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THE PROBLEMS FACED BY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

COVID-19 Pandemic has radically changed politics, economy, religious traditions, practices and conventions, public and private activities, travel and entertainment, lifestyles, etc. since December 2019. Globally, during the closures and come and goes to new normal, education was forced to move to virtual reality as a rapid and dynamic change benefiting greatly from online education. The process of transition to online education fundamentally affected school principals who plan and manage this new pandemic implementation in their schools. In the time of the Covid-19 Pandemic, while the definition of the purpose of schools needed to be restructured, the duties, responsibilities, and job descriptions of School Principals at the front had a new framework. This study aimed to identify the problems faced by High School Principals in Covid-19 Pandemic. A qualitative research approach was used in this basic research. 32 high school principals participated in the research and answered both the personal information form and the open-ended form. The problems faced by school principals in high schools, their insights about the problems and resolution suggestions to those problems within the new framework of their job description were identified and presented in line with their answers on these forms.

Keywords: COVID-19, School closure, School principal, Distance education, online education

LİSE YÖNETİCİLERİNİN KOVİD-19 PANDEMİSİNDE KARŞILAŞTIĞI SORUNLAR

Özet

COVID-19 Pandemisi, Aralık 2019'dan bu yana siyaseti, ekonomiyi, dini gelenekleri, uygulamaları ve sözleşmeleri, kamusal ve özel faaliyetleri, seyahat ve eğlenceyi, yaşam tarzlarını vb. kökten değiştirdi. Tüm dünyada kapanmalar ve yeni normale dönüşler sırasında, eğitim, büyük ölçüde çevrimiçi eğitimden yararlanan hızlı ve dinamik bir değişimle sanal gerçekliğe geçmek zorunda kaldı. Online eğitime geçiş süreci, okullarında bu yeni pandemi uygulamasını planlayan ve yöneten okul yöneticilerini temelden etkiledi. Covid-19 Pandemisi döneminde okulların amaç tanımının yeniden yapılması ihtiyacı doğdu, sahadaki okul yöneticilerinin görev, sorumluluk tanımları yeni bir çerçeveye kavuştu. Bu çalışma, lise yöneticilerinin Covid-19 Pandemisi sürecinde karşılaştıkları sorunları belirlemeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu temel araştırmada nitel araştırma yaklaşımı kullanılmıştır. Araştırmaya 32 lise yöneticisi katılmış, hem kişisel bilgi formunu hem de açık uçlu formu yanıtlamışlardır. Lise yöneticilerinin karşılaştıkları sorunlar ve sorunlara ilişkin görüşleri ve bu sorunlara yeni görev tanımları çerçevesinde çözüm önerileri bu formlardaki yanıtları doğrultusunda belirlenerek ortaya konulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: COVID-19, okul kapanması, okul yöneticisi, uzaktan eğitim, çevrimiçi eğitim

1. INTRODUCTION

With the technological development that started with the Industry 4.0 revolution at the beginning of the 21st century, the necessity of making a radical transformation in the Turkish national education system has emerged. This necessity arises from the necessity of both the force of global change and the change of habits that have been formed by the structural problems in the field of education for years. As schools were trying to keep up with the 21st century and the transformation had begun, the World was shaken by the Covid-19 Pandemic Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) which was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, the capital of China's Hubei province, and was declared to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020 and recognized it as a pandemic on 11 March 2020 by The World Health Organization (WHO,2020). It has since spread globally, resulting in the ongoing 2019–21 coronavirus pandemic. As of 28 March 2021, 127,368,588 cases have been reported across 221 countries and territories, resulting in 2,790,890 deaths. More than 102,641,337 people have recovered (Wordometer, 2020).

The 2019–21 coronavirus pandemic was confirmed to have reached Turkey in March 2020, with the first case being officially confirmed on 11 March 2020. As of 28 March 2021, the total number of confirmed cases in the country is 3.179.115, of which 2.939.929 have recovered and 30.923 have died. (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Health, 2021)

During the 2019-2021 coronavirus pandemic, social distancing and related measures were emphasized by several governments as alternatives to an enforced quarantine of heavily affected areas. According to UNESCO monitoring, more than a hundred countries have implemented nationwide school closures in response to COVID-19, impacting over half the world's student population. As of 28 March 2021, 163,921,494 learners are affected the total number of countries with school closures is 26 worldwide. (UNESCO, 2021). The total number of affected learners in Turkey is 24,901,925. The Affected learners' number at the pre-primary level is 1,326,123, in primary level is 4,972,430, the secondary level is number is 11,404,380, and tertiary level is 7,198,987 according to Figure 1 based on the latest UNESCO Institute for Statistics data.

Figure 1. Figures correspond to the number of learners enrolled at pre-primary, primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary levels of education [ISCED levels 0 to 3], as well as at tertiary education levels [ISCED levels 5 to 8]. Enrolment figures are based on the latest UNESCO Institute for Statistics data.

