



## TRAINING SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVES AS MENTOR PRINCIPALS

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### Abstract:

Processing and management of information in the new age is being completed by the schools which are as seen the most important molders of the community, and for managing and maintain this image in the best way of course is the ultimate task of the school administrators. To execute this special task, the training of school administrators has an extreme importance and even recruiting them as school principals also another issue to consider about. However, when the criteria of becoming school principals is analyzed in Turkey, it is observed that there is a huge gap about this situation, whereas present trainings for school principals found not to supply the demand of school administrators. From this point of view, in this study the most popular trainings for school administrators abroad are reviewed, and it is found that mentoring system which is one of the training methods is very effective, thus, a mentor principal training was prepared by education experts and this training was given to 11 school administrators. As a result of this, an experimental study was conducted in order to scrutinize implications of mentor principal training. Two groups of 11 school administrators were chosen through random cluster sampling. Both groups were given a pre-test and a post-test. T-test analysis was done, and results of pre-test and post-test mean scores of the experimental group, which got mentor principal training, were meaningfully different in positive way. Lastly, both the main and the sub-hypotheses of the study were confirmed. Thus, the results provide a theoretical justification for the claims of the training school principals who got this training had positive perceptions through mentoring.

**Keywords:** school administrators, training of school administrators, mentoring

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## 1. Introduction

Education systems in our country and in the world are changing day by day and it is believed that the exams and administrator appointment system in the training of principals do not provide the necessary performance for the school administrators who will be the school director. It is now generally accepted that the need for a new model for school principals has been come out since the school administrators face the problems due to the lack of experience in their first years, and especially when they get staggered they need someone for supporting. In this context, it has been observed that there are many different methods such as coaching, counseling, peer education, distance education and mentoring (Witherspoon and White, 1996; Wallace, 2012; Mentoring Preparation Program, 2015; Keller, 2012). These trainings, conducted both in school education regions and by private organizations, provide alternatives in training principals on abroad. The purpose of using mentoring system in the training of school principals; to create the potential for the newly appointed school administrators to overcome the problems they face, to increase the potential of principals to develop themselves, to transfer mentor culture to schools, to support school principals in terms of academic and career, and to create a more motivating and effective human resource.

However, there is no such a training in Turkey thus in this research via mentoring training, can the Principals contribute to their professional development? Two sub-hypotheses are tried to be answered in this research;

- 1) Do school principals need such a training? if yes, what courses should be covered in this training?
- 2) Whether a mentor manager training would be effective for school principals?

## 2. Literature Review

The word mentor comes from Greek mythology. According to Odyssey, Ithaca King Ulysses entrusted his son Telemachus to his best friend Mentor before he went to war. It takes twenty years for the king to return from the war, and Mentor trained and trained the prince in the best of his absence (BİLMED, 2009). Mentoring, which takes its name from Greek mythology, is a relationship of cooperation and sharing aimed at education, learning and development. In this relationship, the mentor spends his time, knowledge and effort to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to increase the productivity and success of a less experienced person (mentee) and mentee actively guides the development of the mentor (Çınar, 2003).

Today, the word mentor is used for the support of knowledgeable people to less knowledgeable people. They are the people who provide this support (Bakioğlu, 2012). There are some different concepts that are similar to the concept of mentoring, or even used interchangeably. According to Brunner & Hill (1992), coaching is a tool for leadership, performance, and individual development designed specifically for each client, adhering to confidentiality and ethical principles for organizations, units, groups and Principals in organizations. Another concept that is often confused with mentoring

is counseling. Bakioğlu (2012) in the definition of the consultant, the generally agreed situation is that the consultant should diagnose the problem, determine the solutions needed to correct the problem and sometimes implement the solutions. However, coaching is essentially based on finding the solution, and supporting the coach. Another point where coaching and counseling is different is that while counseling is based on comprehensive theories, it is not possible to mention that coaching, which is a new profession, has its own detailed theoretical background or development in this direction (Clutterbuck & Bachkirowa & Cox, 2010;53).

