



Research Article

The Factors Affecting The Science Arts Center Administrators¹

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Abstract

The Science Arts Centres (BİLSEM⁵), established by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in order to ensure that the gifted students gain self-awareness and become more equipped, are the centres where students receive special education along with the formal schools. The aim of this study is to examine the factors affecting the motivations of the BİLSEM administrators who are considered to play a critical role in the success of their institutions and have almost ten years of experience. In this study the semi-structured interview form. All the BİLSEM managers (N:108) in Turkey were included in the study group on the voluntary basis yet volunteer-based sampling method was followed. For the analysis of the data, content analysis technique of the qualitative research data analysis formats was used. The data obtained from the BİLSEM administrators are coded and categorized in line with the selected method. As a result of the analysis of the data, motivation factors of the school administrators are dealt with in two main categories as of being internal and external factors, and the findings were discussed in light of the other studies in the field and suggestions for implementation and further research were presented.

Keywords

Science Arts Centres (BİLSEM), administrator, motivation

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⁵ Science Arts Centres will be referred as BİLSEM henceforth.

Introduction

Whether in high school or college, some trainees go to work with great enthusiasm and willingness, work overtime to complete and improve their work and actively participate in all activities related to their institution; however the case is unfortunately just vice versa for some other. The latter looks forward to completing the working hours. When the source of such a case is searched, motivational factors come first. Motivation is considered as a significant key to ensure that all organizational entities, including educational institutions, have efficient human resources and use this human resource in the most appropriate way (Bařtrk & Zeren, 2015). In other words, of all the employees in the institutions are required to have high motivation in order to be successful and more efficient (Kavrakođlu, 1996).

The term motivation is derived from the Latin word ‘movere’, which means “movement” is defined as the internal and external forces that make the individual move and provide continuity by leading his / her behaviour (Grsel, 1997; Fındıkçı, 2006; Eren, 2006; TDK, 2017). In similar definitions, motivation is referred as a process that expresses the intensity, tendency, insistence and willingness of the individual to strive to achieve a goal (Robbins, 1993; 2003; Koçel, 2003; Woolfolk, 2004; Lockett al., 2004; Sternberg & Williams, 2009; Tařdemir, 2013). When it is dealt with an organizational point of view, motivation can also be expressed as researching for and presenting the conditions necessary for the employees to work willingly and be more productive in line with the institutional goals (Karakaya & Ay, 2007).

According to Self-Determination Theory individuals have inner stimulation and desire for learning by birth. This inner stimulation takes place depending on the degree to which the motivation is addressed to the individual's needs. In a way, meeting the needs is a prerequisite for inner motivation. According to this theory, it is possible to mention three types of motivation which are; internal motivation, external motivation and lack of motivation. Inner motivation is the reaction to the existing needs of the individual and curiosity, desire to learn and be sufficient, improvement, achievement and enjoying the work done are examples of internal motivation. As for the external motivation, it involves the environmental effects. External awards such as wages, bonuses, promotion due to performance and appreciation by the manager increase the motivation of the employee. Although the role of external factors in increasing motivation is important, it is generally not possible for external factors to provide the necessary motivation without internal factors (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Karagven, 2012; Karatař & Erden 2012; Ersari & Naktiyok, 2012; Yurt & Bozer, 2015).

The main purpose of the motivation is that the employees avail not only for themselves but also for the institution while they are continuing to work in line with the goals of the institution. In this context, the success of enterprises, institutions and organizations depends to a great extent on understanding of the complex and multi-faceted structure of the human nature and the establishment of a suitable working environment for this structure. Therefore, to motivation requires investigation and formulation of the conditions necessary for employees to work willingly in line with the institutional goals and be productive (Fındıkcı, 2006; Karakaya & Alper Ay, 2007; Karagüven, 2012; Ayaydın & Tok, 2015). However, whatever the conditions are to urge and motivate the employees in line with the goals of the institution and make this condition permanent and systematically is quite hard. The situation gets ever harder when the fact that any sources of motivation or methods don't have the same effect for every institution is taken into consideration (Kuşluvan, 1999).

