



## Problems Encountered by School Administrators in School Management in the COVID-19 Pandemic and Strategies for Coping with These Problems

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### Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the problems faced by school administrators in school management and strategies to cope with these problems during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study group of the research, in which the phenomenology pattern, one of the qualitative research methods, was used, consists of 22 school administrators. Maximum diversity sampling method was used to determine the participants. A semi-structured interview form was used as a data collection tool in the research. The analysis of the research data was carried out in accordance with the content analysis technique. As a result of the research, the problems that school principals encounter in school management during the COVID-19 pandemic process are divided into 8 sub-themes: administrative problems, communication problems, financing problems, planning problems, problems with personnel, problems in school climate, problems in school health and problems encountered in the education and training process. clustered. School principals stated that they used different strategies, both administrative and individual, when coping with these problems. School principals stated that they received support from other school administrators as a managerial strategy, consulted with the school management team, benefited from teachers with distance education experience, made effective monitoring and evaluation, identified the source of problems, exhibited technology leadership behaviors, acted with a flexible management approach, used different communication tools. and shared good practices with teachers.

**Keywords:** School management, COVID-19, School administrator, School principal, Strategy

## COVID-19 Pandemisinde Okul Yöneticilerinin Okul Yönetiminde Karşılaştıkları Sorunlar ve Bu Sorunlarla Başa Çıkma Stratejileri

### Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı COVID-19 pandemisinde okul yöneticilerinin okul yönetiminde karşılaştıkları sorunları ve bu sorunlarla başa çıkma stratejilerini incelemektir. Nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden fenomenoloji deseninin kullanıldığı araştırmanın çalışma grubunu 22 okul yöneticisi oluşturmaktadır. Katılımcıların belirlenmesinde maksimum çeşitlilik örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmıştır. Araştırma verilerinin çözümlenmesinde içerik analizi tekniği kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda COVID-19 pandemisi sürecinde okul yöneticilerinin okul yönetiminde karşılaştıkları sorunlar yönetimsel sorunlar, iletişim sorunları, finansman sorunu, planlama sorunları, personelle ilgili sorunlar, okul ikliminde yaşanan sorunlar, okul sağlığında yaşanan sorunlar ve eğitim-öğretim sürecinde karşılaşılan sorunlar olmak üzere 8 alt temada toplanmıştır. Okul yöneticilerin sorunlarla başa çıkmak için yönetimsel ve bireysel farklı stratejilere

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başvurdıkları belirlenmiştir. Okul yöneticileri yönetsel strateji olarak diğer okul yöneticilerinden destek aldıklarını, okul yönetim ekibiyle istişare yaptıklarını, öğretmenlerden yararlandıklarını, etkili izleme ve değerlendirme yaptıklarını, sorunların kaynağını tespit ettiklerini, teknoloji liderliği davranışları sergilediklerini, esnek yönetim anlayışıyla hareket ettiklerini, farklı iletişim araçlarını kullandıklarını ve iyi uygulamaları öğretmenlerle paylaştıklarını ifade etmişlerdir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Okul yönetimi, COVID-19, Okul yöneticisi, Okul müdürü, Strateji

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## Introduction

COVID-19, which emerged in December 2019 in Wuhan, China, World Health Organization (WHO) was declared a “pandemic” on 11 March 2020 (WHO, 2020). While 36 975 people died from the COVID-19 pandemic in Turkey, this worldwide the number reached 3 010 000 people; both the rate of spread of the pandemic and the death rates continues to increase (Ministry of Health, 2021). Declaring COVID-19 as a pandemic social life, health, economy and education sectors in many countries since significant changes have occurred. Because pandemics affect the health systems of countries. cause profound changes in economic, political and social aspects as well as deeply affecting them.

They can be with the pandemic, there have been serious changes in the flow and rhythm of life all over the World (Zhao, 2020); world in order to reduce the impact of the pandemic and slow the rate of its spread applications such as flexible working, working from home, rotating work in many parts of the World has been passed. In addition, partial or full-time curfews all over the world, measures such as quarantine processes, isolation processes and maintaining social distance have been taken. Within the scope of these measures, places that can reduce social distance or increase contact were closed, and schools and universities were included in these closed places (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Gupta & Goplani, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has affected every industry it has deeply affected the education sector as well as the education sector and has caused serious concerns about this sector has been. Because with the spread of the pandemic, as of April 2020, 192 countries completely, 5 countries have closed their schools locally and therefore the student population of the World 99.4% (approximately 1.716 billion students) were affected by this process (UNESCO, 2020a). In Turkey, due to the interruption of Education Over 18 million students and more than 1 million education workers were affected because of this (MEB, 2020a).

