analytic graded measurement tool, which is a quantitative data collection tool, was achieved through theoretical validity, criterion validity, and expert opinions. On the

other hand, reliability was obtained by the split-half method. Accordingly, the participants were randomly divided into two groups (odd-numbered and even-numbered participants) to check the scoring consistency between the groups. The score of the odd-numbered participants was 299, while the score of the other group was 216. This indicated a fit between group scores.

Results

The qualitative and quantitative results were presented according to the sub-problems of the research. First, the qualitative findings obtained from the content analysis of the interview forms and then the quantitative findings obtained from the analysis of the analytic graded measurement tool were presented. Finally, qualitative and quantitative data were combined and interpreted.

1. Qualitative Results: What Is the Status of The Leadership Potential of School Administrators?

The findings obtained from the content analysis of the views on the scenario were presented through direct quotations. Table 3 presents the findings obtained with content analysis according to the participants and subcomponents. The units of analysis consisted of 12 subcomponents under four themes. Also, at the end of the rows and columns of Table 3, findings based on participants and the themes were presented as a summary. Thus, the status of LP can be seen based on the participants and in terms of the components of LP.

Theme 1: Making Decisions and Problem-Solving

Under this theme, the following characteristics of the participants were analyzed: (a) feeling the critical point in a problem; (b) ability to instantly propose a different solution to the problem and to use creativity; (c) running the decision-making process under pressure and autonomy; and (d) managing complexity and uncertainty. In terms of the case analysis, the school administrators could be said to fall into two groups: those who noticed the critical point (n = 7) and those who did not (n = 8). Only one of the participants (P3) came up with a different solution:

> First of all, Ahmet may not disrupt the order of his family members. In other words, he should go to the metropolitan city alone and he can eliminate the concerns of the family members in the meantime as he will have a better opportunity to show the possibilities and the order that he will establish there to the family members.

While the majority of the participants (n = 10) presented a negative impression in terms of running the decision process under pressure and acting autonomously, five administrators presented a positive impression. For example, the participant coded P2 expressed his opinions in this context as follows:

> If I focused on my career, I would accept the offer and become very successful in my new job. The second problem is the pressure of the family members and the union. Solution: (Ahmet) will consider the pressures of family members and the union as an opinion only, and he

will decide what he wants by considering the pros and cons of this job thoroughly.

The last subcomponent under this theme is managing complexity and uncertainty. Only two administrators (P8 and P9) made a positive impression within this subcomponent. For example, P9 expressed his opinion as, "He should explain his determination to his family in a clear language, get to work immediately, and make a good time planning," Presenting a negative impression, P7 stated, "On the other hand, his frustrations, problems, and pressures coming from others make Ahmet unhappy because they force him to make a decision." Similarly, P5 said, "Yes to rewards because education is a process and its outcomes cannot be foreseen, but there should be no penalty."

Theme II: Emotional Leadership and Devotion

Under this theme, the following two characteristics of the participants were evaluated: (a) being happy with working at school, devotion, perseverance; and (b) understanding others' needs immediately, and commitment. Only six participants expressed their views on devotion. Three of them were positive (P1, P2, and P7), while the other three made a negative impression (P5, P6, and P10). For example, P1 made a positive impression by saying, "Working without time limits does not suit everyone's personality. Ahmet is a person who can set goals [for himself] and endure every challenge to achieve these goals." Meanwhile, P6 and P10 exhibited a negative expression by replying, "The family doesn't want, and working conditions are heavy." The subcomponent for which the school administrators exhibited a strong LP under this theme was "understanding others' needs immediately, and commitment." All school administrators made a positive impression in this context, and this issue was emphasized 21 times. For example, the participant with the code P3 said, "His wife's job and health conditions will also affect Ahmet's decision. Yet another problem is the anxiety of the family members." Meanwhile, P15 said, "He will be in conflict with family members. He will be solely responsible for the negativity. He should talk to his family to make a decision." The other important point was that the teachers union and the parents were ignored as external pressure groups.

Table 3

Qualitative Findings of School Administrators' Leadership Potential

Code	Theme I: Decision-making and problem-solving	Theme II: Emotional leadership and devotion	Theme III: Accountability and globalization	Theme IV: Initiative and process	General Overview
P1	Emphasizes the importance of personality. Takes on responsibility for the decision.	Committed to the family. Has a tendency to work for long-term goals. Has self-confidence.	While considering the internal pressure group and trying to persuade it, ignores the external pressure group. Shares information.	Has a tendency toward initiative and change. Ready to make efforts in line with the objectives.	Personality was emphasized in leadership. The impact of the internal pressure group on LP was indicated.
P2	Unprepared to instantly progress events. Does not use decision processes, but wants to make the decision him/herself. Tends to make choices without examining possible outcomes. Not rational.	Does not care about others. Does not notice the needs of others. Self-confident.	Does not care about the external pressure group (parent). Avoids uncertainty and risk. Does not care about providing information about things to be done and outcomes. Does not care about the group's goals.	Has a tendency to change. Results-oriented.	Decision processes cannot be run. Risk and uncertainty are avoided. Insensitive to the needs of others. Does not have an understanding of accountability. The group's goals are ignored and results-oriented.
P3	Emphasizes situationalism. Has a limited ability to decide on a problem in a short time.	Commitment to the internal pressure group (family members) is strong, but has no intimate relationship with the external pressure group.	Cares about the goals of the group s/he is with, but cares mostly about the internal pressure group. Tends to cope with uncertainty.	Results-oriented, estimates profit-loss. Wants to take opportunities. Exhibits signs that s/he trusts others through delegation. Cautiously optimistic.	Places more emphasis on the internal pressure group. Results-oriented. Tends to delegate authority because of trust in group members. Wants to take opportunities with a rational attitude. Cares about situationalism. Tends to cope with uncertainty, but cannot run the decision process.
P4	Recognizes the critical point in the problem, but leaves the decision to others under pressure.	Committed to the parent.			Avoids making the decision despite noticing the problem.
P5	Unable to run the decision process under pressure. Does not assume all possible consequences of the decision.	Committed to the internal pressure group, but does not care about the external pressure group.	Avoids change. Provides other stakeholders with information.	Avoids risks. Does not trust others.	Limited ability to decide on a problem in a short time. Committed to the internal pressure group. Shares information with others, but does not trust them. Tends to ensure self-guarantee.
P6	Despite seeing immediate decision-making as a problem, tends to make decisions under pressure.	Commitment is achieved through exchanges.	Cares about the internal pressure group. Tends to convince through the exchange of ideas. Does not care about the external pressure group.	Has a tendency to change. Has a timid tendency toward initiative. Tends to avoid risks and ensure self-guarantee.	Able to make decisions under pressure, but sees decision-making as a problem. Has "conditional commitment" Avoids risk and initiative.
P7	Unhappy with making decisions under pressure.	Exhibits devotion and commitment to the family.	Gives information to stakeholders about what to do.	Implies that his/her alternatives are limited. Does not want change.	Does not want to make a decision under pressure. Avoids change. Thinks s/he is indispensable.