Science Arts Centres are one of the very important education institutions in Turkey in terms of function and their number is increasing day by day. The aim of Science Arts Centres, which are founded by Ministry of National Education (MoNE) as affiliated to Directorate General for Special Education and Guidance Services, is to educate gifted children in different fields in accordance with their interests and talents. In these centres, which are independent from the formal education and training institutions, studies are being carried out to identify and educate primary and secondary school age children. According to the latest figures, there are 106 Science Arts Centres in 80 cities around Turkey serving at around 25 thousand gifted students at primary, secondary and high school ages. In these centres, where 1st, 2nd, 3rd 4th year students were included in the selection and recognition process in terms of mental, artistic and musical skills in general in 2016, great attention is paid while choosing teachers and administrators. For instance, the very first stage of teacher selection process is based on the evaluation criteria set by MoNE such as having post graduate or PhD degrees and publications and having national or international projects or publications and after the oral exam the teachers are appointed to these schools. (MEB, 2017; <http://orgm.meb.gov.tr/www/ozel-yetenekli-ogrenci-secim-sureci-basladi/>). In these centres, gifted students are subjected to a five-step program which are; adaptation, supportive training, awareness of individual skills, development of special skills and project production and through programs enriched in cooperation with different institutions creativity of these students improved (Çavuşoğlu & Semerci, 2016; Özkan & Tay 2012; Ülger, 2011; Hırça & Bayrak, 2013). As is seen, Science Arts Centres are institutions that have a very effective and intensive function in terms of school climate and goals (Özkan, 2009). Therefore, the motivation of employees and especially administrators is of critical and prior importance for the success of the institutions.

Although many studies have been conducted on the related topic up to now, most of the studies relating the term motivation focus on the employees (Ayaydın & Tok, 2015; Demir & Karakuş, 2015; Sađlam & Demir, 2015), few studies conducted on the administrators who have a key role in the motivation of the institutions. In the current studies, the motivation implementations of the administrators towards the employees are dealt with. In a research by Aslan and Dođan (2016), the administrators' approaches to motivate special education teachers were examined and it was found that the administrators were in the tendency to "orally appreciate the activities carried out" the most and "taking joint decision in the issues concerning the school" the least and it was concluded that the teachers experienced a feeling of inefficacy as a result of the low motivation they experienced. In Ünal's (2000) study with the school administrators examining the activities they perform in their schools to motivate, it was determined that the administrators are very effective in cooperation at school and social relations and the variables like gender, seniority and position in school have no effect on the implementations they adopt to provide motivation. While Ayaydın, Tok (2015) and Yıldırım (2006) found in their research that the most influential factor in the motivation of teachers was "loving their job", Karabay (2004) found that the school structure and facilities were a more effective factor in the motivation of teachers. Bakirođlu and Baħçeci (2010) found that parents considered the school administrators as having significant effects on the school image; nevertheless, most of them didn't find the administrators at their children's schools effective. Having compared public schools and private schools in terms of motivation, Kocabaş and Karaköse (2005), found that teachers working in private schools consider that their managers more competent than the ones in public schools in terms of their administration skills, interpersonal communication, recognition of the employees and appreciate them. In a similar research, Genç (2006) concluded that the external job satisfaction adopted by the school administrators working in private schools is higher than that of public schools. In the study conducted by Erdik (2014), comparing the institutional commitment of BİLSEM and primary school administrators, it was determined that the administrators of BİLSEMs had higher scores on compliance, identification and internalization from the organizational commitment subscale levels than primary school administrators and therefore they had higher motivation at work. In a different study on the same topic, it was revealed that the administrators of primary school with low number of students were more productive and more eager to resolve the problems (Güneş, 2008).

As it is clear with the studies conducted, it is significant for the administrators to be highly motivated while performing the administrative tasks in the institution. Considering the positive effects of high motivation of school administrators on the performance, it is important to determine the motivation resources of the

administrators at the Science Arts Centres (BİLSEM), which are considered to play a critical role in the future of the country.

For this reason, to examine the factors affecting the motivations of BİLSEM administrators, answers for the following questions were sought. While managing the school;

- What are the internal factors affecting the motivation of BİLSEM administrators positively and negatively?
- What are the external factors affecting the motivation of BİLSEM administrators positively and negatively?

Method

This research is a descriptive study. The research model is the studies aiming to collect data in order to identify specific characteristics of a group. The most widely used research method in education is descriptive search method (Büyüköztürk, 2014). All the BİLSEM managers (N: 108) in Turkey were included in the study group on the voluntary basis yet volunteer-based sampling method was followed. Accordingly, 28 BİLSEM administrators took part in the study %25 of which was female and %75 was male. Of all the participants, %28,6 was classroom teacher, %71,4 was from different branches (English, Science, Biology, Maths and etc.). %39, 3 had undergraduate degree, %60, 7 had postgraduate degree and %83 of them had at least 6 years or more of experience.

Semi-structured interview form was used to collect the data. The draft form, which was prepared by reviewing the related literature, was prepared in line with the opinions of the five field experts and a preliminary application was made with the ten school administrators and thus the final version of the interview form was prepared. In the study, the data was collected via online surveys. Despite some disadvantages and problems, collecting data through online surveys, where appropriate for the purpose of the research, is a method that has advantages that cannot be ignored. This method, in which participants are free in terms of time and duration, is a powerful alternative for similar methods due to the benefits it provides at the analysis phase (http://www.megep.meb.gov.tr/mte_program_modul).

