Teacher Hiring Processes in Private Educational Institutions: Methods, Qualifications, and Challenges

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This research aims to comprehensively analyze the teacher recruitment process in private education institutions. The study utilizes a qualitative case study method, and data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with five administrators from boutique schools and five administrators from chain schools. The findings of the interviews revealed three main themes: "Methods for Teacher Hiring," "Desired Teacher Qualifications," and "Challenges." Interviews and course practices emerged as the primary methods for evaluating the personal and professional qualifications of potential teachers. Private school administrators emphasized the significance of personal, professional, and organizational qualifications in their recruitment processes. The research identified several difficulties faced during the teacher recruitment process, including teacher shortages, issues with loyalty, salary concerns, limited options, a lack of transparency, and teacher transfers. This information suggests that private school administrators may need to address these challenges to attract and retain qualified teachers effectively. To improve the recruitment of highly qualified teachers, it is recommended that private school administrators diversify their human resource management methods. Additionally, they should establish legal specifications for private school establishments, prioritizing educational goals over financial concerns. Collaboration between relevant institutions, such as the Council of Higher Education and the Ministry of National Education, is necessary for planning university teacher training quotas and open appointment processes, taking into account the needs of private schools.

1. Introduction

In today's constantly changing and evolving societies, the necessity for organizations to adapt to these changes and developments has emerged. This necessity arises from the fact that tasks within organizations are constantly changing, and the required qualifications for these tasks are also changing. Personnel who possess the suitable qualifications for a task in its initial state may fail when the nature of the task changes and they are unable to adjust and modify their qualifications accordingly. In such cases, when recruiting for these types of tasks, it is essential to consider not only the qualifications required for the task but also the qualifications needed for the potential changes, thus selecting more qualified and adaptable personnel (Başaran, 1985).

For employers and managers, the issue of personnel selection is a crucial challenge Making the wrong decision can lead to significant resource and opportunity losses, affecting both the hired individual and the employer negatively. On the other hand, making the right selection ensures the full utilization of the new employee's potential while positively influencing the performance of existing employees. In addition to its positive impact on costs and profitability, a successful personnel selection process can also lead to an improvement in the organizational climate (Orhan, 2003). The substantial consequences of personnel selection make the process

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multidimensional and complex. From the perspective of educational institutions, the effective management of the personnel selection process for every teacher taking on a new role is of utmost importance.

Qualified teachers have a profound and positive impact on students' achievements. Apart from students' characteristics, socio-economic factors, environment, and peers, the teacher's qualities account for approximately 30% of the largest variance in student achievement (Hattie, 2009). Therefore, it is essential to improve the candidate selection process for teacher education programs and identify reliable predictors to select successful teachers.

Currently, graduating from teacher education programs is sufficient for teacher appointments. In most OECD countries, teachers are employed as permanent or contract public servants (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2018). However, in many countries, the admission standards for teacher education programs are declining, leading to a decrease in the quality of graduate teachers. Consequently, more comprehensive methods are being utilized to select teacher candidates. These methods include measuring cognitive abilities, grade point averages, personality assessments, written responses, and interviews (Sautella et al., 2015).

1.1. Private Educational Institutions

Although many countries have made significant progress toward the goal of free education in public schools, the rate in private schools continues to increase (Dixon and Tooley, 2012). The interest of families in private schools continues to grow, as they believe education will provide their children with a higher social status in life (BRASIL, 2017). The economically empowered segment of society enrolls their children in private schools with the hope of advancing their social class (Medeiros & Januário, 2014). Even private schools that admit students at low fees but lack quality teachers can achieve better results than public schools (Wamalwa and Burns, 2018). The reasons behind this success include the fact that the class sizes are not crowded, student monitoring processes, and effective use of school finance.

Private schools offer significant gains, especially in acquiring mathematical and literacy skills. They achieve homogeneous success in different subgroups (Adu Boahen, 2022). The low student-to-teacher ratio, effective monitoring mechanisms, and generally young teaching staff can be cited as reasons for the higher performance of private schools (Goyal and Pandey, 2012; Kingdon, 2020). Private schools need to implement effective budget management differently than public schools. They must make expenditures for success, and these expenses should lead to new achievements. In the American education system, charter schools have their own private governing boards responsible for school finances and hiring school leadership. With the impact they create and the network they establish, a significant portion of the public in some states attends charter schools (Lay & Bauman, 2019).

If an educational organization achieves effective and efficient outcomes, it can be said that there is effective performance management in place. It can be stated that there is teamwork aligned with the school's objectives, creating a synthesis of individual strengths (Altan, 2018). Private schools with effective organizational functioning differ from public schools in many aspects. One of the fundamental points of distinction is the teacher-hiring process.