Table 2, continued

Code	Theme I: Decision-making and problem-solving	Theme II: Emotional leadership and devotion	Theme III: Accountability and globalization	Theme IV: Initiative and process	General Overview
P_8	Unable to run the decision process. Estimates profit and loss.	Cares about the internal pressure group and tends to leave the decision to them.		Results-oriented.	Wants to make a rational decision. Cares about the internal pressure group and has a tendency to act as results-oriented. Has no personal goals for the future.
P_9	Embraces the decision and does not leave it to others. Tends to run the decision process.	Committed to the internal pressure group. Has personal ideals and tends to achieve them.	Shares information and exhibits attitude of accountability.	Has a tendency to change. Wants to build, monitor, and intervene in the structure. Demonstrates confidence in the team with the delegation of authority.	Undertakes the decision. Has an understanding of accountability. Has a tendency to delegate trust and authority. Process-oriented. Tends to build and develop the structure.
P_{10}	Tends to leave the decision to the family and the environment.	Low devotion and has no personal ideals and goals. Commitment to the family is high.	Low self-efficacy perception.	Tends to avoid risks and uncertainty. Abdicates the rewards due to difficulty.	Leaves the decision to others. Avoids risk and uncertainty. Gives up the prize due to difficulty.
P_{11}	Unable to run the decision-making process. Unable to make a quick decision.	Does not exhibit sincere commitment. No delegating authority. No personal ideals.	Does not trust others, but cares about them. Limited impact power.	Does not want change. The power of expertise is weak. Stays away from initiative.	Unable to run the decision process. Does not want change. Does not trust his/her own expertise and others. Does not delegate authority.
P_{12}	Leaves the decision to others.	Highly committed to the internal pressure group and cares about them a lot.		Wants to maintain the present state.	Cares about the internal pressure group and avoids decision-making.
P_{13}	Tends to run the decision process. Undertakes all the consequences of the decision.	Tends to care about both the internal pressure group and others. Does not have personal ideals, but wants change.	Cares about communication and sharing. Has a desire to persuade the family not to miss the opportunity.	Change-prone but results-oriented. Not satisfied with the existing conditions. Tends to take risks.	Internal and external pressure groups are considered. Prone to change and risk-taking, but avoids taking the initiative. Inadequate self-confidence.
P_{14}	Unable to run the decision process.	Cares about the family and the external pressure group. Has no personal ideals. Self-confidence is low.	Does not care about parental function.	Avoids change. Results-oriented. The performance of the group members is very important. Impact power is limited.	Unable to run the decision process. Internal and external pressure groups are very important. Avoids change. The performance of the group members is decisive on the result.
P_{15}	Unable to make a decision under pressure.	Committed to the family and afraid of experiencing conflict.	Cares about internal and external pressure groups.	Does not want change. Worried about negativity. Cares about the team's performance.	Avoids making decisions under pressure. Cares about the internal pressure group. Avoids risk and emphasizes the skills of the members.

Table 2, continued

Thematic Analysis				
Decision processes cannot be run. There is a tendency to leave the decision to others but to assume the consequences. Time is ahead of the decision process. The problem is noticed but cannot be solved.	Commitment to and caring about the internal pressure group have an impact on the decision. Despite caring about the team they work with, external pressure groups such as the union and the parent do not receive much attention. Low devotion to personal ideals and goals.	Complexity and uncertainty cannot be managed. Accountability and sharing of information are important. Trust in others is weak but important. Poor persuasion and impacting power. The goals of the group are ignored.	Change is not wanted. The process is ignored. Self-confidence is weak. The team's performance is very important. Impacting power is limited. Results-orientedness and profit and loss come to the fore. Delegation of authority is limited.	The internal pressure group is very important. Decision processes cannot be run. Unable to decide quickly and under pressure. Risk and uncertainty are avoided. There is a tendency toward results-orientedness by ignoring the process. Weak self-confidence and trust in others. Delegation of authority is limited. The power of impacting others is limited.

In this context, P3 said, "It is not very important that the union is not positive because today, unions are waiting for the opportunity to immediately fill the place of who quits." Similar ideas were raised by P1, P2, P5, P6, and P8. However, P11 and P13 presented opinions that emphasized the importance of the union as an external pressure group.