1.1.The Terms ‘Distance Education, Distance Learning, Blended Learning ’

Distance education can be defined as training students individually in an environment where they do not need a physical school environment. Distance education has three different generations from past to present (Jones, 2005). The first generation is the traditional generation where student-teacher communication is provided through correspondence. The second generation is also known as industrialized multimedia distance education. In this generation, there is an audio and video-based distance education structure. In the last generation, the computer and the modem started to be used in education. Third generation distance education, also known as interactive education, is the generation where interactive media such as communication and video conferences are used and communication and learning are accepted as a social process. Distance learning requires students and teachers to have a completely different approach than regular daytime lessons. Fundamental issues and difficulties include as Fotjik, (2018) stated that students and many teachers have little or no experience with this form of teaching. Teachers feel they can use the same pedagogical and didactic practices as in full-time teaching, teaching requires students to be highly motivated and able to deal with time efficiently, complex and demanding preparation of teaching and study materials, and the need for thorough technical security.

Blended learning is a concept that was developed in the early 1960s. Blending is a word that connotes the combination of different components into a whole new structure and consequently formed the basis for the conceptualization of blended learning (Dziuban et al., 2018). Graham (2006:5) defines Blended learning as “systems that combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction”. Garrison and Kanuka (2004:96) define blended learning as “the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences”.

1.2.Distance Education Models in Turkey: EBA and EBA TV

During the ongoing pandemic, the address of distance education in Turkey has been through Education Information Network (EBA) and TRT channels mainly on TV because of the access limitations on the internet. MEB (2020) The Education Information Network (EBA), developed as an online education platform within the scope of the Fatih Project of the Ministry of National Education (MEB), offers all course contents over the internet. EBA, which is an online social education platform run by the General Directorate of Innovation and Educational Technologies (YEĞİTEK) within the

MEB, can be accessed through the address www.eba.gov.tr. EBA platform, which can be accessed as "Student", "Teacher" or "Parent", can also be accessed via a mobile application that can be downloaded to mobile phones. In EBA, while providing services as a customized learning environment and interface for students, student-special calendar, support publications and resources, controlled games, one-stop access to all lesson content, repetition of the lessons learned at home, question and exam bank, teacher support outside the school for students. For parents, it also provides opportunities such as the academic follow-up of the student, the possibility of following the exam dates and studies of the child, following the development of the child with the reports generated by the analyses made by the system, and monitoring the performance of the child in the subjects. Providing teachers with one-stop access to all course content, EBA also provides content and question pools compatible with the MEB curriculum, course content specific to interactive boards, monitoring and supporting students, detailed development reports based on class and student, and intelligent suggestion, and directing the content to the students' deficiencies. It offers services such as courses and programs, as well as a distance learning environment to develop professional knowledge and skills, the ability to post assignments, activities, discussions, and projects.

1.3. Emergency Remote Teaching Leaders: School Principals

Emergency remote teaching (ERT) is a temporary shift from the normal modes of teaching. It happens when teaching becomes remote. In contrast to experiences that are planned from the beginning and designed to be online, emergency remote teaching (ERT) is a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery model due to crisis circumstances. It involves the use of fully remote teaching solutions for education that would otherwise be delivered face-to-face or as blended or hybrid courses and that will return to that format once the crisis or emergency has abated. When we understand ERT in this manner, we can start to divorce it from "online learning." (Hodges, C., Moore, S., Lockee, B., Trust, T., & Bond, A. (2020). Playing the most critical role during shifting to remote learning school principals have been reassigned a new role as emergency teaching leaders at their schools. Apart from their formal roles while outlining, monitoring, and evaluating the online lessons of the teachers and classes, they have started to serve as essential, frontline workers, bringing laptops and tablets to students, keeping up the morale of teachers and supporting staff through continuous messaging and communication to the authorities, students, parents. They have carried the events as special days organizations, seminars, concerts, competitions, awards ceremonies, graduation ceremonies to online platforms. Stone and Miles (2020) stated "However, as we transition to planning for the future and a shift away from mere delivery to deep learning, it may be important to consider principals' role in this process." (Pg. 368)

1.4. Aim of the Research

This basic qualitative research is motivated by researchers' intellectual interest in problems in High School Administration in the time of Covid-19 and aims to extend the knowledge in this area. In the time of Covid-19, in Turkey, some datum from the results of the "EBA Monitoring and Evaluation Research" conducted by an independent research organization was shared by the Minister of Education. In the study, where the transition to distance education was made in 2020 and the data of this year, 52.9% of parents, students, and teachers found EBA "sufficient" and 28.5% "very sufficient", 18.6% "not sufficient". (Ministry of National Education. [MEB], 2021). There have been no studies that share information about the number of students who have accessed distance education and at which school level these students are. We still need to know more about the statistics. Despite this, it was also stated by the authorities that participation in distance education in high schools is less than at other school levels. This participation data varies according to the types of high schools. While high school principals

were planning and supervising the implementation of distance education by their teachers, they continued to motivate teachers, parents, and students and to manage the routine work of the school. First of all, they should not risk their health, as they were the only school staff who had been on the front since the first day of the pandemic, opening the schools every day, being reachable by everyone. Apart from all these, the situation of students who could not access distance education was also an important issue. Among the students whose conditions were favorable, those with high motivation were able to continue their live lessons remotely. The situation was more difficult than ever for the children of families with low economic conditions. The principle of equality of opportunity, one of the basic principles of Turkish National Education, serves some purposes beyond equality of opportunity in access to education. Children of families whose economic conditions were unsuitable had to participate in the labor market. In this case, even if they could access distance education tools such as the internet and tablets, they could not attend the classes because they had to work. Home-schooling students and students with special needs could not use distance education during their stay at home as they had to receive face-to-face and one-on-one education. Whether they stay at home or work, where these students live, with whom they live, how they are fed, and how they are cared for is a mystery. Therefore, schools should be defined as a control mechanism that keeps children under surveillance from pre-school to the last grade of high school education, and in a way shapes their living standards, beyond being educational institutions.