## 2. Role and Responsibilities of the Mentor

Mentors take on many different roles in order to meet the needs of the people they help. Although the way to a successful career is not officially appointed by a mentor, most successful people have always stated that a mentor or role model has a very important effect on the achievement of their success (Ismail and Arokiasomy, 2007). **Modeling** Mentors have many different roles besides career development and interpersonal roles. One of the most common roles in the literature is that the mentor tries to be a model for the mentee. **Breeders** conduct orientation programs, workshops and other professional development trainings (Nea, 2005). **Sponsors** By using their prestige and strength, they help their mentees to see and move forward more clearly. **Supporters** mentors provide opportunities for them to be able to express their emotions better and to be comfortable by being with their mentees and creating trust. **Educators**. Mentors, who are also responsible for the educational needs of mentees, are also responsible for the mentors; consultant, teacher, encouragement, coach, observer, facilitator, expert teacher, tour guide, spokesperson, correspondent and equivalent.

### 2.1 Principles of Effective Mentoring

Mentors have all these competencies, skills and functions, but they also have the responsibility to combine them appropriately and effectively, depending on the situation (Fritzberg and Alemayehu, 2004). There are some principles to be able to apply mentoring effectively;

- A positive environment should be established.
- The mentee should be helped to develop his / her personality.
- A healthy communication environment should be provided.
- The mentee should be independent.
- Responsibility should be given to the mentee.
- The person receiving the help should be shown that making mistake is nothing to fear.
- The mentor and mentee should have the goals planned together.
- Mentee should be allowed to conduct a research.
- Small steps should be used in mentee development.
- The mentor should give instructions if necessary. Feedback should be provided.
- The mentee should be ensured to take risks.

- Mentor and mentee must be connected.
- Mentor should perceive this relationship as a unique experience (Çelik, 2011).  
Tips for establishing successful mentoring relationships;
- Be there at every meeting. Show that you value your sense.
- Be friends, do not act as an omniscient authority.
- Become a role model
- Give your mentee a voice in your activities
- Always be open to help (NTC-California Governor' s Mentoring Partnership, 2013).
- Set your mentoring limits (Minnesota Mentoring Partnership, 2007).

### **3. Material and Methods**

#### **3.1 Research Model**

In this research, a mixed method has been followed thus there are two steps of the study (Creswell & Clark, 2007). Firstly, four focus groups of school Principals have been interviewed independently about a possible mentoring program. They discussed about which courses should be covered by a mentoring training for school principals. After analyzing those arguments, it has been agreed on that there should be at least 8 courses in a Mentor Principal training program. Then, a group of school Principals have been chosen for this mentoring training program voluntarily. For the experimental part of the study, this group had these training and after 4 weeks of mentoring training the evaluation of effectiveness of this program has been done by a Mentor Principal Self-Assessment Questionnaire (MPSQ) for the pre-test and post-test of the study.

#### **3.2 Population and Sample**

For this research all the Principals who contributed this study were from state schools. The focus groups were chosen by 204 school principals from the National Educational Ministry of Gaziantep, Turkey. Those were the principals who were experienced as school Principals at least for 5 years. On the other hand, for the sample of the experimental study, the experimental group was selected from 23 school administrators who had their master's degree in Educational Administration Department of Gaziantep University. The experimental group consisted of 11 as the same number, the control group consists of 11 school administrators who are not included in the experimental group.

#### **3.3 Data Collection Tools and Process**

##### **3.3.1 Mentor Principal Self-Assessment Questionnaire (MPSQ)**

The Mentor Principal questionnaire was translated into Turkish then it is applied for 110 school principals to use for the effectiveness of the experimental study. The 21-item Mentor Self Evaluation Checklist of ActiveIp (2009), which provides mentoring training to Principals for the developed questionnaire, was translated from English to Turkish by 3 English experts and then translated from Turkish to English by 3 different English

experts. The translated questionnaires were fulfilled by 70 English instructors to measure language validity, and they were asked to complete both questionnaires. The language validity level of the questionnaire was found to be .98 as a result of the t-test analysis conducted in the questionnaire where the perception level in both languages was measured by filling the Turkish and English simultaneously. After the translation process, two assessment and evaluation experts, two educational management experts and one linguist examined and evaluated for scope and application validity of the survey. As a result of the evaluation and analyzes, the mentor Principal was accepted as a 16-item questionnaire that included questions about the self-evaluation of the Principals.

The first part of the questionnaire consists of three questions asking the demographic information of the participants and the second part consists of 16 items. A 5-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire. The questionnaire, which was ready for pre-implementation, has been read to 3 experienced school principals and asked to indicate what they understood in order to collect data on the intelligibility and answerability of the items, options, and subject. These 3 Principals, who were randomly selected in the research group, were not included in the actual application where validity and reliability studies were conducted. At the end of the study, it was determined that there is no item that the Principals do not understand or make different meaning.

### **3.4 Factor Structure of Survey**

In order to determine the factor structure of the questionnaire, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was applied at the first stage and then confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed for the validity of the defined factor structure.

#### **3.4.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)**

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to confirm the structure obtained by exploratory factor analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis aims to examine to what extent a predetermined or constructed structure is validated with the collected data (Büyüköztürk, Akgün, Özkahveci and Demirel, 2004) Chi-Square Goodness, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Relative Fit Index (RFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Mean Square Root of Approximate Errors (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) indexes were examined. The acceptable fit value for the GFI, CFI, NFI, RFI, IFI and AGFI indices is 0.90 and the excellent fit is 0.95. For RMSEA, 0.08 was accepted as acceptable fit and 0.05 as excellent fit. (Çelik and Yılmaz, 2013). The fit indexes of the model were examined and the minimum chi-square value ( $\chi^2 = 261.18$ ,  $s = 103$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ) was found to be significant. RMSEA = 0.079, NFI = 0.91, CFI = 0.90, IFI = 0.92, RFI = 0.89, GFI = 0.89 and AGFI = 0.88. These fit index values show that the two-factor model is compatible. Factor loads related to the model are given in Figure 3.1.

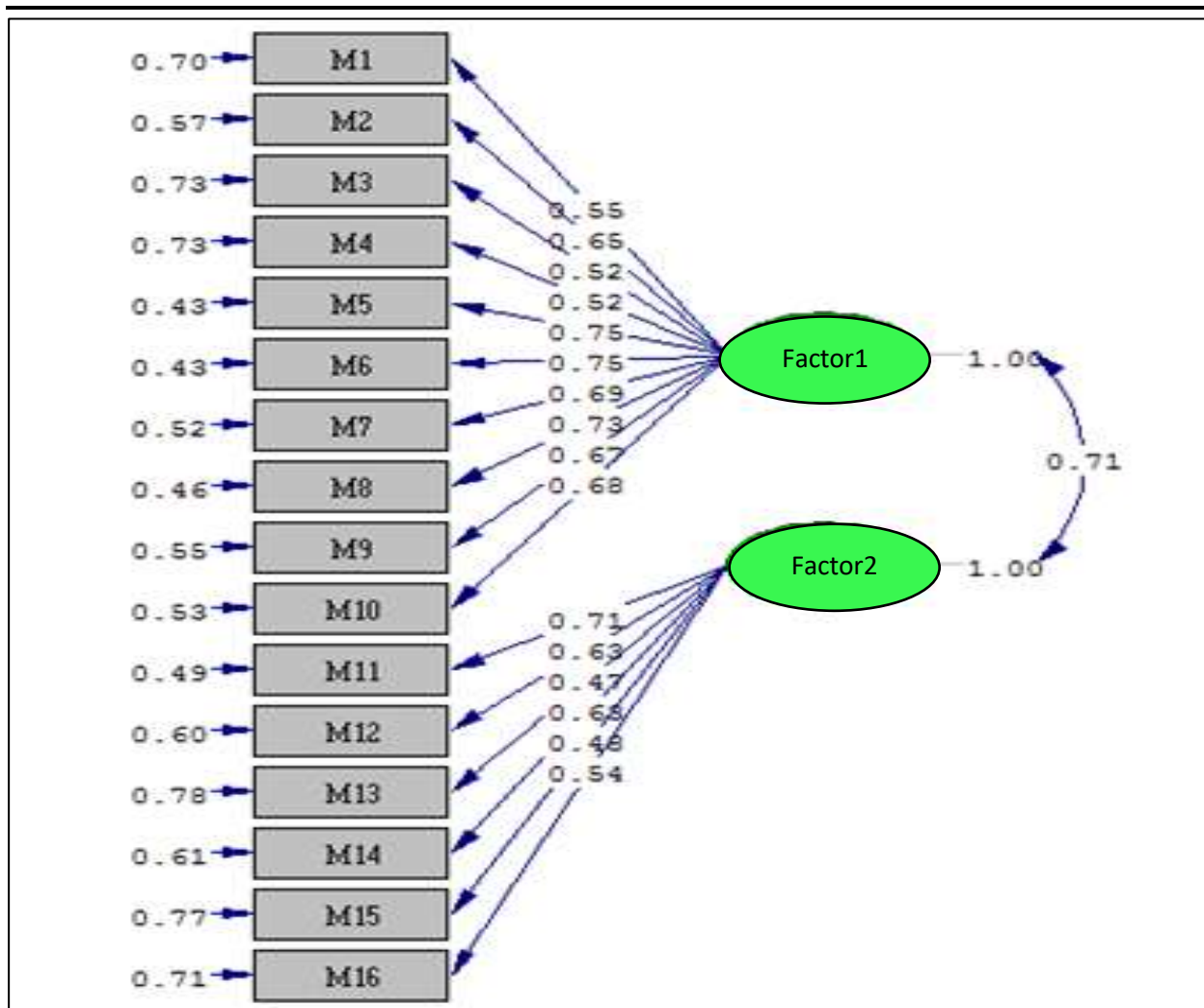


Figure 3.1: Factor loads related to the model

Table 3.1: The indices obtained as a result of CFA are given in the table below

Fit Dimensions	Goodness of Fit	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index	Fit Indices
RMSEA	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.05$	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.08$	0.079
NFI	$0.95 \leq NFI \leq 1.00$	$0.90 \leq NFI \leq 0.95$	0.91
CFI	$0.95 \leq CFI \leq 1.00$	$0.95 \leq CFI \leq 0.97$	0.90
GFI	$0.95 \leq GFI \leq 1.00$	$0.90 \leq GFI \leq 0.95$	0.89
AGFI	$0.90 \leq AGFI \leq 1.00$	$0.85 \leq AGFI \leq 0.90$	0.88
RFI	$0.95 \leq RFI \leq 1.00$	$0.90 \leq RFI \leq 0.95$	0.89
IFI	$0.95 \leq IFI \leq 1.00$	$0.90 \leq IFI \leq 0.95$	0.92
$\chi^2$	$\leq 3$	$\leq 4-5$	261,18

### 3.5 Result of validity and reliability studies, Mentor Director Self-Assessment Questionnaire

As a result of the validity and reliability studies, item 1, item 2, item 14 and item 18 were excluded from the questionnaire due to the fact that they were item 4 and overlapped .35. Considering the sub-dimensions of the questionnaire, the characteristic sub-dimension has 10 items and the traditional sub-dimension has 6 items. Item numbers of the sub-dimensions of the survey are as follows: Capableness: 1 to 10 substances, Characteristic:

10-16 are substances. The Mentor Principal Self-assessment questionnaire was developed as 16 items and 2 sub-dimensions and it was presented as a valid and reliable tool for the purpose of experimental research.

**Table 3.2:** Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Co-Efficient  
of the Sub-Dimensions of the Mentor Principal Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Dimensions	Declared Variance (%)	Cronbach Alfa Reliability co-efficient
Characteristic	39,15	,88
Capableness	11,01	,76

### 3.6 Article Discriminatory Forces

**Table 3.3:** Mentor Principal Self-Assessment Questionnaire (MPSQ)  
Adjusted Item-Total Correlations and t-Values of 27% Lower-Upper Group Difference

Factor Name	Item No	Item-total correlations	t-values
Capableness	M3	,551	3,516*
	M5	,660	6,300*
	M10	,475	6,537*
	M11	,460	5,899*
	M15	,608	6,416*
	M16	,682	6,608*
	M17	,652	5,036*
	M19	,633	7,575*
	M20	,619	6,287*
	M21	,574	5,899*
Characteristic	M6	,661	6,003*
	M7	,433	4,510*
	M8	,308	4,434*
	M9	,562	6,438*
	M12	,397	4,732*
	M13	,466	5,610*

As a result of factor analysis, item total correlations and 27% upper-sub group calculations were made for item discrimination power of the scale consisting of 16 items. When calculating the discriminating power of the items, the total score of each subject was calculated first, and the upper-lower groups were formed by sorting from large to small. Independent groups t-test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the groups. Information on the calculation is given in Table 3. 3, and this calculation is found to be significant.

### 3.7 Analysis of Data

The two-factor structure obtained from exploratory factor analysis was analyzed with LISREL 8.8 program and the suitability of the structure was examined according to the compliance statistics and modification index results. Several cohesion indices are used to demonstrate the adequacy of the model tested in CFA.

### 3.8 Experimental Study

In the second part of the research, the courses have been prepared by experts of mentoring for school administrators to become mentors. Then, courses were given to the experimental group with their content and activities. The Mentor Principal Self-Assessment Questionnaire was applied to experimental and control groups at the beginning and end of the training to determine the effectiveness of this training, and whether there is any difference between the experimental and control groups.

The pattern of our experimental study was determined as a true random experimental design with pretest-posttest control group (Büyüköztürk, 2007;27). This research pattern is one of the experimental designs frequently used in education and psychology. Here, firstly, two groups are formed by random assignment. One of the groups of school principals is chosen randomly as the experimental and the other as the control group. Then, measurements of the dependent variable related to the dependent variable are taken before the application in the two groups. In the application process, the experimental process (the mentoring training), the effect of which is tested, is given to the experimental group and not to the control group. After 4 weeks of training, finally, the measurements of the dependent variable of the subjects in the groups are obtained again using the same tool or partner form. In this experimental study, the mentor Principal self-assessment questionnaire (MPSQ) developed to measure the effectiveness of the mentor Principal training program was used as a tool. The pattern of the study is as follows.

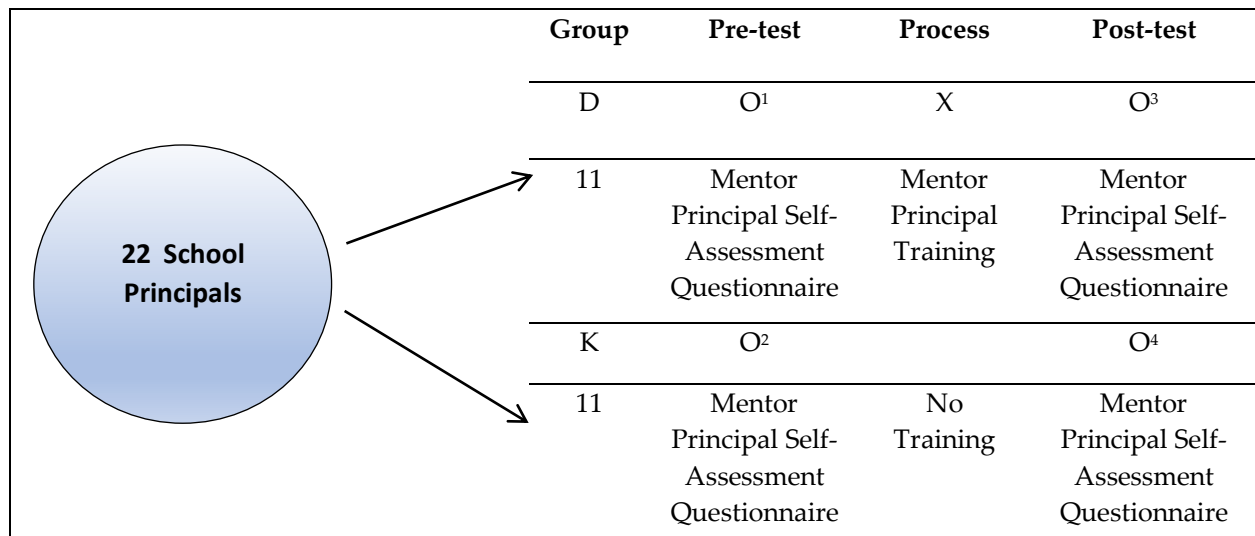


Figure 3.2: Random Sample with Pretest-Posttest Control Group

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Findings of The Focus Group Interviews

While preparing the content of the training program, the school administrators were asked about their Principals' needs, and it was concluded that 8 courses should be included in this training according to their needs. Within the framework of this information, the content of the 8 courses were created with the necessary surveys and



activities. The program of the courses has been established within the framework of a plan to be completed in 4 weeks as follows:

- Week 1: Communication and Conflict Resolution;
- Week 2: Stakeholder Orientation and Leadership;
- Week 3: Teamwork and Time Management;
- Week 4: Technological Information and Organization Recognition.

#### 4.2. Findings of Mentoring Principal Training

In the second sub problem of the research, "Has the program given as a result of the process applied to the Principals in the experimental group participating in the Mentor Principal training program and the Principals in the control group been effective?" The answer to the question was sought. The technique that is used to test the effectiveness of the experimental process in the pattern with pretest-posttest control group, which is the easiest in terms of calculation and interpretation (Beldon, 1994), is the t test for unrelated groups used to test whether there is a significant difference between the averages of the scores of the two groups (Büyüköztürk, 2007;27). In this context, in line with the research, the t-test was performed on the data obtained from the Principals who received the mentor Principal training and the Principals who did not receive the mentor Principal training.) As a general rule, it is desirable that the sizes of the groups be similar. This is especially important in studies with small groups (Ravid, 1994, Büyüköztürk, 2007). In this study, taking this feature into consideration, the experimental and control groups were taken as a small group (Experimental group n = 11 and Control group n = 11)

When the effectiveness of the experimental process is examined based on average scores, in this approach, the research experiment was formed as "the perceptions of school principals who receive mentor principal training are more positive than those who do not receive mentor principal training". The results of the analysis made to test this sub-hypothesis are given in table 4.1.

**Table. 4.1:** T-Test Results of Pre-test and Post-Test Average Scores of Mentor Principal Self-Assessment Questionnaire (MMSQ)

Measurement (MMSQ)	N	$\bar{x}$	S	sd	t	P
Pre-test	22	85.09	4.48	10	- 2. 89	.016*
Post-test	22	96.90	12.47			

\* p<.05

As seen in Table 4.1, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups,  $t (-2.89) = 10$ ,  $p <.05$ . It is seen that there is a positive increase between the pre-test averages ( $\bar{x} = 85.09$ ) and the post-test averages ( $\bar{x} = 96.90$ ) of the subjects who received the mentor Principal training and the control group that did not. This result shows that the changes observed in the mentorship perceptions of Principals can be attributed to the manipulated experimental process (Mentor Principal Training).

Another finding obtained in the research is that the mentor school principals who receive mentoring training should be enthusiastic, open to information sharing, develop

dialogue with the environment, and will also work if they are individuals who know their profession well, Brownie-Ferrigno and Muth (2006; 481) which is similar to the conclusion that eager and practical school principals need a meaningful opportunity to work together to ensure the development of relationships through professional co-operation to support them during the challenging years of the new leadership position. According to the results of the study, in another study in the field, mentoring process of mentoring in school principals and teachers, teachers stated that they are aware of the contributions made to the professional development and upbringing of school principals. The deputy school principals in the study indicated that the principals who are mentors are willing to share their experiences and tend to give advice.

Lastly, the results of the study indicated that mentoring process is important for the professional and social development of school administrators and teachers (Sezgin, Koşar & Er, 2014). In another study on the academic achievement of the school administrators' mentoring roles, in which it was found that there was a positive significant relationship between the school administrators' mentoring roles and the academic achievements of the school they work. In addition, mentoring roles differ significantly according to the professional love of school administrators and the number of students in the school they work; it was concluded that they did not differ significantly according to the faculty where they were graduated from (Yılmaz & Yıldırım, 2013).

## **5. Recommendations and Conclusion**

Although there is a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test results of the mentor Principal training in the analyzes conducted as a result of the experimental study, pre-service or in-service Principal training can be conducted within the framework of the Principal training program. Mentor Principal Self-Assessment Questionnaire (MPSQ) is developed to measure the effectiveness of training, so when the conditions of Turkey for a mentor principal of education is appropriate, this training can be given to all regions, even cities in Turkey, moreover, program evaluation may be introduced as a standard questionnaire for recruiting the principals to the schools. School administrators should be encouraged to participate in such training programs for their professional development and activities aimed at increasing participation can be made. For the overall results of the research, it may be recommended to Ministry of Education of Turkey for giving this training in all geographic regions for the school principals, in addition studies should be done to see how this training effects the results. In order to cry out the wealth of data, by diversifying the sample of the research, opinions of the school's stakeholders (teachers, students, staff, parents) about mentor education can be obtained.

Briefly, it was concluded that a mentor Principal self-assessment questionnaire was developed to measure the effectiveness of mentor Principal training. As the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the developed Mentor Principal Self-Assessment questionnaire was found to be .89, it was concluded that the questionnaire was sufficiently reliable. It is concluded that the valid, reliable and theoretical basis of the Mentor Principal Self-Assessment questionnaire, which is characteristic and traditionally

composed of 2 items and 16 items, is predicted to be sound. As the mentor Principal self-assessment questionnaire was not found in domestic literature reviews, it was concluded that this study would be useful in terms of saving time for the researchers. It was concluded that t-test was used to measure the difference between the mean scores of experimental and control groups.

As a result of the t test, it was concluded that the results of the experimental group receiving mentor Principal training were significantly different from the control group who did not receive this training. It is predicted that this meaningful difference obtained as a result of this analysis conducted to the experimental and control groups will contribute to the relevant literature in order to prove that mentor Principal training is effective and that mentorship attitudes, behaviors and skills can be gained to principals.

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