1.2. Hiring of Teachers

Teacher quality is widely accepted as a critical factor in determining students' academic success (Hattie, 2009; Rivikin et al., 2005). While there are variations among countries, it is observed that disadvantaged groups have limited access to qualified teachers (OECD, 2013). In impoverished countries, due to the shortage of qualified teachers, they employ individuals with lower levels of education as teachers through methods such as certification programs (Chudgar, Chandra, & Razzaque, 2014; Mpokosa et al., 2008). The outcomes of such employment methods include reduced need for in-service training, low salary payments, a lack of tenure guarantees, and position-based job descriptions (Schwille, Dembele, & Schubert, 2007).

One possible reason for the disparity in achieving equal access to qualified teachers could be related to teacher recruitment processes. Countries like Korea and Japan have reduced school-based differences through regional-based recruitment and rotation practices (Akiba et al., 2007). The authority for teacher recruitment varies among countries. Iceland, Norway, Slovakia, and similar countries entrust schools with recruitment

responsibilities, while Austria, Spain, and Turkey, among others, have relatively low autonomy for school-based teacher recruitment (OECD, 2009). Despite claims of the advantages of an autonomous structure in school-based recruitment processes, it is argued in the literature that school-based teacher appointments contribute to achievement inequalities (Han, 2018).

In many countries, graduating from teacher education programs is sufficient for teacher appointments. Teachers in most OECD countries are employed as permanent or contract public servants. This recruitment process is usually carried out through examinations (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2018). Nurturing students with 21st-century skills (critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity, communication and collaboration, information literacy, flexibility, entrepreneurship, and productivity) is possible through qualified teachers. Therefore, the selection of qualified teachers is crucial in this respect (Hotaman, 2011).

In the country where the research was conducted, Turkey, teacher appointments in public schools are carried out through an evaluation of qualifications based solely on an exam that measures knowledge. However, private schools can shape teacher appointments according to their institutional expectations. It should be noted that private schools serve around one and a half million students (approximately 9% of the total formal student population) within the Turkish National Education System (MEB, 2022). The establishment of private schools in Turkey started with the aim of schooling poor children and then became widespread through foreign language learning, equal opportunities, and finally the implementation of neoliberal policies (Altun Aslan, 2019). Within the limits set by the relevant legislation, private schools have a much more flexible structure in terms of student quotas, fees, and the teacher recruitment process (Teke & Yılmaz, 2022).

In many countries around the world, education is generally accepted as a public duty, and public schools provide education services to a large extent. Teacher recruitment processes are also carried out in a centralized manner, especially through examinations. Modern human resource management practices are applied to a limited extent. In private schools, multidimensional recruitment processes are carried out. There are a limited number of studies on teacher recruitment processes in the international literature. With 1.5 million students attending private schools, the number of studies analyzing Turkey is quite low. In this context, the purpose of this research is to examine the qualifications and institutional expectations that private educational institutions in Turkey look for during their teacher hiring processes. Based on the belief that the increasing demand for private educational institutions has a positive impact on student achievement, the resulting teacher profile from the findings is expected to be beneficial for all education stakeholders, especially private educational institution administrators. In order to analyze recruitment methods, teacher qualifications, and difficulties encountered, the following questions were asked:

- What methods are used in teacher hiring?

- What are the qualifications sought for teacher appointments?

- What are the institution-specific expectations during teacher hiring?

- If there are any challenges faced by administrators during teacher hiring, what are they?

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Model

This study was designed as a qualitative approach using the case study method. The case study aims to access rich data regarding a specific phenomenon or situation (Creswell, 2007). It allows for in-depth analysis and obtaining comprehensive data (Glesne, 2015). The case study is commonly employed in educational research, especially when the researcher has no control over the variables and seeks to understand, describe, and depict the reasons and outcomes of a situation. It also helps to visualize different influential factors (Ozan Leylum et al., 2017). In this research, the case study design was adopted to determine the qualification criteria used by private educational institutions during their teacher hiring processes.

2.2. Participants

The research was conducted at private educational institutions operating in Istanbul, Turkey. The private school system in Turkey consists of chain and boutique schools, which may differ in terms of their aims and activities. The purposive sampling method of maximum variation was used to involve administrators from

both chain private educational institutions and boutique private educational institutions. The maximum variation method, which aims to identify differences in the phenomenon under study and determine main themes accordingly (Neuman, 2014), was considered appropriate for achieving the research objectives. Consequently, interviews were conducted with 5 administrators from chain schools and 5 administrators from boutique schools based on the classification provided for private educational institutions. It was determined that data saturation was reached through these interviews.