In the time of Covid-19, while the definition of the purpose of schools needed to be restructured, the duties, responsibilities, and job descriptions of School Principals at the front had a new framework. Within the framework of their job description, it is of great importance to identify and define the sub-problems that aroused from the main question: What are the problems faced by the High School Principal during the time of the Covid-19 Pandemic? This research investigated the main problem under 5 sub-problem titles that are under the responsibility of school administrators in the current system:

1. The problems faced by the High School Principals in student affairs.
2. The problems faced by the High School Principals in human resources.
3. The problems faced by the High School Principals in education and training affairs.
4. The problems faced by the High School Principals in business affairs.
5. The problems faced by the High School Principals in education (school) supervision and counseling practices

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Design

The main purpose of this study is to identify the problems faced by High School Principals in Covid-19 Pandemic and High School principals' insights about the problems and resolution suggestions to those problems. This research investigated the main problem under 5 sub-problem titles that are under the responsibility of school principals in the current system: The problems faced by the High School Principals in student affairs, in human resources, in education and training affairs, in business affairs, and education (school) supervision and counseling practice.

A qualitative research approach was used in this basic research. This research tried to understand how high school principals interpret their Covid-19 experiences in the problem areas and what meaning they attribute to this process by emphasizing experience, understanding, and meaning-making. Merriam (2009) recognizes qualitative researches as “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences.” (p.5).

2.2. Study Group

This research revealed the problems faced by high school principals in the business processes they were responsible for during the Covid-19 hybrid education period. In other words, it also looked at what occurred in the Covid -19 time and what had been disrupted in the management processes at High Schools. Since that this research searched for the answers to a qualitative problem, such as discovering what occurs, the implications of what occurs, and the relationships linking occurrences as Honigmann indicated. (1982, p.4). Thus the most appropriate sampling strategy is non-probabilistic, the most common form of which is called purposive (Chein, 1981). For purposive sampling, we must first determine what selection criteria are essential in choosing the people to be studied. The criteria you establish Qualitative Research purposeful sampling directly reflect the purpose of the study and guide in the identification of information-rich cases. You not only spell out the criteria you will use, but you also say why the criteria are important (Merriam, 2009, p.76). Based on this, it will be useful to put forward the criteria at this point. The main criteria for the study group in this paper were to be a high school principal and to be working in the Covid-19 process. The people named here as the high school principals are school principals, deputy chief principals, and vice-principals. Sampling was held through the most common form of purposeful sampling: network sampling. “This strategy involves locating a few key participants who easily meet the criteria you have established for participation in the study. As you interview these early key participants you ask each one to refer you to other participants.” (Merriam, 2009, p.76). The strategy of reaching the principals of high schools in the province starting from the closest high school principals was accepted as the final sampling strategy of this study.

32 high school principals participated in the research and answered both the personal information form and the open-ended form. Analyzing the personal information of the participants to make sense of the findings of the study enabled the researcher to get to know the participants.

Table.1 Personal Information of the Participants

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	8	75
Male	24	25
<i>Managerial position</i>		
School Principal	11	34,4
Deputy Chief Principal	1	3,1
Vice Principal	20	62,5
<i>Age</i>		
< 35	0	0
35-44	11	34,4
45-54	13	40,6
55-65	8	25
<i>Years of service in teaching</i>		
<5	0	0

5-9	1	3,1
10-14	3	9,4
15-24	16	50
25-34	8	25
>34	4	12,5

Years of service in management

0-4	4	18,8
5-9	11	34,4
10-14	7	21,9
15-24	5	15,6
25-34	2	6,3
>34	1	3,1

Tenure as Principal at his/her school

0-4	25	78,1
5-8	7	21,9

Type of the school he/she works

Anatolian High School	12	37,5
Anatolian Imam Hatip High School	3	9,4
Science High School	2	6,3
Vocational And Technical Anatolian High School	15	46,9

Type of school by student intake he/she works

Central placement via LGS	8	25
Local placement	26	75

24 of the participants are men and 8 of them are women. 75% of the participants are male and 25% are female. 11 of the participants are School Principals, 1 of them is the deputy chief principal and 20 of them are Vice Principals. 34,4% of the participants are School Principals, 3,1% of them is deputy chief principal and 62,5% of them is Vice Principals. 100% of them are above the age of 35. The age of 11 participants is between 35-44 (34.4%), the age of 13 participants is between 45-54 (40,6%) and the age of 8 participants is between 55-65 (25%). 100% of them have been teaching for more than five years. 1 of them has been teaching between 5-9 years (3,1%), 3 of them has been teaching between 10-14 years(9,4%), 16 of them have been teaching for 15-24 years (%50) and 8 of them have been teachers for 24-34 years (25%). 4 participants have been teaching for more than 34 years(12,5%). 4 of them have been principals for 0-4 years(18,8 %), 11 of them have been principals for 5- 9 years (34,4%), 7 of them have been principals for 10-14 years (21,9%), 5 of them have been principals for 15-24 years (15,6%), 2 of them have been working as a school principal for 25-34 years (6,3%) and 1 of them have been principal more than 34 years(3,1%). 25 of the participants have been working for 0-4 years at his/her school as a principal (78,1%) and 7 of the participants have been working for 5-8 years at his/her school

