Public Perception on the Factors that Affecting Turkish Public Administrators' Manager Choice

Akin Erdemir1, Ramazan Erdem2

1Suleyman Demirel University, Research and Application Hospital, Isparta, Turkey
2Suleyman Demirel University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Isparta, Turkey

ABSTRACT
The aim of this research was to evaluate the perception of the public on the factors that Affecting Turkish Public Administrators' Manager Choice. Quantitative research method was used in the research and the data obtained from the survey method were analyzed with SPSS software. According to the results of the research the perception of the public on the factors that Turkish Public Administrators' Manager Choice varies according to the demographic characteristics.

Keywords: Meritocracy, leadership, team, group, member selection, building team

1. INTRODUCTION
Organizations are divided into three groups in Turkey. These; private, public and non-governmental organizations (NGO). While the administrators of private and third sector organizations can select their members of the management teams, which they will work with, until 2011; administrators in public institutions and organizations had no right to choose their own management team. Turkish public administrators are given the right to choose members of their management team in accordance with the merit principle, with the latest legal arrangements1, as in private and third sector organizations. Because, the merit of administrator is essential in terms of managerial function and contributions to achieve the organizational goals [1]. Zaccaro and Banks also stated that the merit of the preferred administrators consists of experience, knowledge, skills and social roles [2]. According to Shirazi and Mortazavi, the merit of the preferred administrators should be included in the evaluation process in order to realize the goals of the organizations [3]. The search for merit in business managers is an important factor for organizational success [4 - 5]. Mooney also mentioned that merit brings a competitive advantage to the organization by affecting the performance of the organization [6]. Today's conditions, as in the other two sectors, have made it mandatory for administrators in the public sector to adopt principles of merit, such as participation, transparency and accountability, fairness and consistency, and governing structures having corporate confidence [7]. It is an indisputable fact that public administrators, who are chosen according to the criteria of similarity (such as nepotism, chronism, patronage and clientelism) or dissimilarity (with various separatist tendencies), are not selected in accordance with the meritocracy principles, will cause the public to be deprived of the advantages of competent managers. If the public perception determined in this research is accepted correctly; it will be possible to say that the authority to select managers given to the public administrators is not used in accordance with its purpose, and triggers the political staffing and teaming, communitarianism and parallel state organizations1. These anti-meritocracy behaviors coincide with the types of favoritism in the literature. According to Bozkurt et al., favoritism is that people who have public facilities, behave in a way that will provide employment opportunity or financial benefits to people who are close to them by kinship or political views or other special reasons [11]. Commonly known types of favoritism are; nepotism, chronism, patronage, service nepotism, logrolling, and lobbying and privileging [12].

The main objective of the research is whether the public perception about the factors affecting Turkish public administrators' manager choice has changed according to the demographic characteristics of the public. The sub-objective of the study is to make a contribution to this field in Turkey in order to reduce the lack of relevant literature.

1.1. Assumptions
It is assumed that the participants' answers to the survey used as data collection tools reflect the real situation.

1.2. Limitations
This research is limited to eighteen (18) and older individuals living in the center of Isparta in July and August 2017 and capable of responding to the survey developed for this research. Since the results of the survey reflect the characteristics of this population, these limitations should be power [9]. Clientelism is to share public opportunities with the surrounding acquaintances [9].

1According to Ilhan and Erdem, Nepotism is the employment of a person to a position based on only kinship relations [8]. Chronism is the appointment of a person to the task because of relationships such as fellowship, friendship, and citizenship [8]. Patronage can be defined as, the dismissal of all the senior executives in the public sector and making new appointments to replace them, by a new party that came to

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taken into account when a generalization is to be made according to the results of the survey. Working on larger and different samples is necessary, in order to generalize the research in other provinces or countries.