Theme III: Accountability and Globalization

The following self-efficacy characteristics of the participants were handled under this theme: (a) understanding others' needs immediately, and commitment; (b) disclosing what to do, how to do it, and the results for everyone; and (c) having the self-confidence to perform the job elsewhere and in other cultures, self-efficacy. Only five participants (P1, P5, P7, P9, and P13) evaluated the first subcomponent of this theme. All of these evaluations created a positive impression. For example, P5 said, "His goals are not clear, either. He should set short-term goals and share it with other stakeholders." Meanwhile, P1 stated, "If he really wants this job, Ahmet should talk about the positive aspects of the job … and convince them accordingly." P13 explained the need to assume responsibility for the consequences, which is another element of accountability, by saying, "He should welcome the outcomes of success or failure," while P9 explained it by saying, "He should exchange ideas with employees about the consequences." In addition to this positive impression, negative impressions were detected. For example, P5 said, "Yes to rewarding but there should be no punishment," while P10 emphasized dissatisfaction by stating, "Rewards if successful, sanctions if [failure]." Considering these explanations, it can be said that the theme of accountability was underrated (n = 7). The second subcomponent of this theme, self-efficacy, was found to be evaluated by 10 participants. Among them, five made a positive impression (P2, P3, P6, P9, and P13). For example, P9 said, "I am confident that with the opportunities offered (Ahmet), he will be much more successful at the private school and get better results." On the other hand, P6 evaluated the case by saying, "Such a hard-working, successful, and respected person should be offered a possibility to show himself, and he must use this possibility." P13 said, "If Ahmet were not successful in his institution, he would not get this offer from the private school. He must have a leadership characteristic, which helped him be successful." The participants who made a negative impression (P5, P10, P11, P14, and P15) emphasized that planning, team building, and adjusting to the environment would be unsuccessful due to the limited time. For example, P10 said, "If Ahmet goes to another school three days before schools open, he will not be able to make proper plans due to time constraints."

Theme IV: Initiative and Process

Within the scope of this theme, the following characteristics of the participants were examined: (a) goal-orientedness and tendency to change; (b) impacting others and making efforts to achieve the group's common goals; (c) developing processes and establishing the structure; and (d) trusting colleagues and delegating authority. All participants, except one, expressed their opinions about the first subcomponent of this theme: "Being goal-oriented and prone to change." Only six participants among the respondents made a positive impression in terms of LP (P1, P2, P3, P6, P9, and P13). While the participants who made a positive impression thought that Ahmet should accept the offer and work in the private school, others (P5, P7, P8, P10, P11, P12, P14, and P15) stated that Ahmet should not accept the offer. For example, P7 said, "I think Ahmet will prefer to stay in his current school." On the other hand, P10 stated, "I think Ahmet will not accept the offer in the face of these problems," while P11 wanted this change in decision to be considered later and justified his opinion as follows:

> The time constraint will prevent him from making the right decision. Even if the decision is positive, it will have a negative impact on the current school and colleagues, and he will have an inefficient academic year. Orientation and his control over his job will be inefficient as he will have limited time in the new school.

Only three participants (P1, P6, and P9) expressed their views on "impacting others and making efforts to achieve the group's common goals," the second subcomponent of the initiative and process theme. These views particularly centered on the persuasion of family members to undergo change. It was noteworthy that the concept of impacting others was touched on only briefly and was limited to the family. A total of seven participants expressed their views on the subcomponent of "developing processes and establishing the structure." Three of these views were positive (P3, P6, P9), while four were negative (P5, P8, P11, P15). P6 said, "Ahmet must first see if he can create his team under these conditions, in which he can work." P3 evaluated the establishment of the structure by saying, "Having the opportunity to make every kind of change including building the team that was offered to him in the primary school where Ahmet worked and delegating authority and [directing] the applications as he wishes." Relating to the negative views, P5 said, "There is not enough time to build his team and to plan his goals." Meanwhile, P8 expressed a results-oriented view by saying, "What will be the advantages and disadvantages when he goes to the private school? If he makes a decision without consulting his family, they will all suffer from the negative consequences of this decision as a family." A results-oriented approach was more common among the participants. While six participants did not express any opinions, nine participants (P1, P2, P3, P8, P10, P11, P13, P14, and P15) expressed results-oriented views. For example, relating to this issue, P2 said, "[Ahmet] will be able to achieve good results in his new position." The last subcomponent of the initiative and process theme was "trusting colleagues and delegating authority." Seven participants expressed their views on this theme, and four of them made a positive impression (P5, P9, P13, and P14). For example, P9 cited "setting goals and delegating authority by dividing the responsibilities within the team, following the works, and exchanging ideas with employees about the outcomes." In this context, "delegation of authority" (P3, P9) was less emphasized, whereas "team" was particularly emphasized (P3, P5, P6, P9, P11, P13, P14, and P15). P11, for example, evaluated the issue by saying, "Education requires teamwork," while P15 emphasized the team concept by stating, "Ahmet's success depends on the success of his team." The majority of the participants (n =

8) emphasized the team concept. The concept of trust was emphasized under three different dimensions: "self-confidence" (P3, P6, and P13), "being reliable" (P4, P13, and P15), and "trusting someone else" (P4). Frequently, participants emphasized the concept of time. In this context, "allocating time to the family" (P1, P2), "working without consideration of time" (P1 and P2), and "limited time for making a decision" (P2, P3, P6, P8, P9, P10, P11, P14, and P15) were emphasized as different dimensions. Another point emphasized by the participants was the concept of "personality." The participants who commented on this issue (P1, P3, and P4) argued that personality was important for LP. For example, P1 emphasized personality by saying, "Ahmet's personality is very important here," while P4 touched on personality by stating, "Ahmet should make a decision by considering his own personality traits, professional values, and expectations." Another interesting aspect among the qualitative findings was that some of the participants emphasized "their indispensability" while emphasizing "thinking about others". For example, P7 explained the continuance of the current situation by saying, "Because the students at the old school need a more idealistic administrator," while P11 justified the issue by saying, "Even if he makes a positive decision, it will bring about negative consequences for his old school and colleagues, and the academic year will be inefficient."