as a principal (21,9%). 12 of the participants have been working at an Anatolian High School as a principal (37,5%) and 3 of the participants have been working at an Anatolian Imam Hatip High School (9,4%), 2 of the participants have been working at a Science High School as a principal (6,3%) and 15 of the participants have been working at a Vocational And Technical Anatolian High School as a principal (46,9%). 8 of the participants have been working at a high school that accepts students by central placement via LGS (25%) and 26 of the participants have been working in a school that accepts students by local placement (75%).

2.3.Data Collection Tools

All of the datum in this research was collected through an open-ended survey. In the research, two types of data were collected as quantitative and qualitative. The personal information form was prepared by the researchers to identify the research group in the study. In the personal form, 8 questions were asked about the participants' gender, manager position, age, teaching time, managerial time, and managerial time in the school where they are located, the type of school they work in, the type of school according to the student intake. With the personal information form, the high school principals in the research groups were tried to be recognized in terms of the characteristics subject to the measurement. An open-ended question form was applied to the participants to collect qualitative data. The open-ended questions form developed by the researcher was created to get the opinions of the High School Principals working during the Covid-19 period on the scope of the research questions. While preparing the form, a literature review was made and draft questions were created. Then, to ensure structure and content validity, a form was submitted to two faculty members and one high school principal in the field of education programs and teaching, which have been studied in qualitative data analysis; Final arrangements were made in line with the feedback they gave and it was made ready for use in the research. The personal form, in which qualitative data were collected, and the form of the open-ended questions, in which quantitative data were collected, were combined on a single e-form in Turkish, delivered online to high school principals in the researcher's network. Qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed separately.

2.4.Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analysed by content analysis. Content analysis is a method used to identify patterns in recorded communication. In content analysis, researchers gather and analyze the content of a text, anything written, visual, or spoken. Brierley and Cowton (2000) stated that content analysis allowed an assessment of the validity and reliability of the empirical research to be made, and meant that the classification process and the basis of classification were specified and open to scrutiny (2000). Kassarian (1977) defines content analysis as the study of the message itself and not of the communicator or audience.

3. FINDINGS

The first sub-problem question is what are the problems faced by the high school principals in *Student Affairs*.

Under the first subproblem title student affairs, student affairs, and transactions below were given to the participants:

Processing of notebooks and files related to student affairs.

Registration and transfer procedures.

The monitoring of student attendance.

Health, nutrition, and safety precautions.

Graduation and diploma procedures.

Exams and passing grades.

Transportation of students.

The first question is: *"According to you if you had problems with the above student affairs and transactions during the Covid-19 Pandemic Distance Education, which/which ones did you have problems with?"*. 31 participants marked the question. According to the answers, 9 (29%) of the participants had problems in the processing of notebooks and files related to student affairs, 7 (22,6%) of the participants had problems with registration and transfer procedures. 21 (67,7%) of the participants had problems in the monitoring of student attendance. 5 (16,1%) of the participants had problems with health, nutrition, and safety precautions. 20 (64,5%) of the participants had problems in exams and passing procedures. 8 (25,8%) of the participants had problems with the transportation of the students. No participants marked graduation and diploma procedures as a problem.

The second and open-ended question of the form under the heading of student affairs is: *"What are the problems you have with the transactions you have marked?"*. 27 participants answered these questions, and 2 of these answers were "no problem". The principals answered as:

"We have difficulties in communicating with our students. Parents do not come to the school for registration procedures and information is not updated, so attendance control and communication cannot be established. Since students do not participate in distance education in the exams, their success is very low. (P30, P31)", "Many requests and problems were encountered due to the pandemic. We had to issue permanent permits for students for transportation. There were barriers to public transportation. Students came to the exams irregularly. There was a problem in keeping track of the textbooks. (P15)", "Due to the lack of attendance obligation, student attendance was not entered into the e-school system, and the instability of the exam dates and the number of exams pushed the students into a complete void. (P18)", "The unhealthy course attendance and follow-up of students in the distance education process created a problem. We have had a big communication problem. (P9)", "Since student exams are face-to-face, it is difficult for students to take regular exams. (P8)", "The constant change of exam schedules due to closures and restrictions created uncertainty. (P10)", "We have had difficulties in school and class attendance monitoring, and class participation. (P26)", "There is no certain information about whether the 9th-grade students will continue. We do not know the students. (P22)", "In the beginning, the awareness of the families was low, so some students were at high risk. (P17)", "We have difficulty in following the course attendance rate. (P24)", "Inconsistent writings and statements of the Ministry about absenteeism. (P23)", "Frequent transfers cause difficulties in following and recognizing the student. (P32)", "We are facing with Covid. (P7)", "Those living in rural areas had trouble accessing the Internet. (P28)", "Missing or incorrect contact information of students. (P27)", "Students do not regularly participate in the distance education process. (P14)", "Student follow-up is not possible because attendance is not compulsory. (P11)", "Certain age groups are not allowed on public transport. (P19)", "Student attendance problems. (P20)", "The inability to manage the Covid-19 process. (P22)", "The insufficiency of the Lesson Attendance. (P3)", "No regular exams. (P21)", "Staff shortage. (P12)", "Lack of parent and student contact information. (P13)"