All countries urgently need to prevent students from being cut off from education due to school closures. They began to look for solutions. Considering the contagiousness and rate of spread of COVID-19 it is the most important thing for individuals to continue their education without jeopardizing their health. It has been seen that one of the simple and effective ways is to resort to technological opportunities and this This view has brought distance education to the agenda (Emin, 2020). Many countries due to the pandemic Ensuring the continuity of education by putting into practice emergency measure packages using digital technologies. They tried to provide (Angoletto & Queiroz, 2020). Countries, schools' search for Education education packages to support the education of children, a variety of educational resources, including

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radio education, educational television, and online teaching resources. used resources/paths. With schools taking a break from teaching, all over the World online platforms have been the most frequently used tools (Taş, 2021). Online tools consist of educational content and format that students can discover on their own from guided learning programs to virtual meetings and real teacher-led time courses vary widely (Schleicher, 2020).

Upon the emergence of positive cases and the onset of deaths in Turkey, all educational institutions education has been interrupted and all educational institutions are short-lived in order to switch to distance education. At the same time, it had to prepare its infrastructure (Davran, 2020). An alternative before Distance education, which is considered as a compulsory education during the COVID-19 pandemic, It has taken part in all levels of education in a way that has taken place in all levels of education and due to the pandemic It has been started to be applied as the only alternative in all areas where it cannot be done (Fidan, 2020).

Distance education, through electronic or non-electronic systems, limits place and time. It is a planned and comprehensive learning program that removes the activity (Altıparmak, Kurt & Kapıdere, 2011). Distance education, conventional standard classroom In cases where it is not possible to carry out in-house activities, various electronic media It can also be defined as providing education from a specific center by using to İşman (2011), distance education is the educational attainment of learners and teachers in different environments. It is a training model in which they carry out their activities through communication technologies or mail.

After schools interrupted education due to the pandemic, countries have recognized children's learning losses. different distance education methods in order to reduce have started to use it. The physical and technological capacity of the countries and the level of teachers' technological skills, families and children's appropriate physical Depending on the circumstances and the availability of technological tools, various digital teaching using synchronous (synchronous) and asynchronous methods with platforms carried out (UNESCO, 2020b). Suspension of education due to the pandemic in our country Television and internet-based distance education was started by the Ministry of Education, Education Informatics Educational support has been started to be given over the internet and television with the EBA Network (Duban & Şen, 2020). Aiming not to interrupt students' education, remote the center of the education process was specified as "television + internet" (MEB, 2020b), more In the next period, external live lessons came to the fore through the Education Information Network (EBA).

Education of the epidemic the changes in the school system have caused important developments at the school level as well has been. Suspension of education in schools within the scope of epidemic measures, face-to-face the evolution of education to distance education, the increase in the importance of school health and hygiene and many current issues such as the use of technology in education are new issues in the management process of schools situations and developments. Decisions made by policy makers regarding education during the pandemic period. School administrations have important duties and responsibilities in the implementation phase. The uncertainty that may arise in times of crisis such as a Pandemic in the chaos environment, the reflexes of schools to adapt to existing and developing new situations needs to be developed and strengthened (Kavrayıcı & Kesim, 2021). This situation as a leader, the school principals continue the problem-solving processes in management. development has become a necessity (Çalık, Sezgin & Çalık, 2013). Epidemic education and training has changed rapidly and stakeholders are not prepared for this sudden change. by rapidly changing

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the focus and methods of school principals while they were caught they had to lead in the disruption of education.

Developments in education and training activities due to the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic It has been the subject of many academic studies. When the studies are examined technology leadership of school administrators (Turan, 2020), instructional leadership (Keleş, Atay & Karanfil, 2020), distance education (Altun-Ekiz, 2020), education at universities during the epidemic process (Dikmen & Bahçeci, 2020), comparison of educational activities in countries (Telli & Altun, 2020). These academic studies when evaluated in general, the studies carried out are mostly educational activities. Appears to be focused on However, the COVID-19 epidemic also affects the management of the school. It can be said that it has led to important developments and changes. The success of school-centered educational activities is closely related to the management processes of the school.