The ten-questioned draft form, which was prepared by reviewing the related literature, was organised in line with the opinions of the five field experts and a preliminary application was made with the ten school administrators and thus the final version of the interview form was prepared. For the analysis of the data, content analysis technique of the qualitative research data analysis formats was used. The data obtained from the BİLSEM administrators was coded and categorised in line with the selected method. As a result of the analysis of the data, motivation factors of the school administrators are dealt with in two main categories as of being internal

and external factors, and the findings were discussed in light of the other studies in the field and suggestions for implementation and further research were presented.

Findings

The findings of the study, which was conducted in order to investigate the factors affecting the motivations of BİLSEM managers, are covered under two main headings as of being positive / negative within the institution and positive / negative out of the institution.

Table 1. The factors affecting the motivation of the BİLSEM administrators positively within the institution.

Opinions of the administrators	f (%)
The institution I work for provides me the opportunity to improve myself	13 (%46,4)
My current job is better than the previous one	13 (%46,4)
The environment of trust in the institution	13 (%42,9)
Harmonious relations in the institution	12 (%46,4)
Professional passion	12 (%42,9)
Being beneficial for the students	12 (%42,9)
High academic achievement rate of the students	10 (%35,7)
Innovative ideas in the institution	9 (%32,1)
Being in a relationship with the teachers	8 (%28,6)
Having an effective communication with the teachers	8 (%28,6)
Having an effective communication with the other personnel in the institution	6 (%21,4)
Having less students in the class	5 (%17,9)
The opportunity to depict knowledge and the skills in the institution	5 (%17,9)
Having a young/active/dynamic staff	5 (%17,9)
The leisure time and cultural activities in the institution	3 (%10,7)
The institution has adequate technical equipment	2 (%7,1)
The institution has an effective communication with the parents and the students	2 (%7,1)
Other (The adoption of an educational philosophy based on the success, productivity and quality of life of the students, being an institution in demand)	13 (%46,4)

According to Table 1, factors such as institution's providing the administrators the opportunity to improve themselves, working in a better position, the environment of trust in the institution, professional passion, being beneficial to the students and having academically successful students are among the most effective factors affecting the motivation of the administrators within the institution.

Positive thoughts on the trust environment within the institution are in contradiction with Özkan's study (2009) depicting the idea of the level of trust between the individuals in BİLSEM is insufficient. It can be said that revisions made in the recent years, the revision of the selection criteria of the teacher and students, raising

awareness on the institution and positive approach towards these institutions have positive effect on these results.

According to Erdik (2014), due to the fact that individual training is essential in Science and Art Centres, the number of students in the institutions is very low compared to the regular schools and this fact contributes positively to institutional commitment levels of BİLSEM administrators. In a study conducted by Polatcan and Akyürek (2016), it was found that the BİLSEM administrators' competences to manage the innovations and change were very high.

According to Summak and Şahin (2013), administrators are expected to take on tasks such as closely following innovations and developments, reaching gifted children and training them in line with their talents. In this regard, the administrators have significant responsibilities (Polatcan & Akyürek, 2016) and thus internal and external motivation sources should be provided for them.

Table 2. The factors affecting the motivation of the BİLSEM administrators negatively within the institution.

Opinions of the administrators	f (%)
Having intensive lesson hours	15 (%53,6)
Inadequacy of the physical conditions of the school/temporary buildings	13 (%46,4)
Lack of the sense of belonging for the teachers	10 (%35,7)
Lack of having enough school staff	10 (%35,7)
Teacher-parents conflict	7 (%25)
Working with substitute teachers	5 (%17,9)
Students-parent complaints	4 (%14,3)
Financial limitations	2 (%7,1)
OTHER	6 (%21,4)
Internal and external assessment and evaluation criteria on documents	
Having naughty students	
Selfish and self-centred approach of the students	
Teacher-administration conflict	
Parents' attempt to interfere with the school administration	

According to Table 2, it is seen that the most dissatisfactory situation among the factors that negatively affect the motivation of the administrators within the institution is the intensity of the lesson hours. Moreover, it is stated that some of the institutions serve in temporary buildings which leads inadequacy in terms of physical conditions. One of the participants expressed his opinion as; "BİLSEM I work at is not an independent institution and this is an important problem. We use the building of another institution and therefore laboratories, classrooms and educational settings are not designed for the training of gifted children. Students have transportation problems." Likewise, as in every educational institution, negative motivation factors arising from lack of staff or parental demands are also emphasized. It is further

thought that providing harmony between the curriculum of the formal education institutions and the BİLSEM curriculum may help to reduce the workload of the administrators and the teachers.

Table 3. The factors affecting the motivation of the BİLSEM administrators positively out of the institution.