2. Method

2.1. Population and Sample

The population of this study is composed of eighteen (18) and older individuals living in the Isparta city center. According to the data of 2016 of the Directorate of Civil Population of Isparta, the population of the research consists of 147,334 people. As is known, it is not possible to give a clear number about how much the sample should be in a research. Considering the present population size, a sample consists of approximately 384 individuals is considered sufficient for this population to provide a 5% error tolerance and a 95% confidence level [13]. Four hundred people were reached in the study and all of the surveys were taken into consideration. The sample of the study was selected by the convenience sampling method and the participants were determined in this way.

2.2. Data Collection Tool

The studies conducted in the literature review stage of the study revealed that, no suitable scale was found for the purpose of the research. Therefore, the questions of the survey were formed by the researcher in accordance with the conceptual framework obtained from the literature review. While creating the questions of the survey; interviews were made by relevant experts. As a result of these interviews, a question pool consist of 350 questions was obtained. These 350 questions were classified by the researcher in accordance with the conceptual framework in the literature and reduced to approximately 100 questions. These 100 questions were reduced to 63 questions in a brainstorming session at a meeting with the participation of some academicians working in the field. Nine of these questions were prepared in order to obtain demographic information and 54 of them in 5-Likert Scale format. In addition, one of the 54 questions was used as a control question. After taking the final form of the questionnaire, it was found that the expressions consisted of the following 7 dimensions; merit, external influences and politics, trust and loyalty, school and business environment, ethnic origin and sect, representation and talent, relatives and citizenship. With a pilot application, including 100 people, the survey, including 63 questions, was tested in the field. Interviewers who had not been involved in the field were trained and thus did not fulfill the parametric assumptions [14-15]. Therefore, Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis variance analysis were applied to these dimensions. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) examines the degree of validation of a predetermined or designed structure, by using the total data [16]. Since the original scale used in this study was not used by any researcher before, DFA could not be performed for the research results.

3. Findings

3.1. Demographic Findings

Table1. Distribution of Participants According to Demographic Variables

| Variables                  | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Age (Years)                |           |         |
| 18-29                      | 152       | 40.3    |
| 30-39                      | 102       | 27.1    |
| 40+                        | 123       | 32.6    |
| Total                      | 377       | 100     |
| Sex                        |           |         |
| Male                       | 262       | 69.5    |
| Female                     | 115       | 30.5    |
| Total                      | 377       | 100     |
| Marital Status             |           |         |
| Married                    | 255       | 68.9    |
| Single                     | 115       | 31.1    |
| Total                      | 370       | 100     |
| Monthly Income (TL)        |           |         |
| -1500 TL                   | 51        | 14.5    |
| 1501-2500 TL               | 89        | 25.3    |
| 2501-3500 TL               | 147       | 41.8    |
| 3501+ TL                   | 65        | 18.4    |
| Total                      | 352       | 100     |
| Education Level            |           |         |
| -High School               | 105       | 28.1    |
| Associate degree           | 111       | 29.7    |
| College+                   | 158       | 42.2    |
| Total                      | 374       | 100     |
| Employment Sector          |           |         |
| Public                     | 213       | 58.7    |
| Private                    | 117       | 32.2    |
| Retired                    | 13        | 3.6     |
| Un-employed                | 20        | 5.5     |
| Total                      | 363       | 100     |
| Worked in any Public Management Team |       |        |
| Yes                        | 53        | 15.9    |
| No                         | 280       | 84.1    |
| Total                      | 333       | 100     |
| Grand Total                | 400       | 100.0   |

http://www.ysk.gov.tr/ysk/docs/2011MilletvekiliSecimi/SecmenSandik2011.htm. (07.01.2017)

A non-probability/non-random sampling technique.

To increase the reliability of the application, the 40th question was used as a control question.
### 3.2. Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation Findings

#### Table 2. Findings of the Factors Expressed by the Participants about the Tendency of Turkish Public Administrators’ (TPA) Manager Choice

| No. | EXPRESSIONS                                                                                                           | X   | SS  | Factor Load |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-------------|
| 1   | TPM prefers the relatives and acquaintances while selecting managers.                                                   | 4.768 | 0.582 | 0.712       |
| 2   | TPM prefers their fellow citizens while selecting managers.                                                            | 4.755 | 0.588 | 0.670       |
| 3   | TPM prefers people who are in their group of friends, while selecting managers.                                       | 4.705 | 0.632 | 0.570       |
| 4   | TPM prefers people who graduated from same school, while selecting managers.                                         | 4.505 | 0.855 | 0.595       |
| 5   | TPM prefers people who have same political view, while selecting managers.                                            | 4.848 | 0.458 | 0.796       |
| 6   | TPM prefers people who have the same profession, while selecting managers.                                            | 4.492 | 0.958 | 0.743       |
| 7   | TPM prefers people who are members of the same union, while selecting managers.                                       | 4.825 | 0.539 | 0.476       |
| 8   | TPM prefers people who are members of the same religious group, while selecting managers.                               | 4.802 | 0.570 | 0.487       |
| 9   | The bureaucratic pressure arising from the upper tiers is effective for TPM while selecting managers.                  | 4.803 | 0.499 | 0.760       |
| 10  | Ethnic origin (Turkish, Kurdish, Laz, Cherkes etc.) of the candidate is effective for TPM while selecting managers.      | 4.560 | 0.853 | 0.898       |
| 11  | Financial gain is effective for TPM while selecting managers.                                                          | 4.677 | 0.781 | 0.514       |
| 12  | The pressures of the private sector companies through politics are effective for TPM while selecting managers.          | 4.683 | 0.684 | 0.424       |
| 13  | Social perception (communitarianism, communist, follower of sharia, leftist/rightist etc.) about the executive candidates is effective for TPM while selecting managers. | 4.800 | 0.548 | 0.791       |
| 14  | The perception (communitarianism, communist, follower of sharia, leftist/rightist etc.) of senior bureaucrats and politicians about the executive candidates is effective for TPM while selecting managers. | 4.782 | 0.544 | 0.807       |
| 15  | The way in which the manager obtains his position (politics, sect, communitarianism, union, merit, etc.), is effective for TPM while selecting managers. | 4.759 | 0.542 | 0.798       |
| 16  | TPM prefers sycophant people while selecting managers.                                                                 | 4.675 | 0.700 | 0.538       |
| 17  | TPM prefers people from the leading families of the city while selecting managers.                                     | 4.231 | 1.124 | -           |
| 18  | The Sect (Sunni, Alawism etc.) of the candidate is effective for TPM while selecting managers.                          | 4.375 | 1.038 | 0.893       |
| 19  | TPM prefers people who worked with them before while selecting managers.                                               | 4.499 | 0.906 | -           |
| 20  | The Intelligence of the candidate is effective for TPM while selecting managers.                                       | 1.729 | 1.076 | 0.530       |
| 21  | The loyalty of the candidate is effective for TPM while selecting managers.                                            | 3.887 | 1.494 | 0.951       |
| 22  | The faithfulness of the candidate is effective for TPM while selecting managers.                                       | 3.860 | 1.519 | 0.973       |
| 23  | The privacy and secrecy behavior of the candidate is effective for TPM while selecting managers.                        | 3.842 | 1.557 | 0.958       |
| 24  | TPM prefers people who was taken part in the management team of one of the previous managers, while selecting managers. | 1.477 | 0.963 | 0.760       |
| 25  | Professional reference is effective for TPM while selecting managers.                                                  | 4.180 | 1.295 | 0.854       |
| 26  | TPM considers providing a social equilibrium in a way that constitutes the mosaic structure (where every section is fairly represented) while selecting managers. | 1.447 | 0.922 | 0.713       |
| 27  | TPM considers the requests/demands of the lower levels within the organization, while selecting managers.               | 3.648 | 1.513 | -           |
| 28  | TPM considers professional reference while selecting managers.                                                         | 3.650 | 1.638 | -           |
| 29  | TPM considers the requests of managers of the other organizations, while selecting managers.                            | 4.640 | 0.814 | 0.422       |
| 30  | TPM prefers people who have a common motivation feature, while selecting managers.                                     | 1.990 | 1.319 | 0.546       |
| 31  | TPM considers the potential of the candidate for being a competitor in the future while selecting managers.            | 4.465 | 1.089 | -           |
| 32  | TPM prefers people who do not give up their values while selecting managers.                                           | 1.432 | 0.864 | -           |
| 33  | TPM prefers people who have a High Level Questioning Ability, while selecting managers.                                | 1.502 | 0.788 | 0.768       |
| 37  | TPM prefers well-educated people while selecting managers.                                                             | 1.646 | 0.955 | 0.763       |
| 38  | TPM prefers people who have the highest specialized knowledge in the field to be studied, while selecting managers.     | 1.621 | 0.863 | 0.907       |
| 39  | TPM prefers experienced people in the field to be studied, while selecting managers.                                 | 1.690 | 0.955 | 0.809       |
As a result of the examination, the expressions in the 17, 19, 27 and 28th questions, which were found to be overlapped, were removed from the scale. On the other hand, the expressions in the 31st and 32th questions, which were found to be single factors because they consisted of only one question, were excluded from the scale. Finally, the control question in the 40th expression, which was used to increase the reliability of the study, was also excluded from the scale. In summary, seven expressions in the 17, 19, 27, 28, 31, 32 and 40th questions were excluded from the scale of the study for various reasons mentioned above. The number of valid expressions in the scale was determined as 47 (21 + 12 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 3 + 2).

According to the highly-rated factors expressed by the participants, the factors that considered as important for Turkish public administrators while selecting their management teams, are listed below respectively;
- Having same political view,
- Being a member of the same union,
- The situation of bureaucratic pressure from the upper tiers,
- Being in the same religious group,
- Social perception (communitarianism, communist, follower of sharia, leftist/rightist etc.) about the executive candidates to be selected for the team,
- The perception (communitarianism, communist, follower of sharia, leftist/rightist etc.) of senior bureaucrats and politicians about the manager candidates to be selected for the team,
- to be one of close relatives and acquaintances,
- The way in which the administrator obtains his position (politics, sect, communitarianism, union, merit, etc.),
- Being a fellow citizen,
- Being one of the friends.

According to the low-rated factors expressed by the participants, the factors that considered as less important Turkish public administrators while selecting their management teams, are listed below respectively;
- Displaying a high level of Innovation,
- Displaying a high level of communication ability,
- Initiative,
- Displaying a high level of adaptive skill,
- Having sharing abilities,
- Having teamwork skills,
- Displaying a high level of problem solving ability,
- Having a high level of questioning ability,
- To have taken part in the management team of one of the previous managers,
- Making the selection of executives by considering the social equilibrium in a way that constitutes the mosaic structure (where every section is fairly represented).
According to the Table 4, the KMO value of the scale is 0.93. Considering the table created by Sipahi et al. including KMO values and comments; it is determined that the suitability level of the variables used in this study to the factor analysis is excellent [18]. Kalaycı also states that the higher the KMO value, the better the dataset is for factor analysis [17]. Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity is used to examine the hypothesis that the variables of the main structure are unrelated or not. According to the “0” value indicated in the Table 7, which fulfills the p<0.01 condition, results of the Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity used in the study are significant.

### 4. Discussion and Conclusions

According to the results obtained from the dimensions of the research, the public perception about the factors that affecting Turkish public administrators’ manager choice can be summarized as follows:

**The public perception about the Merit Factor:** According to the public perception, the Merit Factor is not a determinative factor for Turkish public administrators’ manager choice.

**The public perception about the External Influences and Politics Factor:** According to the public perception, the External Influences and Politics Factor is a determinative factor in Turkish public administrators’ manager choice.

**The public perception about the Trust and Loyalty Factor:** According to the public perception, the Trust and Loyalty Factor is a determinative factor in Turkish public administrators’ manager choice.

**The public perception about the School and Business Environment Factor:** According to the public perception, the School and Business Environment Factor is a determinative factor in Turkish public administrators' manager choice.

**The public perception about the Ethnic Origin and Sect Factor:** According to the public perception, the Ethnic Origin and Sect Factor is a determinative factor in Turkish public administrators’ manager choice.

**The public perception about the Representation and Talent Factor:** According to the public perception, the Representation and Talent Factor is definitely not a determinative factor in Turkish public administrators’ manager choice.

**The public perception about the Relatives and Citizenship Factor:** According to the public perception, the Relatives and Citizenship Factor is definitely not a determinative factor in Turkish public administrators’ manager choice.

As a result of the study, it was determined that the public perception about the effective factors for Turkish public...
administrators' manager choice, the age, gender and marital status variables did not show a statistically significant difference. However, it was found that, monthly income level, education level, employment sector and experience variables displayed significant statistical differences in the perceptions of meritocracy or in the perceptions of favoritism.

As a result of the examination of three variables (monthly income level, education level and employment sector), which were determined as an effect on favoritism behavior while selecting managers, it was determined that the opinions of the participants were gathered in two contrasting views. These opinions and qualifications of the participants are as follows:

- Participants, who have a possibility to be a public administrator and who have knowledge about the process of selection of managers (high-income, college graduate and public employee), have an opinion that favoritism is effective in the selection of public administrators.

- Participants, who have not a possibility to be a public administrator and who have less knowledge about the process of selection of managers compared to the previous group (low income, high school or lower educated and working in the private sector), have an opinion that the merit is effective in the selection of public administrators.

Çelik and Erdem also stated that the favoritism perception of the employees, who are more familiar with the promotion process, are higher than those beginner employees, who are less familiar or unfamiliar with the promotion process [19]. The difference between the perceptions of these two groups is explained by the fact that the employees who more familiar with the promotion process have more information than the others. Pelit et al. state that there are differences in the favoritism perceptions of the private sector employees also [20]. Some studies revealed that there is no statistically significant relationship between the demographic characteristics of the employees and their favoritism perception in the private sector, where administrative and organizational dynamics are very different from the public sector [21].

The experience variable, which has been found to affect the favoritism perception, is another remarkable aspect of the research. The opinions of the participants, who have worked as public administrator before and still have the opinion that meritocracy principles are effective, are contradicted by the general results of the study. However, due to the fact that the participants included the individuals who had previously worked as public administrators (experienced participants who expressed exceptional views in the research), the possibility of not expressing objective opinions while answering the survey was taken into account. It was observed that the experienced participants, who are considered as exceptional group and who have previously served as public administrator, contradict with their opinions about the merit criteria in their answers of some other questions. For example, participants who have the opinion of merit is a determinant factor in the selection of public administrators (who served as public administrator) have been contradicted by responding to another question of the survey as "old managers are not preferred in new manager selections". Therefore, it was thought that the exceptional opinion of this group would not affect the results of the study.

Similarity between the results of this research with the results of the other researches performed in Turkey and international literature were observed. The negative effects of the favoritism perception on the employees were reported in multiple studies [22-23]. Suggestions developed to eliminate the favoritism perception, which differing according to the demographic variables, about the selection of the Turkish public administrators, is as follows:

The necessary legislative regulations should be made for the implementation of the meritocracy principles in the selection of Turkish public administrators.

- A transparent and reliable promotion process should be developed for all employees who has the possibility to be a public administrator.

- A higher order board should be established to assess the performance of the public managers and to perform a penalty and reward mechanism.

- It is suggested that future researchers working on this subject can achieve deeper results by using qualitative research methods from different perspectives.

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