The third and open-ended question of the form under the heading of student affairs is: *"If there are any transactions that you have problems with other than the ones stated in the student affairs era, what are they?"* 27 participants answered these questions, and 2 of these answers were "no problem". The principals answered as:

"The rate of our students participating in live lessons in distance education is very low. They say that the reason for this is impossible conditions. (P30, P31)", "There was a communication problem. The basic problem is that most of the students could barely attend distance education with limited opportunities and technological infrastructure. We could not reach some of them at all. (P9)", "Some students are not taking exams and not following EBA lessons. (P13)", "Lack of class participation in distance education. (P23)", "Meeting the accommodation needs of students. (P27)", "Generally we solve the problems. (P22)", "Unnecessary official correspondence. (P32)"

The second sub-problem question is what are the problems faced by the high school principals in *Human Resources*. In the first question under the title of human resources, transactions below were given to the participants:

Determination of personnel needs.

Recruitment of staff.

Relocation of staff.

Staff training and development.

Supervising staff, registration, and disciplinary proceedings.

Health and military procedures of the staff.

Personnel procedures of the staff.

The first question under the Personnel Services heading was a mark-up question: *"In your opinion, if you had problems in the above-mentioned Human Resources processes and transactions during the Covid-19 Pandemic Distance Education, which one/s did you have problems with?"*. 27 participants marked the question. According to the answers, 2 (11,8%) of the participants had problems in the Determination of personnel needs. 1 (5,9%) of the participants had problems in Recruitment of staff. 1 (5,9%) of the participants had problems in Relocation of staff. 4 (23,5%) of the participants had problems with staff training and development. 11 (64,7%) of the participants had problems in supervising staff, registration, and disciplinary proceedings. 2 (11,8%) of the participants had problems in health and military procedures of the staff. 4 (23,5%) of the participants had problems Personnel procedures of the staff.

The second and open-ended question of the form under the heading of human resources is: *"What are the problems you have with the transactions you have marked?"*. 14 participants answered these questions, and 2 of these answers were "No problem." 3 of these answers were "Staff has Covid". The principals answered as:

"In-service training to be given to the staff is also carried out through distance education, but there are problems in ensuring the necessary participation and being efficient. There is a problem in controlling whether the teachers' live lessons are regularly supervised by the system. (P30, P31)", "We had problems with staff employment, wages, and layoffs. (P17)", "Due to the closed canteens, the only source of income of the school, we dismissed the staff employed by the Family Association. (P23)",

“Teachers do not give importance to distance education. Failure to control students' course follow-up. (P27)”, “Difficulty in checking whether teachers teach the lessons or not. (P28)”, “Supervision of Distance education is out of control for various reasons. Access is limited. (P22)”, “Supervision is very difficult. (P21)”

The third and open-ended question of the form under the heading of Human Resources is: “*If there are any transactions that you have problems with other than the ones stated in the Human Resources era, what are they?*” 9 participants answered these questions, and 3 of these answers were “no problem”. Two of the answers were “teacher attendance tracking.” The principals answered as:

“There were health problems. Due to the fear of contamination of covid19, there was panic and anxiety among the teachers. (P15)”, “ - Staff working within the scope of PICTES project did not come to work without any excuses. (P13)”, “Lack of supporting staff in schools. (P23)”

The third sub-problem question is what are the problems faced by the High School Principals in *Education and Training Affairs*. In the first question under the title of education and training affairs, transactions below were given to the participants:

Books and files were kept related to education and training affairs.

Annual plans.

Board meetings.

Provision of textbooks and tools.

Library procedures.

Teaching process. (lesson plans, trip, and review records.)

Guidance services.

Student disciplinary proceedings.

Seizure proceedings.

Student clubs.

PTA Educational regions and boards (organization and operation)

The first question under the Personnel Services heading was a mark-up question: “*In your opinion, if you had problems in the above-mentioned education and training affairs processes and transactions during the Covid-19 Pandemic Distance Education, which one/s did you have problems with?*” 29 participants marked the question. According to the answers, 13 (44,8 %) of the participants had problems with Books and files kept related to education and training affairs. 2 (6,9%) of the participants had problems with Annual plans. 13 (44,8 %) of the participants had problems in board meetings. 4 (13,8%) of the participants had problems with library procedures. 10 (34,5%) of the participants had problems in the teaching process (lesson plans, trip, and review records.). 13 (44,8 %) of the participants had problems with guidance services. 7 (24,1%) of the participants had problems in student disciplinary proceedings. 3 (10,3%) of the participants had problems in Seizure proceedings. 14 (48,3%) of the participants had problems in Student Clubs. 8 (20,7%) of the participants had problems

in PTA. . 3 (10,3%) of the participants had problems in Educational regions and boards (organization and operation)