At this stage, participant views were discussed and summarized across the themes. The school administrators were observed as failing to run the decision-making processes. Time was considered important for decision-making. Administrators could recognize the problem in the scenario, but they could not offer a solution. While participants tended to leave the decision to others, they took on the consequences of the decisions made by others. School administrators were committed to the internal pressure group (family) but ignored the external pressure group (union). While devotion to family was high, devotion to personal ideals and goals was very low. The participants were found to tend to avoid uncertainty. When the school administrators make a decision, they evaluate the cost and benefits. When the dimensions in Table 3 are evaluated together, the participants can be said to be results-oriented and to refrain from delegating authority. Avoidance of delegating authority can be interpreted as an indication that they do not trust others. Avoiding uncertainty and risks may indicate weakness in taking the initiative. Avoiding change suggests inertia.

When the qualitative data were examined on the basis of subcomponents, four of the subcomponents were found to be at a very low level, five at a low level, two at a moderate level, and one at a very high level. The distribution of subcomponents by levels is given below:
Very low:

- *Running the decision-making process under pressure and autonomy*
- *Managing complexity and uncertainty*
- *Goal-orientedness and tendency to change*
- *Developing processes and establishing the structure*

Low:

- *Ability to propose a different solution to the problem instantly, creativity*
- *Being happy with working at school, devotion, perseverance*
- *Having the self-confidence to perform the job elsewhere and in other cultures, self-efficacy*
- *Impacting others and making efforts to achieve the group's common goals*
- *Trusting colleagues and delegating authority*

Moderate:

- *Feeling the critical point in a problem*
- *Disclosing what to do, how to do it, and the results for everyone*

Very high:

- *Understanding others' needs immediately, and commitment*

2. Quantitative Results: What is the level of the leadership potential of school administrators?

Table 4 shows the item-based scores of the participants obtained from the analytic graded scale.

Table 4

The LP Levels of School Administrators

Participants	I_1	I_2	I_3	I_4	I_5	I_6	I_7	I_8	I_9	I_{10}	I_{11}	I_{12}	Total
P_1	10	5	0	10	10	5	10	8	8	4	10	8	50
P_2	7	1	0	2	9	10	10	8	1	7	9	9	37
P_3	9	1	0	8	8	1	9	4	1	8	7	5	25
P_4	8	5	2	8	8	8	9	5	8	3	8	8	42
P_5	10	5	0	10	7	9	10	3	0	0	10	7	41
P_6	9	3	0	8	10	9	9	7	7	7	9	5	45
P_7	7	3	1	10	8	8	9	10	10	10	9	9	48
P_8	7	5	0	5	5	3	5	7	5	5	5	5	27
P_9	8	3	0	2	8	7	8	8	3	3	8	8	38
P_{10}	2	5	0	6	2	9	7	2	2	2	7	1	17
P_{11}	5	5	1	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	8	9	38
P_{12}	0	5	1	7	9	8	3	4	7	7	10	10	39
P_{13}	9	10	2	8	9	9	8	10	2	2	10	8	43
P_{14}	0	10	1	10	2	3	3	0	10	10	8	0	9
P_{15}	1	5	0	2	4	5	5	3	7	7	7	4	16
Total	39	51	6	57	54	59	55	51	53	52	72	54	34,3

Index scores calculated for each participant were presented in the total column. During calculation of the index score, the scores of the positive items were summed and the scores of the negative items were subtracted from the total. Accordingly, the maximum scores were 50, 48, and 45, which belonged to the administrators coded P1, P7, and P6, respectively.

When the participants were ranked according to their LP over a five-point ranking, two of them were found to fall into the very low category and three into the low category. While nine participants were in the medium category, one administrator was in the high category. No participants were in the very high category.

Table 5 shows the mean scores for the items and the interpretation of these scores. The mean item score was calculated by dividing the total score of the participants for each item by the number of participants (n = 15). These scores were interpreted separately according to positive and negative items. As the mean score for items with positive content approached 10,

it indicated a very high level. On the other hand, as the mean score for items with negative content approached 0, it indicated a very high level.

Table 5

Results of the LP Level of the Participants on the Basis of Subcomponents

Item Code	Content	Mean	Min-Max	LP Level
I₁ (+)	Tendency to change	2,60	0,00–10,00	Low
I₂ (-)*	Leaving the decision to the internal pressure group	3,40	10,00–0,00	High
I₃ (-)*	Leaving the decision to the external pressure group	0,40	10,00–0,00	Very High
I₄ (+)	Accountability-transparency-sharing information	3,80	0,00–10,00	Low
I₅ (+)	Coping with complexity and uncertainty	3,60	0,00–10,00	Low
I₆ (+)	Self-sacrifice for the group's goals	3,93	0,00–10,00	Low
I₇ (-)*	Giving up the group's goals for his/her personal career	3,67	10,00–0,00	High
I₈ (+)	Delegation of authority to colleagues-trust	3,40	0,00–10,00	Low
I₉ (+)	Attaching importance to process rather than results	3,53	0,00–10,00	Low
I₁₀ (-)*	Attaching importance to results rather than process	3,47	10,00–0,00	High
I₁₁ (+)	Sensitivity to the needs of others	4,80	0,00–10,00	Middle
I₁₂ (+)	Devotion	3,60	0,00–10,00	Low

* Negative items were coded inversely.