While the education administration deals with the system, the school administration deals with the problems intensifying at the school level. deals with. Educational administration is a macro level education, school management is a micro level approaches with a point of view (Erdoğan, 2010). In order to achieve success in school management, to identify the problems encountered in the management of the school, to overcome these problems. Developing solutions is very important (Taş, 2021). In this context, school in the COVID-19 epidemic the problems encountered in the management of the school, the school principals responsible for the management of the school the determination of the opinions in line with their opinions and the presentation of solution proposals. It is thought that it will contribute to the studies to be carried out on education in the period. Epidemic The problems encountered in school management in the process of may be due to its absence. In this period of the epidemic, in the education process. Determining the problems encountered by applying scientific methods will occur in the future. It will enable to be prepared for possible crisis and disaster situations.

The aim of this research is to determine the school principals' management in the COVID-19 epidemic. to examine the problems they face and the strategies to deal with these problems. For this purpose to achieve this, answers to the following questions will be sought:

1. Problems faced by school principals in school management in the COVID-19 pandemic what are they?
2. Dealing with the problems faced by school principals in school management during the COVID-19 pandemic what are exit strategies?

### **Method**

Qualitative research method was preferred in this study, which aims to examine the problems faced by school principals in school management during the COVID-19 pandemic and the strategies for coping with these problems according to the opinions of school principals. The research was designed as a phenomenological pattern, one of the qualitative research types. To reveal human experiences about a phenomenon the phenomenology pattern, which is a research strategy carried out with the aim of (Creswell, 2013), to cases that are known but do not have a detailed knowledge and understanding about focuses (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021).

## **Study Group**

The study group of this research consists of 22 school administrators. The maximum diversity sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used to determine the participants. Maximum diversity sampling is defined as determining similar and different situations in relation to the problem being studied in the universe and conducting the study on these situations (Büyüköztürk et al., 2022). In the use of this technique, it is aimed to reach richer and more detailed data by ensuring the diversity of participants. In order to ensure diversity, attention has been paid to the fact that the participants of the study work in different types of schools, are from different branches, have different seniority and have different educational levels. Of the participants, 15 are men and 7 are women. Of the participants, 5 are in preschool, 7 are in primary school, 6 are in middle school, 6 are in high school. The managerial experience of 6 of the participants is 8 years, 5 of them are 6 years, 10 of them are 5 years, 3 of them are 4 years.

## **Data Collection**

The research data were obtained from face-to-face interviews with volunteer participants in accordance with the interview method. Before starting the interviews, the participants were informed about the purpose of the research with the consent form. Necessary explanations have been made regarding the confidentiality and reliability of the information. The duration of the interviews with each participant is planned as approximately 20 minutes. The interviews were conducted at the schools where the participants worked and at the time periods determined by the participants. In this study, the principles of scientific research and publication ethics were meticulously complied with, and necessary permissions were obtained for this purpose, and a Voluntary Consent Form was signed by the participants.

## **Analysis of Data**

Content analysis technique was used in the analysis of research data. The purpose of content analysis is to explain the data obtained as a result of the research with various concepts (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). First, all of the data obtained were examined in detail and codes were given to expressions with the same meaning. Then, themes and sub-themes were created according to the codes. At the last stage, the themes and sub-themes created were arranged, the findings were defined and interpreted. In addition, direct quotations from the opinions of some participants were made. The real names of the school administrators participating in the study were not used, and the names of the administrators were coded as M1, M2, .....M22.

The findings obtained as a result of the analysis of the data were interpreted systematically with a critical approach, multidimensional considerations were made while specifying the possible reasons for the findings, and discussions supported by the results of the relevant literature were made. In the interpretation of the findings, excessive generalizations were avoided in the results and discussions, a flexible language with probability was used instead of a sharp language, and care was taken to ensure that the suggestions developed were based on research findings.

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## Findings

### 1. Findings Regarding the Problems Faced by School Administrators in School Management in the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Findings regarding the problems encountered by school administrators in school administration during the COVID-19 pandemic are given in Table 1.