The second and open-ended question of the form under education and training affairs is: *“What are the problems you have with the transactions you have marked?”*. 21 participants answered these questions, and 1 of these answers was "no problem". The principals answered as:

“There are problems in filling and signing course books, holding board meetings, and signing the MOM. Teachers do not want to participate in face-to-face education activities because of the lack of vaccination. Library and club activities cannot be carried out. (P30, P31)”, “Communication with students and parents could not be established. Meeting with school parent association members. Difficulties in applying social distancing rules at banks for withdrawals. (P27)”, “Homework could not be checked on time. The problem could not be determined in the teachers' boards, and instant communication and meeting could not be held for resolutions. (P29)”, “Guidance services need to be given face-to-face, by touching and feeling. Therefore, remote guidance does not achieve its purpose. (P8)”, “Application observations and excursions in the lesson plans could not be made. Club work could not be done. Board meetings were not efficient and functional. (P15)”, “Teachers' reluctance to follow up on paperwork. (P23)”, “The studies that can be productive via face-to-face training were interrupted during the pandemic process. (P10)”, “In the distance education process, there were problems in the book and document order. (P26)”, “All student clubs lost their functionality because there were no students. (P18)”, “It's getting harder to exchange views. (P22)”, “Class books are not signed, teachers are not sensitive. (P13)”, “The school guidance service did not work actively. (P9)”, “Problems experienced in online meetings.(P19)”, “Especially social clubs. (P17)”, “Difficulty with the active participation of the student. (P28)”, “We are facing a Pandemic. (P27)”, “Teachers not showing up for signature. (P21)”, “Insufficient lesson participation of the students. (P3)”, “Lesson attendance of the students.(P1)”

The third and open-ended question of the form under the heading of education and training affairs is: *“If there are any transactions that you have problems with other than the ones stated in the education and training affairs era, what are they?”* 7 participants answered these questions, and 2 of these answers were "no problem". The principals answered as:

“Not providing the necessary information by the class teachers of the elements that ensure student participation in the lessons given over EBA, not taking the steps to ensure their participation.

. (P13)”, “Technology adaptation process of my teachers who had more years of service at the beginning of the pandemic. (P23)”, “Inadequate duration of lessons, Technological inadequacies. (P29)”, “Failure of students to attend live classes.(P32)”, “Student reluctance. (P21)”

The four sub-problem questions are what are the problems faced by the High School Principals in *Business Affairs*. In the first question under the title of business affairs, transactions below were given to the participants:

Maintenance and repair works of buildings and facilities.

Equipment-purchasing.

Warehousing.

Archive works.

Correspondence affairs.

Budget-account.

Canteen-cooperative affairs.

Revolving fund affairs.

Inventory (identity) works.

Civil defense, fire fighting.

The first question under the Business Affairs heading was a mark-up question: *“In your opinion, if you had problems in the above-mentioned business affairs during the Covid-19 Pandemic Distance Education, which one/s did you have problems with?”*. 21 participants marked the question. According to the answers, 38% of the participants had problems in canteen-cooperative affairs. 28.6% of the participants had problems in correspondence affairs. 14, 3% of the participants had problems with budget-account. For each of the other affairs, one participant stated that he/she had a problem.

The second and open-ended question of the form under business affairs is: *“What are the problems you have with the transactions you have marked?”* 14 participants answered these questions, and 3 of these answers were "no problem". The principals answered as:

“There is a problem with the official notification of the articles that need to be communicated to the person. (P8)”, “Although the canteen was opened, it had to be closed because the number of students coming to the school was low and unstable. (P18)”, “Canteens work effectively due to the shortage of students. (P15)”, “Our school does not have sufficient financial resources to purchase equipment. (P29)”, “Since there were no students, it was not possible to operate a revolving fund. (P27)”, “It is an old building; there are no toilets on the floors. (P13)”, “Unity on wet signatures could not be achieved. (P28)”, “We are facing with Covid 19 Pandemic. (P7)”, “A lot of unnecessary correspondence. (P21)”, “Financial problems. (P2)”, “Canteens are closed. (P23)”, “Lack of canteen rental income. (P3)”

The third and open-ended question of the form under the heading of business affairs is: *“If there are any transactions that you have problems with other than the ones stated in business affairs era, what are they?”* 4 participants answered these questions, and 3 of these answers were "no problem". The principal answered as “The pandemic conditions are very severe. (P27)”

The fifth sub-problem question is what are the problems faced by the high school principals in *Education (School) Supervision and Counselling Practices*.

In the first question under the title of Education (School) Supervision and Counselling Practices, transactions below were given to the participants:

Institutional audit.

Teacher supervision.

Inspection and investigation procedures.

Guidance procedures.

The first question under Education (School) Supervision and Counselling Practices heading was a mark-up question: *"In your opinion, if you had problems in the above-mentioned Education (School) Supervision and Counselling Practices during the Covid-19 Pandemic Distance Education, which one/s did you have problems with?"* 21 participants marked the question. According to the answers, 17 (81%) of the participants had problems in teacher supervision. 8 (38,1%) of the participants had problems with guidance procedures. 2 (9,5%) of the participants had problems in an institutional audit. No participants marked inspection and investigation procedures as a problem they have faced.