According to the item-based LP levels of the school principals, the LP levels of the participants were observed to be low in terms of tendency to change (I1) (= 2.60); accountability, transparency, and sharing information (I4) (= 3.80); coping with complexity and uncertainty (I5) (= 3.60); making sacrifices for the goals of the group (I6) (=3.93); trusting colleagues and delegation of authority (I8) (= 3.40); attaching importance to the process rather than to the result (I9) (= 3.47); and devotion (I12) (= 3.60). Among the positive items, while sensitivity to the needs of others (I11) yielded the highest mean score (=4.80), it corresponded to a medium LP level. Among the negative items, the LP level was calculated to be high for items "not leaving the decision to internal pressure group" (I2) (= 3.40), "not giving up the group's goals for personal career" (I7) (= 3.67), and "the result is ignored instead of the process" (I10) (= 3.47). The LP level of the participants was determined to be very high in terms of "not leaving the decision to the external pressure group" (I3) (= 0.40).

3. Combining qualitative and quantitative results: How can the leadership potential of school administrators be described when the level and status of their leadership potential are associated?

Table 6 shows the general LP descriptions obtained by combining qualitative and quantitative data. LP was found to be low on both a participant and a subcomponent basis. In terms of the qualitative characteristics of the school administrators regarding their LP, the first noticeable aspect was the failure to run the decision-making process. At the same time, while a tendency to leave the decision to others was determined, it was observed that the making of decisions quickly and under pressure was avoided. Participants' views pointed to three different pressure groups: (a) family, (b) the team with which they worked, and (c) the union. The participants were found to have a high commitment to their families, about which they cared very much. Some of them even tended to leave the decision to their families. School principals stated that they cared about the opinions of their family members. Consequently, they sought their families' approval in decisions and expressed commitment to their families. However, a school administrator thought that commitment could be "conditional." The team members with whom they worked at school were highly important, and they emphasized the performance of the team to the extent that it overshadowed their impact on the results to be

achieved. On the other hand, the external pressure group was ignored. Some even had negative attitudes. The school administrators were observed to avoid risk and uncertainty. Some of the school administrators thought themselves to be indispensable. They also stated that an administrator should have a sense of accountability and a democratic attitude, should establish and monitor the structure, and should intervene when necessary.

Table 6

Review of the LP-Related Status and Levels of School Administrators

P Code	Qualitative Scores	Quantitative Scores	LP Description
P_1	8/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: High level	50: High	High level
P_2	5/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Middle level	37: Middle	Middle level
P_3	6/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Middle level	25: Low	Middle level
P_4	3/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Low level	42: Middle	Low level
P_5	3/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Low level	41: Middle	Low level
P_6	6/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Middle level	45: Middle	Middle level
P_7	3/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Low level	48: Middle	Middle level
P_8	3/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Low level	27: Low	Low level
P_9	10/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: High level	38: Middle	High level
P_{10}	1/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Very low level	17: Low	Very Low level
P_{11}	1/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Very low level	38: Middle	Low level
P_{12}	2/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Very low level	39: Middle	Low level
P_{13}	6/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Middle level	43: Middle	Middle level
P_{14}	3/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Low level	9: Very Low	Very Low level
P_{15}	1/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Very low level	16: Very Low	Very Low level
Overall	Mean score 4/12 gives a positive impression relating to the subcomponent: Low level	34.3: Middle	Low level

Qualitative findings became more evident under the following points:

- The decision process could not be completed. There was a tendency to leave the decision to others.
- The administrators did not have personal ideals and goals.
- The administrators tended to maintain the current situation and did not want change.
- Risk, complexity, and uncertainty could not be managed; these conditions were feared and avoided.
- The administrators' confidence in themselves and their expertise was weak.
- The process was ignored; a results orientation was more pronounced.
- The administrators were committed to their families, and they were limited in their ability to persuade and influence.

Because the quantitative findings were analyzed in two different dimensions, findings were obtained in both participant and item dimensions. The overall mean score on the participant basis was calculated as 34.3 out of 80. This score indicated that the LP of the participants was low. However, when the LP scores of the participants were classified using a five-point rating, a different situation was observed. It was noteworthy that the majority of the school administrators (n = 9) were at a moderate level (33–48). Three-fifths (n = 3) of the school administrators were at a low level (17–32), while two school administrators (n = 2) were found to have very low levels of LP (0–16). Only one school principal (n = 1) ($\bar{x}$=50) had a high level of LP (49–64). While no one had a very high level of LP, the participants were found to have gathered around a medium level. When the quantitative findings were examined on an item basis, the LP level was found to be low in seven of the 12 items. One item was moderate, three items were high, and one indicated a very high level of LP.

While the qualitative data showed a tendency to leave the decision to others, the quantitative data indicated that the participants did not leave the decision to others. In the qualitative data, the frequent emphasis on running the decision process and the time constraint were evaluated as low LP levels in terms of running the decision-making process by the participants.

Considering that a low number of participants (n = 7) expressed opinions on accountability and sharing information in the qualitative data, it seemed more appropriate to take quantitative data as a basis. When the qualitative data were reviewed again, only P5 (informing other stakeholders), P9 (information sharing and accountable attitudes), and P13 (caring about communication and sharing) were found to express opinions about accountability and sharing information. Therefore, the participants were evaluated as exhibiting low levels of LP in terms of accountability, transparency, and sharing information that was observed in the quantitative data.

The quantitative data generated contradictions in itself in terms of impacting others and seeking to achieve the group's common goals. While positive items on the same subject pointed to a low level, negative items indicated a high level. When the qualitative data were examined, the impacting characteristic of the participants was found to be limited, and the goals of the group were found to be of little importance. Therefore, the LP level of the participants was low in terms of impacting others and in trying to realize the common goals of the group.

In the quantitative data, while the LP score was low because the participants did not care about the process, as they did not care about the results rather than the process, the LP score was calculated as high. In the qualitative data, on the other hand, because the participants were found to care about the results, they were evaluated as being results-oriented based on a comparison of the qualitative and quantitative data. However, developing the process and establishing the structure was a more dominant concept in terms of LP. Because the manner in which the results were obtained was associated with values, the development of the process and the establishment of the structure may provide more valid information about LP. Therefore, the "developing the process" side of the participants was considered low.