**Table 1.** *Opinions of School Administrators about the Problems They Encountered in School Administration During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Theme	Theme Sub-theme	Codes
<b>Problems that School Administrators Face in School Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic</b>	Administrative problems	Not being prepared for the crisis Constant change of decisions Lack of clarity and comprehensibility of ministerial decisions The fact that the decisions contradict the legislation Failure to take the opinions of practitioners in centralized decisions Failure to achieve unity in the implementation of decisions Managers have to take more initiative than necessary Weakening of cooperation with stakeholders Experiencing delays in centralized decisions
	Communication problems	Why the inability to make face-to-face communication is caused by misunderstandings Some parents' inability to use communication tools The rise of disinformation on social media
	The problem of financing	Reduction of the school's income sources Increase in health and cleaning expenses
	Planning problems	Lack of an action plan on distance education Experiencing conflicts in weekly lesson planning Ignoring disadvantaged students in planning Decisions The current lesson plans should be based on face-to-face education
	Problems with personnel	Loss of motivation Decreasing the effectiveness of teachers Poor performance Reduction of cooperation Reduction of productivity
	Problems experienced in the school climate	The dominance of uncertainty The formation of anxiety and fear Deterioration of social relations Decimation of interaction between employees Reduction of colleague cooperation
	Problems experienced in school health	Experiencing difficulties in maintaining social distance The fact that old habits complicate the implementation of health measures High risk of disease transmission at school
	Problems encountered in the educational process	Increasing inequality of opportunities and opportunities Interruption of the continuity of education and training Falling student participation Increasing learning losses Lack of technological infrastructure The problem of adaptation to distance education The difficulty of distance education of inclusion students Weakening of students' belonging to the school The difficulty of making assessment and evaluation in distance education Decrease in efficiency in remote processing of applied courses

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According to Table 1, the problems that school principals face in school administration during the COVID-19 pandemic are clustered into 8 sub-themes. These sub-themes administrative issues, communication issues, financing issues, planning issues, personnel issues, problems in the school climate, school health issues and problems that are encountered in the educational process. Codes in the administrative problems subcategory; failure to be prepared for the decisions of the Ministry of the crisis, a lack of clear and concise decision because they are in contradiction with the legislation of the continuous change of the comments, instead of official correspondence in the use of other channels are central in the decision to seek the views of practitioners failure is the lack of unity in the implementation of the decision, managers have to take too much Initiative, cooperation with stakeholders in the decision the weakening of central and delays are listed as.

Codes in the communication problems subcategory; the inability to make face-to-face communication causes misunderstandings, the inability of some parents to use communication tools and the increase in disinformation on social media have been listed as. The codes in the financing problem subcategory are listed as increasing health and cleaning expenses and decreasing the income sources of the school. Codes in the subcategory of planning problems; the lack of an action plan related to distance education, conflicts in weekly lesson planning, ignoring disadvantaged students in planning, and existing lesson plans are listed as being based on face-to-face education. The codes in the personnel related problems subcategory are listed as loss of motivation, decreased effectiveness of teachers, decreased performance, decreased cooperation, decreased productivity and weakening of belonging.

The codes in the subcategory of problems experienced in school health are listed as difficulty in maintaining social distance, old habits make it difficult to implement health measures, and the risk of disease transmission at school is high. Problems in the educational process in the sub-category codes; the increase in opportunity and inequality of opportunity, education and training interruption in the continuity of, the fall of Student Involvement, learning losses increase, the lack of technological infrastructure, the weakening of social and emotional development of students in distance education issues, the challenge for distance education students belonging to the weakening of the school inclusion of students in distance education assessment of the difficulty of making practical classes is listed as the decline in efficiency in processing the remote. Some examples of school administrators' views on the subject are presented below:

The most important problem we face is that the instructions and instructions coming from the center are not fully understood, and they are announced to the public via social media in a way that everyone makes different meanings (M2).

The fact that everything changes every day. The previous decisions taken turn into other decisions the next day. There are difficulties in transferring current information to parents, students and teachers (M7).

We had difficulty in making distance education plans. The reason is that it is necessary to evaluate many factors together. In addition, because we are used to central government, we have always waited for orders and instructions. The ministry also failed to show reflexes in time due to the fact that it was his first experience. Sometimes he experienced contradictions(M11).

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We are experiencing economic difficulties because our school canteens are closed and donations from our parents are falling. Another is that constantly changing and updated implementation decisions prevent creating a stable course (M16).