The second and open-ended question of the form under Education (School) Supervision and Counselling Practices is: *"What are the problems you have with the transactions you have marked?"* 21 participants answered these questions, and 1 of these answers was "no problem". The principals answered as:

"Our friend, who worked in the guidance service, did not take an active role in the process due to his chronic illness. I don't think the guidance service can be remotely efficient either. (P9)", "Insufficient feedback about the lessons taught. Inability to provide education and training to students within the scope of equal opportunity. (P29)", "Necessary communication could not be provided with the students. They could not answer the phones. (P28)", "There is a problem in distance education because the guidance has to be done face-to-face. (P23)", "Since the lessons were on the internet and EBA, it was difficult to audit the teachers. (P15)", "Transactions related to the education of IEP students, student work, and transactions are disrupted. (P13)", "Lesson supervision has become difficult as education is done remotely. (P24)", "Failure to receive application feedbacks correctly. (P27)", "Teacher supervision is difficult. (P21)", "Supervision is not possible. (P22)"

The third and open-ended question of the form under the heading of Education (School) Supervision and Counselling Practices is: *"If there are any transactions that you have problems with other than the ones stated in Education (School) Supervision and Counselling Practices era, what are they?"* 6 participants answered these questions, and 3 of these answers were "no problem". The principals answered as:

"Since the guidance work is remote, parent information is insufficient. (P22)", "Students are not attending classes. (P21)", "Teachers are not taking responsibility. (P13)"

4. DISCUSSION

The first sub-problem is the problems faced by high school administrators in student affairs. When the findings are examined, it is seen that the highest rates are concentrated under two sub-headings: Student attendance, exams, and passing grades. The answers given to open-ended questions also support these findings. In the answers it is stated that student attendance is not compulsory, student-parent contact information is missing or not at all, and communication is not established properly. It is understood that the causes of the two main problems experienced at that time were unhealthy communication and the non-obligation of attendance. Since student attendance is not compulsory, it is not possible to control the achievements of the students. But students still have to be evaluated through exams. Grades must be formed within the framework of the regulations required to pass the class. Exams were designed and administered face-to-face. Students at grade levels who were not given face-to-face education were evaluated with face-to-face exams. It is the responsibility of high school administrators

to announce, plan and administer the exams to all students of all grade levels. High school principals organized the exams by making remote announcements and calls to the students that they could not follow face to face. In this case, it is necessary to investigate whether students who have no communication can participate in these exams. At the end of this academic year, it should be expected that there will be many students who are likely to have problems passing their classes. Also, we understand from the answers given to the open-ended questions that the postponements and cancellations of the exams made by the ministry within the framework of closures and measures have also caused many communication and psychological problems. The uncertainty has been worrying. 9th-grade students continued face-to-face education for a very short time and could not be recognized by school administrators and teachers. In this sense, we will expect them to adapt to the school in the 10th grade. During this period, the transfers continued and it was not possible to recognize the transferring students. It will not be possible to recognize new students who only exist on the class lists with their names and surnames unless they attend distance education courses or come to the school administration. In the answers given to open-ended questions, it is seen that the rate of students' participation in distance education is low, it is said that students in rural areas have problems with internet access. In addition, there are problems in meeting the accommodation needs of students staying in hostels within the scope of epidemic measures. In summary, the inability to monitor students in distance education leaves its mark on this sub-problem.

The second sub-problem is the problems faced by high school administrators in Human Resources. According to the findings, the common and the most marked problem (64,7%) which the school principals chose is Supervision of the staff. Lessons held in EBA in distance education can be controlled over the EBA system. This monitoring is the duration of the lesson, how long the teacher stayed in the lesson, and student participation. School administrators monitor employees at every moment of face-to-face training. In this case, supervision was not possible in live distance lessons. It is known whether the teacher has started the lesson or not. Of course, this will not be enough for auditing. There seems to be no other way but to believe the teacher's statement. It can be deduced that there are no serious problems related to the employee's rights, appointment, assignment, military service, and health problems. The fact that employees have covid-19 and that they cannot be vaccinated is a concern, stated in the answers to open-ended questions. Face-to-face education and support training courses, albeit hybrid, continued in 12th grades. Although student participation was high at first, and later student participation decreased, teachers came to schools and stayed together. The fact that they suffer from the slow progress of the vaccination calendar is also valid for school administrators. Also, first of all, school principals, who have been on the field and at the forefront since the first day of the pandemic, should be vaccinated in terms of the continuity of school work and operations. In the answers given to the open-ended questions, it was mentioned that the lack of support personnel and the staff working by the parent-teacher association had to be dismissed due to financial problems. However, covid-19 times are the times when schools should be kept the cleanest and tidiest. In high schools, where new procedures such as the project *My School is Clean* have begun to be implemented, these project processes will not be able to be carried out healthily without support staff. In addition, in the answers given, it is understood that the in-service training received by the employees is not effective because it cannot be audited either.

Arguments for the third sub-problem: The third sub-problem is the problems faced by the High School Principals in education and training affairs. In the markings made by high school administrators, it is understood that they encounter problems in every process of education and training. It seems as if they have experienced all the problems that will be encountered while executing unchanging legislative procedures in a completely changing system. High school administrators think that it is not effective to hold the teachers' council remotely, where the school's semester and annual road lines are drawn and

decisions are taken, which is of great importance for schools. It is seen that there are problems in transactions that involve legal obligations, such as regular filling and signing of Class Notebooks, and failure to sign MOMs regularly, although they are somehow resolved. Although the lecture is held remotely and the meetings are held remotely, official records are made face to face and are signed under wet signature and this is still mandatory. Students could not use the libraries and student clubs did not carry out their activities. In this sense, there was no problem. Another problem addressed by school administrators in the answers to open-ended questions is about guidance services. It was stated that guidance activities should be carried out face to face. It has been stated that remote work of the guidance services is not effective. Also, the guidance services continued to provide services at schools face to face, their effectiveness is debatable. It is also stated that the members of the parent-teacher association do not come to school, the meetings cannot be held regularly, the decisions are not taken on time, and the members are worried about the risk of contamination in the banks in the withdrawal procedures. However, in a school that carries out a project like *my school is clean* and other expenses continue, the school family associations provide the greatest financial support.

Arguments for the fourth sub-problem: The fourth sub-problem is the problems faced by the High School Principals in business affairs. The covid-19 pandemic, which caused economic crises all over the world, of course, also led to economic crises in schools. Under this sub-problem title, high school administrators pointed out that they had problems mostly in canteen cooperative works, budget accounting works, and official correspondence. Canteens are known as the biggest source of income for schools. Canteen facilities are rented by the parent-teacher association and the rental income is deposited into the parent-teacher association account. With this income, the needs of the school are met. When there was no face-to-face education, the canteens were closed, and when there was face-to-face education, there were few students, so the canteens did not want to be open. Canteen revenues have completely disappeared. As the needs of the school continue to increase, how did the school administrators finance these needs and will they do so? One of the most common problems in the answers to open-ended questions is excessive and unnecessary correspondence.

Arguments for the fifth sub-problem: The fifth sub-problem is the problems faced by the High School Principals in Education (School) Supervision and Counselling Practices. Among the transactions given under this heading in the form, the most marked transactions by high school administrators were teacher supervision (81%) and guidance services (37%). In the answers given to open-ended questions, it is stated that it is not possible to supervise the teacher in distance education. During distance learning, teachers rarely came to school just to sign class notebooks and other papers. Except for the face-to-face lectures of the 12th grades, most courses cannot be followed. Feedback from students and parents cannot be received. In the context of distance education, the only person who reaches the student is the lesson teacher and in this sense, he and only the students who attend his lessons can know what is going on during the lessons. We have mentioned the guidance services before and if it is necessary to emphasize again in this subtitle, it is stated again that the guidance services cannot be carried out remotely and the guidance services remain passive. The answer to an open-ended question draws attention.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

During the pandemic process, there has been a rapid and dynamic change in the education sector benefiting greatly from online education. The process of transition to online education fundamentally affects school principals who plan and manage the implementation in their schools. In this study, the problems faced by High School Principals in distance education during the Covid-19 time were investigated through the personal information form and open-ended form, and certain findings were obtained. Under the main heading, the duties and responsibilities of high school administrators are

examined under 5 sub-titles. Jobs and transactions are given under these sub-titles briefly on the form and the problems experienced in these works and transactions are determined. The transactions in these five sub-titles are actually all related to each other. Problems experienced in one of them intersect with the others or lead to the others. When the answers given to the open-ended questions were examined, it was seen the high school principals emphasized that student attendance is not compulsory, there have been communication disorders, and they have been unable to monitor and supervise students, teachers, and courses, as well as they had financial problems. Face-to-face education and distance education are two completely different applications. While the lessons were held remotely, other transactions were not arranged according to this new system. For example, during this pandemic, what is expected from administrators, teachers, students, and parents and the opportunities to be provided for them have not been shown in a road map. While transitioning to a new system, the understanding of "we will experience this system together" prevailed. Whether the necessary preparations have been made or not, this may be the subject of separate research. High school principals who experienced the new system also had to learn by doing many procedures. Solutions were produced instantly as problems were perceived and experienced. According to the findings of this study, it seems that high school principals had problems in almost every process, and in those that they did not experience problems were the processes that were not active, for example, libraries. Now let's reinforce these results with suggestions.

In the light of the findings, it comes to the fore that the students could not succeed in the exams due to their absenteeism, irregular participation in online education, or not participating at all. School principals should provide compensation for the loss of education. They should be committed to the systematic planning and implementation of recovering the loss of education. Communication is the most important beneficiary in this process. For this reason, school principals should take measures to ensure healthy and uninterrupted communication. It is important that the school website is recognized by the parents and that the announcements are followed. It should be ensured that parent and student contact information is fully recorded. The most affected students are the children of economically disadvantaged families. In this process, they should be identified and measures should be taken to support them.

It is recommended to conduct researches to study the problems faced by teachers, problems faced by students, and problems faced by parents during the Covid-19 Pandemic process. Thus, the situation can be revealed from multiple perspectives of all stakeholders.

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