There was a need to collect additional data on the points of contradiction between qualitative and quantitative data (Lund, 2011). For this reason, the opinions of five school administrators were obtained to check and confirm the results. In this study, there was consistency between qualitative and quantitative data in the following issues: avoidance of change, disregarding

the process, not delegating authority, not trusting others, failing to manage complexity and uncertainty, sensitivity to the needs of others, and low level of devotion. On the other hand, the points showing inconsistency were the decision process, accountability and sharing information, appreciation of group goals, and process-results-orientedness. According to the findings obtained in the additional interviews, the results of the study regarding failure in running the decision-making process and disregarding accountability and sharing information were confirmed; nevertheless, the results relating to impacting others and considering the goals of the group, as well as results-orientedness, were not confirmed. The participants explained that results-orientedness, which was a finding of the study, did not reflect the reality by emphasizing the importance assigned to both the results and the process. Additionally, the repeated team emphasis indicated that the goals of the people working together were considered.

Discussion

This first study, which focused on describing the LP of currently working school administrators, will contribute to LP studies in terms of context, methodology, and content. In this study, which blended qualitative and quantitative data collected from school administrators working at different levels in a centralized education system, the LP of school administrators was determined to be low. The main sources of this situation were found to be (a) an unwillingness to change and a desire to maintain the current state, (b) avoidance of complexity and uncertainty, and (c) inadequacy in running decision-making processes.

Despite the contextual and methodological differences, a discrepancy emerged when the results of this study were compared to the results of previous LP-centered studies. For example, Widodo and Sulistinah (2018) found that half (53%) of teachers who were prospective school principals had a good level of LP. In this study, only two of the 15 participants had good LP. Church (2014) reported that high-ranking and experienced business executives had a high level of LP (.75), while low-ranking and less experienced managers had a low level of LP (.37). Supposing that the school administrators who participated in this study were defined as low-ranking administrators in the hierarchical structure of the education system, the results obtained by Church (2014) could be said to be partially in line with the results of the present study. However, Dries and Pepermans (2012) found that the LP level of business managers in different positions and different places was high. In a relational study of 1,232 students at a military school, Allen et al. (2014) found that participants had a high level of leadership potential. Also, Lee et al. (2015) found that the LP level of Korean college students was high. A similar study was conducted on middle school students in Turkey and found that students' LP was high (Oğurlu & Emir, 2013). Studies on the leadership of school administrators in Turkey tend to center on the types of leadership (e.g., transformational, transactional). Most of these studies are descriptive-type studies based on quantitative data collected from teachers in primary and secondary schools. The leadership scores of the school administrators in these studies were usually high (Çetiner, 2008; Keleş, 2009; Kiriş, 2013; Tosun, 2015; Zengin, 2019).

The result of the present study showing that the leadership potential of school administrators was low does not seem to be compatible with the results of national and international studies. The sources of this inconsistency may have stemmed from the topic of this study, the research methodology, and contextual differences. The concept and practices of central management still exist strongly in many countries such as Turkey. In a highly centralized education system, schools are required to work under common rules and norms. Often,

bureaucratic practices and sanctions as a form of punishment cause school administrators to behave differently. The word "leader" can be perceived as a threat to the existing one because the word corresponds to such concepts as change, difference, diversity, and need-orientedness. In such structures, the ability of school administrators to exercise leadership is naturally limited (Buluç, 2009; Bush, 2008). Similarly, Aslan and Karip (2014) stated that school administrators in Turkey experienced limitations in exercising leadership due to the structure of the education system.

According to the literature, the main differences between the manager and the leader are having a tendency to change; developing processes and structures; realizing the source of the problem and proposing an original solution; running the decision-making processes efficiently under complexity-uncertainty and pressure; and moving towards the aim by impacting the stakeholders (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Buchanan & Huczynski, 2017; Hoy & Miskel, 2012; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). Initiative and the propensity to change are among the prominent aspects of leadership. In the study conducted by Çelik (2013), a significant positive relationship was found between transformational leadership behaviors and initiative behaviors of school principals according to teachers' opinions at the primary school level. In the study conducted by Güneş (2011), the transformational leadership skills of school administrators were defined as being at a low level. The results of the present study showed that school administrators "did not want change." They can be defined as transactional leaders because of their emphasis on "maintaining the status quo" (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Given the negative impact of stagnation on LP, the education system should promote mobility and change through mechanisms to be developed. It is recommended that systems be developed for career planning, promotion, performance evaluation, accreditation, and accountability in this direction. In particular, the paths that enable young educators to advance their hopes and realize their potentials must be defined and structured.

In this study, the most problematic area for LP was found to be the dimension of "the implementation of decision processes." Aslan and Karip (2014), who aimed to determine the leadership standards on which school administrators should have based the opinions of school administrators, listed "decision-making strategies" among these standards. Decision processes consist of defining the problem, creating options, evaluating the options, applying the decision, and evaluating them. To make the decision, it is necessary to obtain information about the problem and solution options and to use that information to determine the most suitable option from among those available (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). The present study found that although the school administrators were able to define the problem, they had limitations in terms of generating options and applying the next steps. Another result related to this issue is the effect of the family on the decision. This implies "familial management in which family members are influential in decision-making processes," where expertise is excluded. This judgment fits the decision-making profile of school administrators in Turkey based on social-organizational values including "collective, human relations, stability-oriented" values (Yaylacı & Beldağ, 2015). In support of this profile, in the present study, some school administrators stated that they avoided change because they thought it might harm the students, personnel, and school environment. In this study, the fact that some administrators took "the consequences of the decision" into consideration indicated a rational behavior. However, a rational decision may not suit every situation, as leadership qualities emphasize factors such as "purpose and value" in decisions (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Another factor related to the decision process is time. In this study, the school administrators frequently emphasized the lack of time to make decisions. Indeed, the efficiency of the decision is defined as the ability to make the decision without delay as well as to identify the

proper option. The ability to make the "quick and right" decision is emphasized as a leadership characteristic (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2017; Bush, 2008). The individuals whom school managers will involve in the decision-making process and the technical subjects with which they need assistance are associated with their leadership aspect. Particularly, the parties to be affected by the decision should be included in the decision process, though this does not mean that the decision can be left to others or running the decision processes might fail (David, 1989; Williams, 2006). The problem of decision-making in a school emerges in particular between teachers and school principals. According to McMillan (2000), school administrators are unable to effectively carry out the decision process and are not able to involve teachers in that process.