Preparation of the epidemic process of the schools There were problems we had in the process of obtaining the clean certificate of the school. Jul. We have survived this process with the supports we have received. We received our documents, but we also went through a difficult process with our staff (M19).

Chaos is occurring with the inconsistent orders of our ministry. It's up to the managers to put this together. Unclear regulations put us in trouble in front of teachers, students and parents (M20).

The fact that the parent whose student did not come to the school even though the expenses of the school continued has left the financial support he had made to the school before has revealed another difficulty (M22).

## 2. Findings on Strategies for Coping with the Problems Faced by School Administrators in the COVID-19 Pandemic

The data of the findings on the strategies for coping with the problems encountered by school administrators in the COVID-19 pandemic are given in Table 2.

**Table 2.** *Opinions of School Administrators on Strategies for Coping with the Problems They Encountered in the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Theme	Theme Sub-theme	Codes
<b>Strategies for Coping with the Problems Faced by School Administrators in School Management in the COVID-19 Pandemic</b>	Managerial strategies	Getting support from other school administrators
		Consultation with the school management team
		Consultation with other school administrations in the education district
		Benefiting from teachers with distance education experience
		Effective monitoring and evaluation
		Identifying the source of the problem
		Exhibiting technology leadership behaviors
	Individual strategies	Flexible management approach
		Using different means of communication
		Sharing good practices with teachers
		Don't act cold-blooded and discreet
		Taking the initiative
		Making individual sacrifices
		Showing the will to solve problems
Effective communication		
Don't be patient		

According to Table 2, the strategies of school principals to deal with the problems they face in school administration during the COVID-19 pandemic are clustered into 2 sub-themes. These sub-themes are managerial strategies and individual strategies. Codes in the sub-theme of managerial strategies; getting support from other school administrators, school management team, in consultation with the school administration in consultation with the other in the area of education, distance education for teachers with experience to benefit from effective monitoring and evaluation, to identify the source of the problem, technology leadership behaviors, exhibiting a flexible management approach, using different communication tools to share with teachers and best practices are in order. Codes in the individual strategies sub-theme;



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acting coolly and prudently, taking initiative, making individual sacrifices, showing the will to solve problems, effective communication and patience are listed as. Some examples of school administrators' views on the subject are presented below:

We held meetings with representatives of the relevant parties and determined a strategy. By taking advantage of our friends who have competence in distance education, we have ensured the dissemination of good practices throughout the school. We have taken joint decisions in order to ensure unity within the education region (M4).

I used the programs that our teachers will use in distance education myself first. Then I showed the teachers how to use the program to our teachers in a practical way (M7).

I was injured by different technological tools to communicate with teachers and staff during periods when face-to-face meetings were prohibited. I also announced the good practices in distance education to teachers (M12).

First of all, I followed the policy of calmly spreading the waiting time. Those who were in a hurry experienced difficulties. I adopted the understanding of flexibility instead of a strict attitude (M18).

Work should be continued patiently and decisively. This process will continue until it passes (M21).

I had a consultation with our management team and help from other school administrator friends (M22).

## **Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

According to the findings obtained as a result of the research, it is seen that school administrators are facing a wide variety of problems in the management of the school during the COVID-19 pandemic. The identified issues; administrative issues, communication issues, financing issues, planning issues, personnel issues, problems in the school climate, school health issues and problems that are encountered in the educational process.

Failure to be prepared for crises, issues administrative issues under the heading of the decisions of the Ministry of lack of a clear and concise decision decision because they are in contradiction with the legislation of the continuous change of the comments, managers have to take too much initiative, cooperation with stakeholders in the decision the weakening of central and delays are listed as. Sarı and Nayır (2020), who examined international reports during the pandemic period in their study, state that countries' unpreparedness for the crisis has emerged as an important problem in the educational process. This finding described in the reports coincides with the finding obtained from the research that the lack of preparedness of school administrations for the crisis is one of the problems encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic process. An important problem faced by school principals under the sub-category of administrative problems is the problems experienced in decision-making processes. School principals stated that the decisions taken by the ministry during the COVID-19 pandemic were not clear and understandable, decisions were constantly changing, conflicting decisions were made with the legislation, unity was not achieved in the implementation of decisions, there were delays in centralized decisions, and the opinions of practitioners were not taken about the decisions taken related to the management of the school. The research findings of Kavrayıcı

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and Kesim (2021), in which they examined the reflections of the COVID-19 pandemic process on school management processes, support the conclusion that the decisions made in their studies caused problems in school management processes.

One of the main findings of the research is that school principals encounter communication problems during the COVID-19 pandemic. School principals have stated that the inability to conduct face-to-face communication about communication causes misunderstandings, some parents are unable to use communication tools, and disinformation on social media is increasing. Külekçi-Akyavuz and Çakın (2020) also stated in their studies that the vast majority of school administrators experience problems due to the lack of communication with both teachers and students, as well as with parents, and due to the lack of face-to-face communication. Even under normal conditions, communication barriers are often experienced in organizations in general and in schools in particular, while fighting an epidemic that affects the whole world in an extraordinary process and while faced with the limitation of communication channels within the scope of this struggle, it is inevitable that communication problems will occur. In the study conducted by Taş (2021); eliminating the possibility of learning by doing-living, minimizing teacher-student-parent communication, interaction and cooperation, disrupting students' socialization, the risk of technology addiction increasing the number of students, experiencing problems with access to the course have been expressed as negative aspects of distance education.

In the research, one of the problems faced by school principals during the COVID-19 pandemic is the problems related to financing. The school principals expressed the problems related to financing as an increase in health and cleaning expenses and a decrease in the school's income sources. This finding is in parallel with the finding of Kavrayıcı and Kesim (2021) that school incomes decreased and appropriation deprivation was withdrawn in some schools during the pandemic process. Similarly, Memduhoğlu and Meriç (2014) state that one of the main problems that school principals encounter the most in the management of the school is the problem of financing and budget. Sarice (2006) states that the implementation of many tasks in the management of the school depends on financing and budget and draws attention to the importance of financing and budget in the effectiveness of the school.

In the study, school administrators believe that they have encountered problems in planning in school management during the COVID-19 pandemic. The school administrators stated the problems they encountered with planning as the lack of an action plan related to distance education, there were conflicts in weekly lesson planning, disadvantaged students were ignored in planning, and the existing lesson plans were based on face-to-face education. Dec. Külekçi-Akyavuz and Çakın (2020) found that school administrators had planning problems during the pandemic period, and Arslan and Küçük (2016) supported the findings of their research on the findings that school administrators encountered problems related to planning in their studies. Başaran and Çinkır (2013) stated educational planning as the process of deciding the ways of providing and using the inputs needed to ensure that the school achieves its educational, organizational and managerial goals.

The school principals who participated in the research stated that they encountered many problems under the heading of personnel problems during the COVID-19 pandemic. These problems are listed as staff loss of motivation, decreased effectiveness of teachers, decreased

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performance, decreased cooperation and productivity, and weakening of belonging. Kavrayıcı and Kesim (2021) states that the problems experienced with personnel during the pandemic period make it difficult to manage schools. Semerci and Çelik (2002) state that not only student-related but also staff-related problems are frequently encountered in schools, while Külekçi-Akyavuz and Çakın (2020) state that there is apathy among teachers during the pandemic period. Sarı and Nayır (2020) state that the COVID-19 process causes stress in teachers and causes them to feel bad. Akmansoy (2012) states that the negativities experienced in educational environments can be effective for a long time depending on the degree of influence of students and cause negative attitudes such as insecurity, low motivation, lack of self-confidence in individuals.

Another finding obtained from the research is that the school administrators stated that there were some problems in the school climate during the COVID-19 pandemic. School administrators explained these problems as the predominance of uncertainty, the formation of anxiety and fear, the deterioration of social relations, the Decimation of interaction between employees and the decrease in cooperation with colleagues. Bagwell (2020) suggests that during crisis periods such as the pandemic period, school stakeholders experience deep uncertainty, and social isolation reduces interaction. According to Schwab and Malleret (2020), one of the most important effects of the pandemic process is the uncertainty that arises about the future. Huong (2020) states that uncertainties in the COVID-19 period negatively affect education and training.

The school administrators who participated in the research stated that they encountered various problems in school health with the COVID-19 pandemic. These problems are stated as difficulty in maintaining social distance at school, old habits make it difficult to implement health measures, and there is a high risk of disease transmission at school. Pearson et al. (1997) state that crises that develop suddenly and whose symptoms can be noticed when they appear include events that can endanger the safety and health of employees and society in the organization. Sarı and Nayır (2020) state that the COVID-19 pandemic threatens school health and causes teachers, students and parents to feel bad.

School principals are of the opinion that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused many problems in educational processes. Managers of this opportunity issues and the increase in inequality of opportunity, education and training interruption in the continuity of, the fall of Student Involvement, learning the increase of losses, technological infrastructure, lack of education issues, inclusion of students in the school that the students belonging to the weakening of the challenge for distance education, distance education assessment in the difficulty of making practical expressed as the decrease of the yield in the processing of remote classes. Harris (2020) state that the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered inequalities in society and that people with a lower level of well-being in society are even more affected by this situation. Harris (2020) pointed out that in the COVID-19 process, not every student's opportunity is equal, some students have access to the Internet, tablets, etc. he emphasized that he did not have access to educational teaching tools. Saran (2020) states that inequality of opportunity in accessing online education is an important problem in developing countries. Kavrayıcı and Kesim (2021) states that during the pandemic period, students' poverty creates obstacles to their access to computers, the Internet and even television, which has a negative impact on the educational process. Saavedra (2020) draws attention to the increase in learning

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loss in students during the COVID-19 pandemic process. Sarı and Nayır, (2020) underline that the problems experienced in education and training processes during the pandemic period are highlighted in international reports.

Within the framework of the second theme of the research, the opinions of school administrators regarding the coping strategies of the problems they encountered in school management during the COVID-19 pandemic were examined. It is observed that the opinions of school administrators are clustered in the sub-themes of administrative strategies and individual strategies. Other strategies in dealing with the problems that school administrators face administrative getting support from school administrators, school management team, in consultation with the school administration in consultation with the other in the area of education, distance education for teachers with experience to benefit from effective monitoring and evaluation, to identify the source of the problem, technology leadership behaviors, exhibiting a flexible management approach, using different communication tools and best practices sharing with teachers, that is. The individual strategies of school administrators in dealing with the problems they encounter are acting coolly and prudently, taking initiatives, making individual sacrifices, showing the will to solve problems, effective communication and being patient. In times of uncertain crisis, school leaders cannot continue the leadership practices they have been accustomed to up to this time. In such times, leadership means exploring different solution searches in order to create new paths (Harris, 2020). The findings of Keleş, Atay and Karanfil's (2020) research that school administrators are trying to solve the problems they face during the pandemic process by giving technological support to teachers and using effective communication methods with all stakeholders support the research findings. Kavrayıcı and Kesim (2021) states that school principals' cold-blooded, motivating, empathy, technology leadership, quick decision-making, team building and coordination behaviors come to the fore during the pandemic period. Döş and Cömert (2012) mention the importance of the need for school principals to provide effective communication by acting in a cold-blooded attitude and behavior in times of crisis.

As a result; the COVID-19 pandemic, school administrators, school management and strategies for coping with the problems they face in these problems, which has uncovered in this study, school principals COVID-19 pandemic, many problems (such as administrative issues, communication issues, financing issues, planning issues, personnel issues, problems in the school climate, school health problems and problems in the educational process), it is understood facing. However, it is observed that school principals use administrative and individual strategies to deal with these problems.

## **Recommendations**

An action plan can be prepared by the ministry for crisis management in order to realize a possible pre-crisis education-education that may also affect education systems in the most effective way. The findings obtained from the research on the problems that school principals face in school management can be taken into account in the formation of ministry policies for crisis periods. The decisions taken for education and training should be taken with a participatory approach, in accordance with the realities of the field and in a way that does not cause uncertainty. Professional development activities can be organized to determine how personnel should act and protect the health of personnel during extraordinary periods similar to

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the COVID-19 pandemic. Every school should have a distance education strategy ready for situations where face-to-face education cannot be provided. In times of crisis, a sufficient share can be allocated from the central budget in order to minimize the inequality of opportunities and opportunities in education. Learning losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic should be determined based on students, and individual compensation plans can be prepared by teachers to compensate. Choosing the wrong material on the ground restricts the easy movement of children in the garden. In addition, in the event of an accident, the hard floor of the area where the child will fall causes injury and damage to them. For this reason, the material to be used should be soft textured. School garden walls should be equipped with interesting writings, pictures and figures containing practical and useful information about life. Entrances and exits to the schoolyards should be made through a single door for security purposes, security booths and security guards/officers should be present at the entrances of the schoolyards regardless of the number of students.

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