Opinions of the administrators	f (%)
Providing the required materials in the institution timely	16 (%57,1)
Opportunity to take the initiative related to work	16 (%57,1)
Positive approach of the senior/senior managers towards the institution	13 (%46,4)
Promotion of creative and innovative ideas as an administrator	10 (%35,7)
Consideration of my ideas by the managers as an administrator	10 (%35,7)
Having sufficient authority about work	9 (%32,1)
Being supported for postgraduate studies by the administrators	9 (%32,1)
Having a peaceful and happy family	7 (%25)
Parent support and satisfaction	6 (%21,4)
Being appreciated/rewarded by the superiors	1 (%3,6)
Objective evaluation of the performance	1 (%3,6)
Meeting in-service training needs	1 (%3,6)
OTHER	1 (%3,6)
Being a popular institution by the surroundings	

According to Table 3, it is clear that factors such as providing the materials needed, freedom to take the initiatives related to work, positive approach of the senior managers, appreciation of innovative ideas and consideration of administrative ideas appear to be among the leading positive motivation sources out of the institution. When all the factors assessed together, it is understood that; the senior management supported BİLSEM administrators in terms of professional and individual improvement, meeting the material needs was prioritised, having a good family relations had positive effects on work and not only the parent but also the administration had high expectations from the institution. An administrator expressed his ideas on this issue as; “Provincial Directorate of National Education is very sensitive towards our problems and this makes us feel strong.” Despite the fact that many factors are influential in the positive approach of senior managers, in the studies conducted it is emphasized that school administrators play a critical role in creating a positive school image (Buzdik, 1973, Bakiođlu & Bahçeci, 2010). In this regard, the administrators of the institution have an influence on increasing the success and harmony of the students, parents, teachers and the staff (Bakiođlu & Bahçeci, 2010).

In a study conducted by Erdik (2014), it is stated that one fourth of the BİLSEM administrators had post graduate degree and therefore academic studies were

important for them. In parallel with the increase in expectations and performance levels in the institutions in the last years, it is observed that the value given by the graduate education has also increased and the senior management is also an important motivator in this respect.

Table 4. The factors affecting the motivation of the BİLSEM administrators negatively out of the institution.

Opinions of the administrators	f (%)
Inadequacies in the regulations	14 (%50)
Unnecessary correspondence (paperwork)	12 (%42,9)
Instability in the education system	11 (%39,3)
External interventions	11 (%39,3)
Problems related to nepotism	10 (%35,7)
Having a lot of responsibility with less authority	10 (%35,7)
Indifference of the parents	8 (%28,6)
Considering exam scores as success criterion	8 (%28,6)
Lack of appreciation	6 (%21,4)
Lack of appreciation for the work done	5 (%17,9)
OTHER	6 (%21,4)
Teacher recruitment process, working with the teachers on assignment basis, lack of regulations relating BİLSEM institutions, execution of work and procedures according to the directives	

According to table 4, the factors that affect the administrators' motivation most negatively are the inadequacies in the regulations. As in every institution, unnecessary correspondence (paperwork), instability in the education system, external interventions and the responsibilities the administrators have are among the leading external factors that affect the administrators negatively. Despite the high expectations of the parents, their being indifferent to the struggles made at the school expressed as a negative motivation resource for the administrators. An administrator expressed his views on this issue as "The fact that the parents do not value the school is more saddening". In the study conducted by Özkan (2009), it was emphasized that the legislative regulations relating BİLSEMs caused problems because these regulations were put into practice via directives instead of the regulations.

Result and Discussion

Gifted students prominently differ from their peers in terms of iq, pace of learning and level of academic knowledge. In this term, it is foreseen that the educational needs of the these students can be more appropriately met by teachers and administrators with different competencies and skills (Summak & Çelik-Şahin,

2014). It is also considered that along with some competencies, the administrators' motivation relating the job is another important factor at work. In this respect, in the study conducted to determine the factors affecting BİLSEM administrators' motivation it is understood that; the administrators were very happy for working at BİLSEMs and had professional satisfaction; they had the trust environment and the harmony required at their institutions; despite the intensive hours of lessons and temporary buildings they serve in, they were supported and appreciated by the senior managers; on the condition that the problems relating unnecessary correspondence and the regulations were solved, they would have higher motivation and therefore would motivate the staff they work with better.

In light of the aforementioned results, the following suggestions can be made: The role of school administrators cannot be denied in reaching school goals. Therefore, it is important that motivational factors accepted by the school administrators should be used effectively, efficiently and objectively. Making motivation resources adaptable for improvement and implementation by conducting similar studies with administrators of different educational institutions will help the administrations in the other educational institutions to be more successful. Moreover, qualitative attempts to meet personal and professional needs will be effective in strengthening institutions.

Effective and practical training seminars to be realized following the joint work of the Ministry of National Education and the universities in line with the determined needs will contribute to the improvement of the motivation levels of the administrators.

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