In this study, the source of avoidance of change was determined to stem from "avoidance of complexity and uncertainty" and a lack of knowledge and skills for "managing complexity and uncertainty." A similar finding was discovered in Allen et al. (2014). In this study, which investigated military school students, the participants' overall leadership potential was determined to be high, although their stress tolerance and tolerance for ambiguity were at a middle level. The highest leadership potential component was found to be self-efficacy. In the present study, the self-efficacy levels of the participants were found to be low. In their individualist and collectivist culture characterization, Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010) stated that Turkish society reflected the collectivist authoritarian characteristics. Da'as (2017) reported that individualistic and collectivist cultural characteristics were reflected in school principals and that there was a significant difference, especially in cognitive and strategic skills. The tendency to avoid uncertainty in the collectivist cultural environment was consistent with the results of the present study.

To have a global mindset means to have the confidence to employ one's professional expertise in another institution or anywhere in the world. This concept requires the establishment of a relationship between the micro and macro as well as self-efficacy and accountability. In the present study, the global mindset side of the school administrators was found to be low. It is unlikely that managers who do not have a global mindset will raise individuals with a global mindset. Given the fact that the primary means of becoming an internationally respected nation is through education at school, it is an important requirement that school administrators have a global mindset. Managers who can evaluate school-level issues from a global perspective and who can find and develop solutions must be selected and educated.

Based on the results of the research, the method used in the selection of managers can be concluded as being insufficient for determining the best managers in the country where the study is carried out. Those selected by the present method appear to have a considerably low level of LP. Accordingly, the current method of selecting administrators should be developed enough so that it results in the selection of the best managers, as the high LP of school administrators is a positive factor in ensuring school efficiency. As in other fields, the selection of managers with high LP is critical to achieving educational success. Another aspect of this determination is related to raising managers. According to Bush (2008), while educating school leaders is considered highly important, and while developed countries have built an infrastructure to do so, in developing countries, a highly insufficient situation emerges in the selection and education of school administrators, though it is a much more critical need. Aslan and Karip (2014) highlighted the need for "a specific model for raising school administrators" in Turkey.

In addition to this situation, the school principals who participated in the study focused on their managerial roles but ignored their leadership roles. This can be presented as a meta finding of the study. At the macro level, the preferences and practices of the Ministry of Education may be inferred as affecting this result because while regulations focus on improving school administration, leadership development is a neglected issue in regulations. In the international literature, the institutional structure is reported as being one of the factors affecting LP; also, LP is stated as affecting leadership performance (Allen et al., 2014). Studies conducted in Turkey show that the existing structure associated with the school administrators restricts leadership (Aslan & Karip, 2014). For these reasons, to achieve educationally effective results, the structure that will provide the opportunity for school administrators to exercise leadership should be built.

Although the scope of the data collection tool used in this study included the LP dimensions of the previous studies to a great extent, it also maintains originality due to cultural and systemic differences. For example, Dries and Pepermans (2014) included "results-orientedness" among LP indicators as a component of motivation. In this study, process and results-orientedness were handled together as LP indicators because considering the process was thought to be an important leadership aspect in terms of establishing the construct (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Hoy & Miskel, 2012; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012; Yukl, 2010). In another study (Lee et al., 2015), global mindset and citizenship aspects were added to LP dimensions. In this study, the global mindset was associated with self-efficacy and placed on the measurement tool as "being able to serve elsewhere and under different conditions." On the other hand, the measurement tool employed in this study involved some aspects included in other studies, such as the decision process, impacting others, coping with uncertainty, creativity, process management, and accountability (Allen et al., 2014; Dries and Pepermans, 2014; Lee et al., 2015; Widodo and Sulistinah, 2018). Therefore, the measurement tool employed in the present study is a comprehensive data collection tool that can be utilized in other studies as well. Thus, the LP assessment tool is a valid and easy-to-apply, economic alternative to determining the LP of educational administrators or prospective managers. In the present study, the LP level of the participants who were still working as administrators was described, and the necessary aspects that required improvement were determined. School administrators were found to be needing development particularly in terms of decision making, process management, and initiative. The improvement of the decision-making skills of the current or candidate school administrators will contribute to LP. Using the measurement tool that this study employed, one can determine the LP levels of the prospective managers and current managers, as well as leadership aspects in need of development. Additionally, educational content can be prepared and applied for improving these aspects. Furthermore, planned and efficient studies can be carried out to improve the leadership aspects of prospective administrators in related courses at the graduate level, postgraduate education, seminars, workshops, and national-, local-, or school-level educational activities.