Table 1. *Participant Information*

Code	Position	Gender	Duration of Man	School Type	Code
BY1	School Manager	Male	14	Boutique	BY1
BY2	School Manager	Male	3	Boutique	BY2
BY3	School Manager	Female	9	Boutique	BY3
BY4	School Manager	Male	8	Boutique	BY4
BY5	School Manager	Female	12	Boutique	BY5
ZY1	School Manager	Male	12	Chain	ZY1
ZY2	School Manager	Male	8	Chain	ZY2
ZY3	School Manager	Male	10	Chain	ZY3
ZY4	School Manager	Female	9	Chain	ZY4
ZY5	School Manager	Female	3	Chain	ZY5

Four female and six male school administrators participated in the study. Their administrative backgrounds ranged from three to fourteen years. Five participants work in chain private schools, and five participants work in boutique private schools.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

The data was collected using a semi-structured form developed by the researcher. The use of a semi-structured form helps the interviewer stay within a certain framework during the interview process (Robson & McCartan, 2016). The form, consisting of four questions, was presented to two different experts in the field of educational sciences during the development process. Well-defined questions are crucial for effective interviews (Patton, 2014). The validity and reliability of the data collection tools and research design used in quantitative studies are expected to be tested and reported very carefully. In qualitative studies, validity and reliability are different from quantitative studies (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In qualitative research, credibility, clarity, accuracy of results, and competence of the researcher are important (Krefting, 1991). Based on the feedback received, the consistency and comprehensibility of the semi-structured interview form were strengthened. After corrections, a pilot test was conducted to ensure the form's clarity and comprehensibility. The form was determined to be clear and understandable.

The participants of the study were informed about the research before the interviews, and they were expected to provide answers voluntarily. They were informed that they could leave the research at any time if they wished. Permission was sought for recording the interviews, and it was assured that personal information would be kept confidential and the recordings would be deleted after transcription. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, and each interview was completed within a time frame of 25–30 minutes.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the content analysis method. Content analysis is a systematic and repeatable technique based on specific rules, where coding results in the identification of categories and themes (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008). The interviews were analyzed following the specified steps:

- The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured form.
- Audio recordings were taken, and the recorded audio was listened to and transcribed by the researcher several times.
- Transcripts were compiled into a table in a common framework, and codes were attempted to be identified separately by the researchers.
- Categories and themes were derived from the identified codes.

- Another expert researcher was asked to provide their opinion on the identified codes, categories, and themes.
- Recommendations were considered, and the final analysis was completed accordingly.

2.5. Ethical

In this study, all rules were complied with within the scope of the "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive". In this study, all rules were complied with within the scope of the "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive". The research was carried out with the approval of the Yildiz Technical University Ethics Commission, dated June 01, 2023, and numbered 2023/06.

3. Findings

The research findings were organized under three main themes: Methods for Teacher Hiring, Desired Teacher Qualifications, and Challenges. Sub-themes were created within each main theme based on recurring or conflicting statements from the interviews with private school administrators. The details of the categories formed are explained using participant statements.

3.1. Hiring methods in private schools

Within this theme, the responses received from private school administrators were divided into two sub-themes, Finding and Selecting Staff, and grouped into categories. These categories can be listed as references, internet-based advertisements, requests to the institution, interviews, and course applications.

Internet-based advertisements were mentioned by all school administrators participating in the study as a method of finding staff. Announcing on the institution's website, placing advertisements on employment websites, making announcements through social media tools, and sharing advertisements in a chat group established among private schools were listed as various methods.

> *"We first identify any areas or subjects where we have a shortage, and then we use internet advertisements to find teachers who can fill those gaps. Our school is part of a group that includes other private schools as well as associations and their communication channels. We post job openings in those channels, such as **** (the messaging app), to announce in which areas we need teachers." - BY4*

> *"First of all, we post internet advertisements no matter what. Even if you need to hire one teacher, you should start with at least 8-10 candidates in that field, and then you can choose the most qualified among them. Of course, you need to determine your required qualifications beforehand." - ZY3*

> *"We collect job applications from various channels. For example, we post a job advertisement on **** (job search social media platform)."- ZY5*

In addition to posting job advertisements on their websites, schools often have open human resources modules for continuous data entry. Especially chain school administrators mentioned that they collect job applications and reach out to teacher candidates through these modules.

> *"For example, we post job advertisements on **** (a job search social media platform). We accept applications using the application form available on our school's human resources page. Sometimes, people bring their CVs in person, and sometimes they submit their CVs to the school administration electronically." - ZY5*

> *"We share our job openings on social media platforms to reach a wider audience and increase the number of job applications. Additionally, we collect job requests using the application form on our school's official website. By harnessing the power of social media, we can access a broader pool of potential candidates, and the application form allows us to manage applicants' submissions in an organized and systematic manner." - ZY2*

> *"We also receive direct applications to our school. People with previous experience in the private sector, those who have left their previous jobs, former paid teachers, and new graduates all apply directly. Teachers who have recently left their jobs often apply during the mid-term periods through this method." - BY5*

Another method in the personnel search process is through references. People can be reached through their references, or individuals may reach out to the institution through their references. Especially in chain schools,

the upper management's recommendation of teachers from within the organization and the evaluation of relevant individuals by the schools have been considered references.

> *"Since we are affiliated with the headquarters, we cannot intervene too much in certain subjects, especially in language branches. For language branches, the headquarters provides us with 10 alternatives and tells us to select 3-5 teachers based on our needs from those 10 candidates." - ZY1*

> *"Some teachers come to us based on someone's recommendation. Teachers who have left a closed school or a different institution for various reasons can come to us based on the recommendation of that school's administrators." - BY3*

Indeed, all private school administrators who participated in the research emphasized the importance of references. They highlighted that references play a crucial role not only in the personnel search process but also in the personnel selection process. Moreover, references were mentioned as a significant factor in determining teacher qualifications as well.

In the personnel selection process, it was determined that references are examined during the interview stages. Information about references is shared with the school administrator conducting the interview, either in the resume file or during the interview itself. The interviews conducted in the research demonstrate that interviews are definitely used in the teacher recruitment process. All participants mentioned the interview process, and it was observed that some schools follow a single-stage interview method, while others conduct two-stage and three-stage interview processes.

> *"We first conduct a preliminary interview with the teachers, and the general details in this interview provide us with important clues. In the preliminary interview, we evaluate whether the teacher is compatible with our school's overall vision and mission. Additionally, details such as the teacher's attire, mannerisms, or any negative habits provide us with further insights. These important details guide us in selecting suitable candidates." - BY4*

> *"Usually, our colleagues evaluate the candidates who apply through recommendations or via the Internet. For example, when we are hiring a math teacher, our math department head or the head of the numerical department conducts interviews. Based on these interviews, they identified the three most suitable candidates among those who applied for the math teacher position and brought these candidates to me. Then, I conduct interviews with these three candidates to make the final decision." - ZY1*

> *"We conduct interviews with the candidates using a completely defined interview form consisting of six sections. In this interview, all four administrators preferably participate; otherwise, a minimum of two people conduct the interview. If all administrators express positive opinions after the interview, we direct the candidate to Ankara. For example, after the interview with a history teacher, we inform Ankara that we found the candidate suitable. The candidate participates in an online interview with the relevant coordinator there; if a positive result is achieved at this stage as well, we conduct one final interview with the candidate to make a job offer." - ZY5*

One of the methods applied after the interview is the demonstration lesson, which allows teacher candidates to be evaluated comprehensively. Based on the responses provided by the participants, it was determined that the demonstration lesson is a highly preferred method, both in boutique schools and chain schools.

> *"After the interviews, we ask the candidates we find positive to conduct a sample lesson. During this process, we evaluate the candidates' teaching approaches, instructional skills, and classroom management abilities. The demonstration lessons enable us to see and assess how the candidates perform in a real classroom environment. By doing so, we identify candidates who are suitable for our school's teaching quality and student-centered approach, thereby strengthening our recruitment process. With the candidates who receive positive results, we conduct detailed discussions regarding job offers in the subsequent stages." - ZY2*

> *"Our next method is subjecting candidates to a demonstration lesson to assess their more human qualities. During this stage, we observe their communication skills, interaction with students, empathy, and motivational abilities with special attention. The demonstration lesson allows us to understand whether the candidates have a student-centered teaching approach and helps us evaluate their approaches to students. In this way, we strive to select suitable teachers not only based on their academic qualifications but also taking into consideration their interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence." - BY1*

3.2. Teacher qualifications

The qualifications that private schools look for in teachers are grouped into three categories: Personal Qualifications, Professional Qualifications, and Institutional Qualifications. Starting with the Personal Qualifications category, it is observed that personal qualities such as self-awareness, diligence, communication skills, teamwork, empathy, a positive outlook towards students, and being a role model are sought after.

> *" Our interview form consists of six sections, as I mentioned before. The first section is about positive personality traits, and in this section, we ask questions related to how the candidate describes themselves and how they are perceived by colleagues and students. The second section is about communication and empathy." - ZY5*

> *"A school not only looks for competence in teaching but also qualities such as character, adaptability, and teamwork. Criteria such as the candidate's suitability for the institution, the potential to add value to students, and whether they genuinely care for students are also important. Most importantly, love for students and compassion are essential qualities that must be present." - ZY3*

> *"Adaptability is crucial, and the candidate should also be determined and enthusiastic. We spend significant time with the students, both during and after school. To cope with this pace, one must genuinely enjoy doing this job." - BY5*

A boutique private school administrator emphasized a specific personal quality that is considered highly important for their institution.

> *"It is crucial for teachers to be role models for the students. Therefore, not having a nightlife or a smoking habit are significant criteria for us. Even if a teacher smokes outside of school, being known as a smoker among the students can hurt them. That's why these criteria are given high priority in our school." - BY4*

When examining the desired professional qualifications, it is evident that experience, proficiency in teaching methods and techniques, digital skills, assessment competence, career goals, professional development and renewal, versatility, and foreign language proficiency are among the criteria used. Additionally, having an undergraduate degree relevant to the subject as required by legal regulations is a professional qualification that applies to all schools.

> *"It varies according to the subject. We look for experience in classroom teachers. Even the least experienced of our classroom teachers have around 15 years of experience with a sensitive and reliable approach. We encounter inexperienced parents since it's often their first child, and their expectations are a bit higher. Experience is a crucial requirement for our classroom teachers, and we definitely seek highly experienced teachers. However, in other subjects, especially those who have self-improved and have 3-5 years of experience, we also evaluate teachers. Although we value interns, we try to keep our distance from them as much as possible." - ZY1*

> *"Among the criteria we look for in candidates are a minimum of 2 years of teaching experience, eligibility to be appointed as a teacher in the relevant subject according to legal regulations, good command of the English language, proficiency in teaching methods and techniques, and having adequate knowledge in assessment and evaluation." - ZY4*

> *"We need to keep renewing ourselves constantly. The teacher we will work with should also be open to renewal. In the teaching profession, when your students come before you as a new generation, you can't continue with old approaches. Being adaptable to teamwork is also essential. You need to know how to work together and share knowledge while collaborating and renewing." - BY2*

ZY1 and BY3, especially regarding primary school teaching, emphasized the importance of gender as a significant variable. The frequency of parents preferring female teachers as classroom teachers has made this quality important in teacher selection.

> *"In primary school, parents see female teachers as more advantageous in terms of adaptation, communication, and establishing connections, and they prefer them. As a private school, the demands of your parents are much more valuable. In the teaching profession, the number of female teachers is already higher, but if you look at private schools, the vast majority of teachers working as classroom teachers are female." - BY3*

When looking at the institutional qualifications, they can be divided into expectations related to the educational identity of the institutions and expectations related to their commercial identity, which would

enhance the clarity of the obtained data. As institutional expectations, qualifications such as alignment with the school's mission and vision, adaptation to the school culture, contributing to institutional development, and working for the institution's goals have been highlighted.

"We aim to raise confident, hopeful, and happy children in line with our institution's mission. The teacher who will work with us should embrace this mission. We have a constantly evolving ecosystem in our institution. Our newly-started teachers should be able to adapt to this climate and support its development. These criteria are as important as professional competence, even more so. Working with such teachers will lead to a sustainable increase in our success graph." - ZY2

"We have a culture of sharing in our school. There is a good communication environment. Our teachers and we, the administrators, frequently spend time together, trying to learn new things, sharing knowledge, and expanding our horizons. This environment has been built over a long time. Evaluating the teacher we hire from this perspective is important. When you choose someone who can adapt to the school culture and climate, you preserve internal harmony." - BY5

Responses indicate that financial considerations play a significant role in the hiring process of private schools, considering their status as commercial entities.

"In the final stage, all the results are presented to the board of directors, and they make the decision about the teacher's salary, and after these stages, we decide whether to hire the teacher." - BY4

"The reason for the low salary can be explained in part as follows: private schools have a market problem, and there are also many options in different subject areas. If you can get a job done for 10 liras, you wouldn't want to pay 50 liras. But when you realize that you cannot get the job done for 10 or 30 liras, you might accept paying 40 or 50 liras. In the private sector, teachers can also earn good salaries. By increasing their workload and bringing students to the institution, they can significantly increase their income." - ZY3

"After completing the interviews and gaining a good impression, if you also see success in the sample lesson applications, the next topic to discuss is salaries. You should maintain an internal balance within the institution. Also, it is not entirely correct to focus solely on salary. There should be a return on their extra work, such as participating in courses. They should be able to be flexible and take part in activities such as periodic mock exams, which will affect their income situation." - BY1

3.3. Challenges

The answers provided by the participants show that despite attempts to conduct the recruitment processes based on professional criteria, encountering difficulties is quite common. Based on the participant responses, the challenges faced in the recruitment process can be listed as follows: teacher shortages in some subject areas, loyalty issues, salary concerns, limited options, lack of transparency, teacher transfers, and the requirement for long working hours.

"For instance, this is not only related to us, but you agree with someone, and one of the most common situations we encounter is this... We have a chat group where all private school founders in Istanbul are present, and this issue is constantly discussed there: unethical transfers. For example, if I agree with a teacher and we have agreed on everything and signed the contract, then they get a slightly better offer elsewhere, and they back out. Of course, economic conditions are important for everyone, but once you sign a contract, you should not give up." - ZY1

"For example, a teacher candidate may actually be waiting for the results of a public employment exam, but they don't express this because of the fear of not finding a job. Our interview form includes about 20-25 questions, maybe even more. It takes quite a long time, and if the candidate you are interviewing is not a good fit or doesn't align with the school's culture, but they have applied and you have a need, you end up interviewing them, and you feel like you are wasting your time and effort." - ZY5

The interviews indicate that there is a significant challenge in finding enough teachers, especially in the fields of classroom teaching, mathematics, and English, which creates a multifaceted problem.

"One of the fundamental problems is the lack of teachers in specific subject areas; for example, we are experiencing a shortage of teachers in classroom teaching, English, and mathematics. Therefore, we have to consider Plan B. Plan B consists of teachers who are not graduates in their subject area, have a minor in the subject, or are highly

qualified teachers in their field, demanding salaries much higher than the market. Another issue can be the appointment problem, where teachers may not be able to get appointed due to legal regulations, etc. No matter how good the quality and experience of the teacher are, if they cannot be officially appointed, it can create a problem." - BY4

"We need to hire classroom teachers. We currently have a need for 2 classroom teachers, and the job advertisement has been open for about 4 months. Today, there are 50 applications for this advertisement, but as of yesterday, there are only 7 qualified candidates in this subject area. The remaining 43 candidates are from other areas; they cannot be officially appointed to this subject area. In private schools, there are criteria for teachers to be able to perform their jobs officially, and they must meet these criteria. Let's say we are hiring a literature teacher. When we post the job ad, within 24 hours, around 80-100 people apply. The same applies to history teachers." - ZY3

"Some subjects are in high demand. With these subjects, you can attract students. For example, classroom teachers and mathematics teachers are crucial, and the quality of these teachers is of utmost importance. If you find a good candidate, you become more willing to hire them. However, when a teacher is well-known in the private sector, they tend to demand higher salaries. But as an institution, you also have your limits, and you need to maintain a balance in teacher salaries. There are also individuals whom you may not be able to hire due to financial constraints or the possibility of them leaving for another institution in a short period of time. Additionally, in some subject areas, there may be disagreements with teachers who are able to get appointed to government positions." - BY5

Private school administrators sometimes find themselves compelled to hire teachers they don't feel entirely suitable for the job due to a lack of alternatives. Naturally, such hirings often result in the teachers leaving the school at the first opportunity.

"For instance, let's say I need to hire a mathematics teacher today, and to get a successful teacher, I should be prepared to offer a salary in the range of 22,000 to 24,000 TL because that's the average amount a competent teacher would demand in this field. However, if I end up hiring someone for 16,000 TL, which is a lower salary, I must constantly monitor and supervise that teacher, remind them of their duties, and hope that luck will be on my side for this person to become a good teacher. But this is quite rare, even very rare. I know of cases where I hired teachers unintentionally, and at the beginning of the year, I warned my fellow administrators to pay attention to certain individuals because I didn't feel good about hiring them, but I had no other choice. Unfortunately, I also know that I had to terminate the contracts of these teachers at the end of the year." - ZY3

When looked at in general, comprehensive data regarding teacher recruitment processes in private schools has been obtained. Among the methods of finding personnel, internet-based advertisements, posting on job websites, using social media, and sharing advertisements through private school chat groups stand out. As for the personnel selection methods, interviews and demonstration lessons are conducted. Moreover, personnel selection criteria are grouped into three main categories: personal qualities, professional qualifications, and institutional qualifications. Personal qualities include communication skills, diligence, and empathy, while professional qualifications focus on experience, teaching methods, and digital skills. Institutional qualifications involve alignment with the school's mission and vision, contributing to institutional development, and adopting a low-salary policy.

Private school administrators may encounter various challenges during the recruitment process. Particularly, teacher shortages in some subjects, teachers' salary demands, and issues related to loyalty are the main problems. Additionally, teacher transfers and a lack of transparency also complicate the recruitment process. These challenges require private schools to review their recruitment strategies and adopt more effective methods. Selecting candidates who align with the institutional culture is crucial to attracting and retaining qualified and compatible teachers.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

This research aims to comprehensively evaluate the teacher recruitment processes. Considering that public teacher recruitments are conducted through centralized exams, examining the teacher recruitment processes in private schools provides an opportunity to understand the teacher selection methods, desired teacher qualifications, and the challenges faced in the recruitment process. The private school system, which accommodates approximately one and a half million students and has more freedom in teacher selection

compared to the public sector, is seen to be structured with an emphasis on not only educational and achievement criteria but also on financial sustainability.

The findings obtained from the research contribute to expanding the existing knowledge about teacher recruitment processes. In addition to previous studies that examined teacher qualifications under two themes: personal characteristics and professional competencies (Engel, 2013; Tamir, 2021), this research also provides insights into the importance of institutional qualifications. The research findings are also in line with the literature regarding recruitment methods and challenges encountered (Jabbar, 2018). Private schools consider not only teacher qualifications but also personal characteristics and institutional expectations equally important when searching for suitable teachers.

The first step of the teacher recruitment process, which is personnel search, highlights three main methods: references, internet-based advertisements, and incoming applications to the institution. Each of these methods has unique advantages. References play a significant role in terms of reliability and compatibility, while internet-based advertisements provide access to a wide pool of candidates. Incoming applications contribute to diversity among candidates and offer alternative options for hiring teachers throughout the year. It can be argued that references have a significant impact on the teacher recruitment process. This finding aligns with a study by Teke and Yılmaz (2022).

In the teacher recruitment process, two methods, namely interviews and teaching demonstrations, are utilized. Both methods play a significant role in teacher recruitment and complement each other. Interviews involve one-on-one conversations with teacher candidates to assess their experiences, knowledge levels, pedagogical approaches, and communication skills. Interviews allow employers to get to know the candidates more closely and evaluate their personal and professional qualities. It helps to understand candidates' work history, performance, and behavioral patterns (Ivancevich, 2010). Moreover, interviews provide an opportunity to inform candidates about the institution's values, working environment, and expectations. The degree of matching between the characteristics required by the organization and the characteristics of the person is evaluated through an interview (Sabuncuoğlu, 2005). On the other hand, school administrators use teaching demonstrations to observe candidates delivering a specific subject or lesson to assess their pedagogical abilities and teaching skills. Teaching demonstrations are believed to be effective in evaluating candidates' competencies in classroom management, lesson planning, student interaction, and student achievement measurement. Effective teaching behaviors are considered a crucial factor in teacher recruitment (Schumacher et al., 2015). Generally, a multi-stage process involving both interviews and teaching demonstrations is observed. Liu and Johnson (2006) state in their study that multi-stage recruitment practices provide deeper insights into teachers.

The desired teacher qualifications of private school administrators are categorized into three main headings: personal, professional, and institutional qualities. Regarding personal qualities, it is observed that qualities such as self-awareness, diligence, communication skills, teamwork, empathy, a positive outlook towards students, and being a role model are sought after. Mason and Schroder (2010) concluded that personal qualities make a difference, especially in interview processes. Private school administrators seek teacher candidates who possess self-awareness. It is important for teachers to recognize their strengths and work on their weaknesses. Moreover, personal qualities such as diligence, communication skills, and teamwork are considered essential for teachers to communicate effectively with students and collaborate with other teachers. Qualities like empathy, a positive outlook towards students, and being a role model are also emphasized, as they help teachers establish better relationships with students and serve as positive examples.

The desired professional qualifications for teacher recruitment include experience, proficiency in teaching methods and techniques, digital competencies, assessment skills, career objectives, professional development and renewal, versatility, and proficiency in a foreign language. Additionally, the teacher candidate is required to have graduated from relevant undergraduate programs in compliance with legal regulations. Maynes and Hatt (2015) found that teachers should have professional development goals, be able to deliver the curriculum, possess a rich repertoire of teaching strategies, be passionate about development, and be student-focused. While their results show similarities with the findings of this research, the concept of versatility, derived from participants' statements, contains more specific information. Versatility is described as additional tasks beyond delivering lessons, such as monitoring students' academic progress, taking on extra hours for exam

supervision, and contributing to student enrollment in the institution. Private schools may evaluate this request about financial sustainability and compensation policies. Experience also stands out as a professional qualification associated with parental demands. However, it can be argued that, in general, newly graduated and inexperienced teachers may face disadvantages in the recruitment process. Experience is a trust factor for administrators in the hiring process (Tamir, 2021). Both personal and professional qualities are effective dimensions in teacher recruitment, and the fulfillment of institutional qualities by the candidate leads to successful hiring processes.

Institutional qualities differ based on institutions' expectations concerning their educational identity and commercial identity. From an educational perspective, qualifications such as alignment with the institution's mission and vision, adaptation to school culture, contribution to institutional development, and working for the institution's goals are mentioned. From a commercial perspective, a low salary policy, flexible working hours, extra job expectations, and the ability to work overtime are listed. In their study examining person-job fit and person-organization fit, Ellis et al. (2017) concluded that there is a significant relationship between these two variables for job selection and satisfaction. Based on this finding, individuals need to have a profile that is both professionally and personally aligned with the teaching profession and also matches the institution's expectations for mutual satisfaction. Ensuring that the recruited teachers are in line with the institution's mission and vision, capable of adapting to the prevailing school culture, and meeting effective criteria for permanent employment. The statements made during the interviews indicating that private schools are not financially at ease will further explain the institutions' final decisions in the recruitment process from a commercial perspective.

Private school administrators face various challenges in the teacher recruitment process. Some of the challenges identified in this research include teacher shortages in certain subject areas, loyalty and retention issues, salary concerns, limited options, a lack of transparency, teacher transfers, and the requirement for long working hours. These challenges are related to the structure of private schools and are also influenced by the country's education policy. The Ministry of National Education periodically increases the number of appointments for certain subject areas. Additionally, certain teaching disciplines have seen very few job openings for years. As a result, private schools may struggle to find teachers for subjects such as primary education, mathematics, and English while receiving numerous applications for history, geography, and literature positions.

This demand imbalance can be associated with difficulties in salary negotiations, limited options for hiring, and teacher transfers. Lee (2005) argues that the increased demand for teachers has led schools to compete for qualified candidates. Successful and recognized teachers in private schools may receive enticing offers from other institutions, leading to challenges in selecting qualified teachers during the recruitment process. The issue of salaries is also influenced by the location of the school. Given that this research was conducted in Istanbul, where the cost of living is high, this factor should be taken into account when interpreting the results. Levin (2012) similarly found that schools tailor their financial structures based on their geographical locations, resulting in recruitment processes that align with the region's conditions.

The teacher recruitment process is a laborious and demanding one, and it is natural for school administrators to expect transparency and loyalty from teacher candidates. Many teachers working in private schools may aspire to be appointed to public schools through the central exams conducted by the Ministry of Education. Since the recruitment processes and official appointments often occur around the same time, individuals may withhold this information and act non-transparently due to the fear of not being hired. On the other hand, another challenge arises when individuals conduct job interviews with different institutions simultaneously, and after receiving acceptance from one institution, they may choose another institution offering a better offer. While this may seem reasonable from the teacher's perspective, it can lead to the repetition of the recruitment process for the institution.

In conclusion, the teacher recruitment process is a complex structure that has implications for continuity and institutional success. Private school administrators tend to use interviews and lesson demonstrations in the recruitment process, attempting to measure personality traits mainly during interviews and professional qualifications during lesson demonstrations. International studies mention the use of psychotechnical tests and portfolio applications as additional methods. This approach may lead to decision-making based on

incomplete data in the teacher recruitment process. In addition to the results consistent with the literature, it has been found that the expectations for teacher qualifications can be shaped in parallel with the financial structure of schools. When looking at the challenges of the teacher recruitment process, the insufficient availability of qualified teachers in every subject area can be considered a triggering factor for other challenges.

In this context, to achieve more qualified teacher selection, it is recommended that private school administrators diversify their human resources management methods in recruitment. Considering the prominence of financial issues, establishing legal specifications for the establishment of private schools and ensuring that educational goals are the primary focus of institutions would be beneficial. University teacher training quotas and public appointment processes should be planned together by the relevant institutions, the Higher Education Council, and the Ministry of Education, taking into account the needs of private schools. The research results indicate that both the shortage and abundance of teacher supply pose different problems. As a limitation of the interview method in the research, the desired qualifications for teacher recruitment may have been expressed in a limited manner. Quantitatively measuring the desired personal, professional, and institutional qualifications could contribute new insights to the literature. The other dimension can be examined by conducting a study centered on teachers regarding the recruitment process. Comparative research can be conducted to examine the differences between countries in recruitment policies.

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