Limitation and Strengths

Controversial cases such as qualitative-quantitative consistency and number of participants, which are specific to mixed-method studies, were also experienced in this study. According to Lund (2011), there may be an inconsistency between qualitative and quantitative data in mixed-method studies. It may be necessary to collect additional data in cases of inconsistency. In this study, there was a difference between qualitative and quantitative results, which had to be emphasized. While the qualitative findings indicated a lower level of

LP among the participants, the quantitative findings yielded relatively higher scores. In this study, the aspects that indicated consistency between the qualitative and quantitative data were (a) avoidance of change, (b) ignoring the process, (c) not delegating authority, (d) not trusting others, (e) failing to manage complexity and uncertainty, (f) sensitivity and commitment to the needs of others, (g) and low level of devotion. Aspects that indicated inconsistency were (a) decision process, (b) accountability and sharing information, (c) appreciating the goals of the group, and (d) process-results-orientedness. These inconsistent points were checked by collecting additional data. While the results of the additional study confirmed the results of the research in terms of failure in running the decision process and ignoring accountability and sharing information, it did not confirm the results in terms of aspects such as impacting others, considering the goals of the group, and results-orientedness. Another issue was the number of participants. There is an uncertainty in the literature about how to select the participants of qualitative and quantitative data collection stages in mixed-method studies. While a small number of participants is adequate in the qualitative data collection stage, more participants are needed for quantitative data collection due to generalizability concerns. This leads to methodological problems (Creswell, 2017). In this study, qualitative and quantitative data were interpreted together to reflect the current reality. Due to the number of participants, the generalizability of the study's quantitative results is limited. For the results to be generalized, it is especially recommended that, in future studies, the quantitative data collection tool be applied to a larger number of sample groups. In this context, the results to be obtained in quantitative studies with larger sample groups can generate more conclusive results in terms of the dimensions of LP determined in the present study, such as (a) impacting others and considering the goals of the group and (b) results-orientedness.

The participants emphasized that the personality of the actor in the Ahmet scenario might be a clue as to leadership behavior. Therefore, personality traits related to LP can be taken into consideration as a factor in subsequent studies. In a meta-analysis study conducted by Bono and Judge (2004), significant relationships were found between the five-factor personality traits and the transformational and transactional leadership traits. However, because the present research is a descriptive study, the relational and effect analysis is beyond its scope. Future studies might investigate the existence of a relationship between LP and personality.

Senyurt Yenipinar has been working in the field of education as a teacher, administrator, and inspector. He is currently an assistant professor at the Department of Educational Sciences at Aksaray University, Turkey. His research interests focus on educational policies, strategic management, accountability in education, organization in educational institutions and schools, and the development of teacher and learning capacity.

Kamil Yıldırım received his PhD in educational sciences, majoring in educational administration. He is currently an associates professor in the Department of Educational Sciences at Aksaray University, Aksaray, Turkey. Educational quality, teacher education, professional well-being, and educational leadership are among his research interests.

Hasan Tabak is currently an assistant professor at the department of Educational Sciences at Aksaray University, Turkey. He also serves as the head of the department of Assessment and Evaluation in Education. His research interests focus on educational policies, opportunity and equality in education (OEE), organization in educational institutions and schools, development of teacher and learning capacity, and learning environments.

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APPENDIX 1

Dear Sir/Madam,
Through this study, for which we are seeking your opinions, we aim to determine the leadership potential of education administrators. Your contribution is very valuable to us. The information you provide will be used for scientific purposes only and will be kept strictly confidential. Thank you in advance for your help.
Dr. Şenyurt Yenipinar, Dr. Hasan Tabak, Dr. Kamil Yildirim
Aksaray University, Faculty of Education

A. Please read the sample case below and answer the questions following the text.

Ahmet has been working as a principal at a public school in Anatolia for 5 years. He works efficiently with school stakeholders. He has a respectable position in his circles. Three days before the schools open, he gets an attractive offer to become the director of a successful private school in the big city. If he accepts this offer, he will be able to establish his own team and make any necessary changes (including delegating authority and managing applications) as he wishes. This offer will give him important opportunities for the future. However, his family members and the teachers union, of which he has been a member for years, do not think this is a good opportunity. Ahmet has limited time to make up his mind while considering their needs. According to the content of the offer, the expectations of him in this new position would be high. He would be required to explain, to the interested parties, the results he obtains by using his management skills to achieve his goals regardless of the working hours, which means working on weekends and holidays. When the desired results are achieved, Ahmet and all the employees may receive bonuses. If the desired results are not achieved, Ahmet and the teachers may be subject to sanctions.

1. In your opinion, what should Ahmet do in the above case? Please include your justifications.

Reply. Use the other page if necessary.

B1. To what extent would you accept the offer of the private school if you were Ahmet?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B2. To what extent should Ahmet's decision to transfer to the private school be left to his family members?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B3. To what extent should Ahmet leave the decision to transfer to the private school to the union?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B4. In your opinion, to what extent should Ahmet share information with everyone about the things he will do, the methods he will employ, and the positive or negative outcomes of his performance if he works in the private school?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B5. In your opinion, to what extent can Ahmet survive in a private school with a different working environment?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B6. In your opinion, to what extent does Ahmet make sacrifices in realizing the goals of the groups of which he is a member?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B7. In your opinion, to what extent does Ahmet take into account the goals that he has set for his personal career despite the goals of the groups of which he is a member?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B8. In your opinion, to what extent does Ahmet delegate his powers to his colleagues?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B9. In your opinion, to what extent does Ahmet care about how a job is done, regardless of its outcome?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B10. In your opinion, to what extent does Ahmet care about achieving the target results regardless of how the job is done?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B11. In your opinion, how quickly should Ahmet make arrangements in the working environment according to the individual needs and development of the group members?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B12. In your opinion, how happy will Ahmet be about sacrificing his private life and working at the school at times when he is not obliged to do so?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

C. Demographic Information

1. Gender:

2. Age:

3. Total managerial experience:

4. Managerial experience in the current school:

5. Marital status:

6. Number of children (if any):

7. Education level:

8. Do you have union duties apart from being a member?:

9. Location of your school:

10. Level of your school:

11. Perceived socio-economic level in the vicinity of your school:

12. Number of teachers in your school:

13. Number of students in your school: