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July 17, 2020
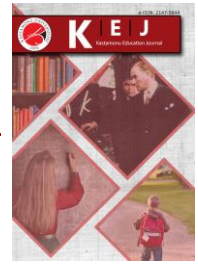
Reasons for the Theory-Practice Gap in Education Administration

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|Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article|

Reasons for Theory-Practice Gap in the Field of Educational Administration

Eğitim Yönetimi Alanındaki Kuram-Uygulama Boşluğunun Nedenleri[1]

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Öz

Kuram-uygulama boşluğu "kavram, görüş ve teorilerin profesyonel koşullarla ilişkilendirilememesi ve uygulanamaması" olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu araştırmanın amacı eğitim yönetimi alanındaki kuram-uygulama boşluğunun nedenlerini ortaya koymaktır. Çalışma, Ankara'daki ilkokul, ortaokul ve liselerde görev yapmakta olan 380 okul yöneticisi ve Ankara'daki farklı yükseköğretim kurumlarında çalışmakta olan 57 araştırmacı ile yürütülmüştür. Görüşlere ilişkin veri, araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen Eğitim Yönetiminde Kuram-Uygulama Boşluğunun Nedenleri Anketi'nin iki farklı formu ile toplanmıştır. Veri, yüzde, frekans dağılımı ve ki-kare değerleri ile yorumlanmıştır. Okul yöneticileri tarafından kuram-uygulama boşluğunun en sık ifade edilen nedenleri sırasıyla "araştırma sonuçlarının okul yöneticileri ile paylaşılmaması, araştırmaların yöneticilerin ihtiyaçlarına göre yürütülmemesi, araştırmaya dayalı uygulama yapmanın ödüllendirilmemesi"dir. Eğitim yönetimi araştırmacılarına göre sırasıyla kuram-uygulama boşluğunun nedenleri "eğitim yönetimi araştırmacıları ve okul yöneticileri arasında iletişim kanallarının olmaması, eğitim yönetimi araştırmacılarının, çalışmalarını atanma-yükselme ölçütlerine yönelik yapmaları, eğitim yönetimi araştırmacılarının, okullardaki mevcut koşulların farkında olmamaları"dır. Yöneticilerin görüşleri bazı maddeler açısından çalışılan eğitim kademesi, okulun bulunduğu ilçenin sosyo-ekonomik düzeyi, yaş ve lisansüstü eğitime katılım durumuna göre farklılık göstermektedir. Okulun bulunduğu bölgenin sosyo-ekonomik düzeyi, yönetici görüşlerinde en çok fark yaratan değişkendir. Araştırmacıların görüşlerinde "sorunları araştırmaya dayalı olarak çözmenin zaman gerektirmesi" konusunda unvan değişkeni açısından farklılık bulunmuştur. Sonuç olarak kuramcı ve uygulamacıların görüşleri birlikte değerlendirildiğinde, iki temel sonuç ortaya çıkmıştır. Katılımcıların, sorunların çözümüne yönelik araştırma yapmanın zaman gerektirmesi ve veri toplama sürecinde yaşanan problemlerin kuram-uygulama boşluğuna neden olduğuna katıldıkları söylenebilir. Bu kapsamda kuramcılar ve uygulamacıların, araştırma ve uygulama önerilerini paylaşabilecekleri etkinlikler düzenlenmesi önerilmektedir.

Abstract

The theory-practice gap can be defined as "a failure to apply or to relate the concepts, ideas and theories to professional conditions". The aim of this research was to explore the reasons for the theory-practice gap in the field of educational administration. Participants included 380 school administrators working in primary, secondary and high schools and 57 researchers working in different higher education institutions in Ankara. The views are collected through the questionnaire with two different forms, namely Reasons of Theory-Practice Gap in the Field of Educational Administration developed by the researchers. Data were interpreted by percentages, frequency distributions and chi-square values. The most common reasons given by school administrators for the gap were "researchers' failure to share results with administrators, conducting the research without considering the needs of administrators, and failure to reward administrators for their research-based practices". For the researchers the reasons for the gap are as follows; "the lack of communication channels between researchers and administrators, researchers' preferences to conduct their research for the requirements of the assignment and promotional criteria and the lack of awareness of researchers about the actual problems of schools." The findings of the study revealed that the views of school administrators varied for some independent variables such as school level, socio-economic level of the district, age and attendance to a graduate school program. The variable that revealed the highest difference was the socio-economic level of the district. It was found that there was a statistically significant difference for "conducting researches aiming at solving problems requires notable time period" item among researchers' views according to their title. As a conclusion, it can be said that when the perspectives of scholars and practitioners are evaluated all together, two main results are revealed. The participants are agreed that "utilizing research focusing on the solution of the problems requires considerable time" and "problems encountered during the data collection process" are the most common reasons for the theory-practice gap. Finally, it is recommended that some activities can be organized for the purpose of sharing research proposals and their implementation results between theorists and practitioners.

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INTRODUCTION

The perspective of human capital theory refers to investment in education to increase the competences of labor force as an important issue for development (Gümüş&Şişman, 2012). The success of an individual's professional practice is often closely associated with the use of theoretical knowledge that can be gained with education. Each profession, including school administration, utilizes research-based theories and members of each occupation are supposed to seek out and use that information during practice (Gündüz & Korkmaz, 2014; Kowalski, Place, Edmister, & Zigler, 2009; Şahin, 2009). However, researcher suggests that school principals struggle to make connections between theory and practice, both because their training lacks a deep grounding in research and theory, and because principals sometimes perceive a tension or disconnect between research and practical knowledge (Çelik, 2002; Kayıkçı&Ercan, 2013; Şahin, 2009). Educational administration also requires scientific and technical knowledge (Balcı, 2008; Borg, 1981; Bursalıoğlu, 1996).

Theory can be described as a system of abstract generalization that explains problems and events that can be observed in nature or, in this case, professional practice (Karasar, 2006; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2003; Owens, 2004). One function of theory is to direct practice toward more effective outcomes (Gündüz & Korkmaz, 2014; Sayılan, Aksoy, Yıldız, Bülbül, Özdem, İlgan, & Soydan, 2005). In literature, many authors have argued for a strong connection between theory and application for an effective professional practice. According to Balcı (2008), theory is essential for successful, continuously-improving practice. Most of the time theory emerges from practice (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1979 cited by Gündüz & Korkmaz, 2014), in that the problems practitioners encounter supply many variables for empirical investigation. Theory enlightens and directs practice; practice also enlightens and directs the development of theory (Gündüz & Korkmaz, 2014).

A theory-practice gap is described as "failing to apply or relate the concepts, ideas and theories of a professional field with professional conditions" (Drake & Heath, 2011: 101). According to Carter (2008: 75), the theory-practice gap is a problem with two dimensions: "knowledge transfer" and "knowledge production." Knowledge transfer refers to an "inability to transfer findings to the agenda, tools and publications in a way that practitioners can benefit" and "knowledge production" is about "failing to choose research topics related with practitoners' needs." Two more dimensions of the theory-practice gap are "knowledge usage" and "communication for needs" (Huberman, 1994; cited by Nutley, Walter & Davies). Based on all of these descriptions, for purposes of this paper the authors define the theory-practice gap as a circumstance stemming from lack of understanding between practitioners and researchers about what kind of new practice knowledge is needed and a lack of information about how to transfer this knowledge to the field of practice, or the failure of practitioners to use it.

The theory-practice gap has been examined in various fields like leadership, teacher training, medicine, and clinical psychology (Hatasa, 2013; Keedy, 2005; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Zekan, Peronja & Russo, 2012). There is a theory-practice gap in the applied field of educational administration according to both national and international literature (Aydın, Yılmaz & Altınkurt, 2013; Beycioğlu & Dönmez, 2006; Bush, 2006; Çelik, 2002; English, 2002; Houchens & Keedy, 2009; Sharma, 2009; Keedy, 2005; Young & Rorrer, 2012). Although there is research about the theory-practice gap in educational administration, few researchers (excepting Karataş, Kyzy & Topuz, 2015) focus on the reasons of the gap. This study was designed to help address this need and it differs from Karataş et al. (2015) in that it incorporates the perspectives of more key constituents of the problem (both school administrators and educational administration researchers).

Literature suggests that the reasons for the theory-practice gap in the field of educational administration can be investigated from three perspectives: reasons stemming from the features of research itself (Funk, Tornquist & Champagne, 1995; Karataş et al, 2015), reasons stemming from the relationships between researchers and practitioners (Funk, Tornquist & Champagne, 1995), and reasons stemming from the attitudes and behaviors of practitioners (Funk et al, 1995; Karataş et al, 2015). Aspects of the research itself that may contribute to the theory-practice gap might be related to topic, the process of obtaining permission to conduct research, method, results or the way they are reported. Educational research (including educational administration research) is often criticized as not being relevant to practitioners needs (Balcı, 1993; Beycioğlu & Dönmez, 2006; Röbken & Rürup, 2011). According to Erçetin (2001) the process of obtaining permission to conduct applied research in schools is often cumbersome and slows down the production of new, relevant research, aggravating the linkage between theory and practice. The way research is designed may also affect the gap. Qualitative research designs (Brownlie, Hewer, Wagner, Svensson, 2008; Örücü & Şimşek, 2011) and action research (Anderson, 2007; Champbell, 2013; Keedy & Achilles, 1997; Keedy, 2005; Kuzu, 2006; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013) are some examples of the methods some authors have argued might help to narrow the gap because practitioners can more easily relate findings to their own context and problems of practice. Another issue related with method is about data collection process. According to Balcı (2008), some researchers fail to adequately describe data collection instruments or their validity and reliability. Failing to find applicable research results and implications for practice is another problem contributing to the theory-practice gap (Anderson, 2007; Ergün, 1999; Hargreaves, 1996; Korthagen, 2010). Related to this, researchers may also fail to give practitioners adequate information about how to apply results of research in practice (Crishna & Przybycien, 2010; Gall et al., 2010). Beyond these reasons in general the theory-practice gap may also occur because of the technical language and jargon used in research reports. Also, reading research in other languages is not always possible for some practitioners (Anderson, 2007; Broekkamp, & van Hout-Wolters, 2007; Brownlie, Hewer, Wagner, & Svensson, 2008; Erçetin, 2001; Gall et al., 2010; Panagiari, 2008).

The theory-practice gap might stem from the relationship between researchers and practitioners. Literature refers to a frequent lack of communication between researchers and practitioners (Belli, 2006). For example, researchers often fail to find ways widely disseminate their results (Anderson, 2007). Making research findings well known is important to yielding results in practice (Fetalver, 2010). Additionally, May (2009) argued that there is often lack of cooperation between researchers and practitioners during the research process, such as mutually deciding the topic to investigate, implementing the research, and applying the results. Reasons for the theory-practice gap may also stem from the attitudes or behaviors of the practitioners themselves. Practitioners may be unaware of research findings (Bursalıoğlu, 1996; Karataş et al., 2015; Sarason, 1971 cited by Kowalski et al., 2009). Reasons for failing to use research might stem from negative attitudes or the features of the institution; it can be related with the practitioners's common role as data source in research, too.

Practitioners may believe that research findings are unvaluable, unreliable or inapplicable to their problems (Anderson, 2007; Belli, 2006; Broekkamp & van Hout-Wolters, 2007; Kowalski et. al., 2009). According to Moncaster et al. (2010), when practitioners think their personal academic knowledge is not adequate to address a problem, they often turn to popular-press, practitioner-based articles or ask colleagues about similar experiences (cited by Crishna Przybycien, 2010). Practitioners sometimes use these alternative sources of knowledge when they don't feel they have enough time. As Gall et al. (2010) mentioned, teachers feel they don't have time to discuss how to adapt research evidence to their own problems because they are mostly engaged in meeting students' needs. Finally, Panagiari (2008) argued that another reason practitioners use alternative knowledge instead of research is because there is no institutional incentive for using scientific information in their practice. The conditions of practitioners' institutions like their libraries and access to technology and research databases may also influence their capacity to read and utilize research (Panagiari, 2008). Cooperation among institutions which are related with conducting and disseminating research is also important (Karataş et al., 2015). This dimension can be evaluated according to Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory. According to this theory self-actualization takes place at the top (Koçel, 2018). People who are trying self-actualization might be interested in activities like science more and find opportunities to deal with it.

Keedy (2005) argued that researchers sometimes think of practitioners as just informants about professional problems or consumers of the knowledge produced by researchers. Instead, researchers should be mindful of their own biases (Gerstein, 2001). Teachers and other educators are supposed to design curricula, analyze assessment data, and produce data about educational outcomes. If practitioners understood their role as action researchers, they may be more enthusiastic of empirical research and more eager to use its results and recommendations (Champbell, 2013).

Identifying the reasons for the theory-practice gap for a particular field is essential to find solutions for narrowing it, especially when it comes from the perspectives of researchers and administrators themselves (Bursalıoğlu, 1996). Earlier studies of the theory-practice gap in educational administration seem to focus on only one group of actors. For a more holistical point of view, research with practitioners and scholars is a necessity. The aim of this study was to explore the reasons for theory-practice gap in educational administration field based on the perspectives of both school administrators and educational administration researchers. Specific research questions are as follows:

What do school administrators (school administrators and vice-school administrators) think about the reasons for the theory-practice gap in the educational administration field? Do the ideas of school administrators vary according to 1) School level in which they work; 2) Socio-economic level of the district in which they work; 3) Age; 4) Attendance of graduate school?

What do educational administration researchers think about the reasons for the theory-practice gap in the educational administration field? Do the ideas of educational administration researchers vary according to 1) Their title, 2) Their experience as practitioner, 3) Years of overall experience?

Is there a significantly meaningful differences between the ideas of school administrators and educational administration researchers?

METHOD

This research utilized a descriptive design (Karasar, 2006). Neuman (2008) explains that descriptive research examines participants's beliefs, ideas, characterics, or behaviors.

According to Fitz (1999: 314), academicians are the experts who conduct research in universities, publish research results and conduct education-training activities; and the practitioners are teachers, school principals, assistant principals and other education workers (cited by Özdemir, 2011). Bursalıoğlu (1996) refers to scientists as the producers of the research and principals as the consumers of it for the educational administration field. In this context, there are two different working populations and samples in this study. The first population consists of primary, middle, and high school administrators (school administrators and vice-school administrators) who work in Ankara's eight central districts (Altındağ, Çankaya, Etimesgut, Gölbaşı, Keçiören, Mamak, Sincan, and Yenimahalle). According to statistics from MEB (Ministry of National Education) (2014), 3341 school administrators are working in Ankara's eight central districts. To identify the necessary sample size for this population, a formula by Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel (2014: 96) for discontinuous data was used. According to the calculations, based on this formula the sample size should be 345 for this research with a 0,05 tolerance. A bonus of 10% of the sample is added (34) to cover any missing data and thus the target sample became 379 people. The researchers decided to reach 189 schools because

there are typically might be two school administrators for each school. For stratified sampling according to level of school, number of schools for each district are reached. According to MEB statistics (2014) there are 454 primary schools, 367 secondary schools, and 257 high schools in the eight central districts of Ankara. According to stratified sampling 84 primary schools, 63 secondary schools, 42 high schools were needed as a sample for this research. Besides the level of schools, the number of schools in each district were also accounted for while stratifying. After deciding the sample size for each districts, schools were randomly selected to apply the data collection tools.

The second population of the research were the educational administration researchers who work in higher education institutions located in Ankara and which have graduate programs in Educational Administration (Middle East Technical University, Gazi University, Hacettepe University, Ankara University, Başkent University, and Public Administratiom Institute for Turkey and Middle East). According to the university web pages in March 2015 there were 75 researchers, so the entire population was asked to participate.

Ultimately, 380 school administrators agreed to participate in the research. 43,9% of the participants were working in primary schools; 33,9% of them were working in secondary schools; and 22,2% were working at high schools. To classify the districts, data from the Turkish Statistical Institute (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu) was used. After applying statistical processes districts were classified in terms of socio-economic status. Altındağ, Mamak classified as least developed; Sincan, Etimesgut, Keçiören classified as middle developed; Gölbaşı, Çankaya, Yenimahalle classified as developed. 40,3% of the participants were working at developed districts, 33,7% of the participants were working inmiddle developed distircts, and 26% of the participants were working in least developed districts. 31,6% of the participants were at 30-40 years old range, 47,9% were at 41-50 years old range and 20,5% were 51 years old or older. 35,8% of the participants have attended graduate school and 64,2% of them have not attended graduate school. In summary, most of the participants were from primary schools, they were from developed districts, their age mostly ranged from 41 to 50 and most had not attended graduate school.

To better interpret the perspectives of school administrators, crosstabs were made for different independent variable pairs. Some of the crosstab results used for interpreting the analysis are; 56,58% of secondary school administrators and 69,04% of high school administrators had not participated to graduation school education. 66,46% of administrators from developed districts, 60% from middle developed districts and 66,27% from least developed districts had not attended to graduate school. The school administrators from 30-40 (50%); the ones from 41-50 (64,28%) and the participants 51 or older (85,89%) did not attended graduate school.

To answer the research questions, all participants were asked to complete the "Questionnaire about the Reasons for the Theory-Practice Gap in the Field of Educational Administration" with two forms for each of the respondent groups. According to Büyüköztürk (2005: 135), "describing the problem, writing items, asking experts's ideas, pre-application" are the four basic phases of developing a questionnaire. To develop the questionnaire for this study, the following steps were completed:

To create the item pool, first the researchers reviewed previous literature (Aydın, Yılmaz, & Altınkurt, 2013; Balcı, 2008; Belli, 2006; Beycioğlu & Dönmez, 2006; Brownlie et al., 2008; Crishna & Przybycien, 2010; Ergün, 1999; Fetalver, 2010; Kowalski et al., 2009; Mays, 2009; Örücü& Şimşek, 2011; Şahin Fırat, 2006; Young & Rorrer, 2012) and related data collection tools (Björkstorm & Hamrin, 2001; Broekkamp & van Hout-Wolters, 2007; Funk, Champagne, Wiese & Tornquist, 1991; Öztürk, 2011; Panagiari, 2008) regarding the reasons for the theory-practic gap in the educational administration field. Based on these sources, the item pool was developed. Items were grouped into dimensions based on the literature review. After creating the item pool, two forms were developed. The first form was for school administrators and the second form was for educational administration researchers. After preparing the two questionnaire forms, the researcher prepared Expert Feedback Forms and then experts gave feedback.

After experts provided feedback as to the questionnaire's content validity, items were revised accordingly. Because one of the experts was consulted for literature and grammar issues, all her feedback was included. To incorporate the other experts' ideas to address relability, an agreement degree for nine experts was calculated for each item. First to calculate Fleiss's Kappa Coefficient a distribution of the frequency of expert responses was prepared. Then Fleiss's Kappa Coefficient for each item was calculated using an online coefficient calculater found at http://justusrandolph.net/kappa/. Calculated values were evaluated according to Landis and Koch's (1977: 165) agreement measures. In this research, the items that had value under 0,20 were removed; the ones higher than 0,21 were revised according to the suggestions of experts. New items offered are also added to questionnaires. After this process the number of items on the school administrators' form decreased from 39 to 35; the form for school administration researchers number of items decreased from 28 to 26. Based on the suggestions of experts, the Likert option "no opnion-0" was removed because participants would tend not to answer.

Padem, Göksu & Konaklı (2012) recommend pre-testing questionnaires with a small group and Büyüköztürk et al. (2014) suggest groups of 10-20. After the questionnaire was revised, pre-test forms for each group were prepared and administered with small groups representing school administrators and educational administration researchers.

After pre-testing with thirteen school administrators from and ten educational administration researchers the final versions of the data collection tools were prepared. Two forms of the Questionnaire about the Reasons for Theory-Practice Gap in the Field of Educational Administration were same in terms of first (Stemming from the Features of the Research) dimension. The second

dimension (Reasons Stemming from the Relationships between Researchers and Practitioners) had the same items but they were written in accordance with study groups. The school administrators form had Reasons Stem from the Features of the Practitoners and researchers form included Reasons Stemming from the Features of Educational Administration Field as their own third dimension.

After getting permission from each related institution, from April 2015 to Novermber 2015 data were collected. Because the data are discontinious, frequency and percentage were calculated and chi-square test were done for independent variables (Büyüköztürk, 2012:145; Sümbüloğlu& Sümbüloğlu, 2010). Level of significance for the chi-square was established at 0,05.

FINDINGS

Findings for the research question, "What do the school administrators think about the reasons of theory-practice gap for educational administration field?" are presented in Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3.

Table 1. School administrators's ideas about "reasons stemming from the features of the research"

Items		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
1. Research about educational administration is not reported in an easily understandable language.	f	3	20	75	176	106	380
	%	0,8	5,3	19,7	46,3	27,9	100
2. Following research written in a foreign language is difficult.	f	5	22	61	176	116	380
	%	1,3	5,8	16,1	46,3	30,5	100
3. Statistics used in educational administration research are difficult to understand.	f	4	38	115	137	86	380
	%	1,1	10,0	30,3	36,1	22,6	100
4. Using research to solve problems in educational administration requires funding.	f	6	53	65	167	89	380
	%	1,6	13,9	17,1	43,9	23,4	100
5. Using research to solve problems in educational administration requires time.	f	6	38	55	176	105	380
	%	1,6	10	14,5	46,3	27,6	100
6. Educational administration research can not generate relevant findings.	f	5	46	82	157	90	380
	%	1,3	12,1	21,6	41,3	23,7	100
7. Findings from educational administration research can't be translated into useful strategies.	f	6	42	93	151	88	380
	%	1,6	11,1	24,5	39,7	23,2	100
8. Problems encountered during the data collection process.	f	3	47	110	137	83	380
	%	0,8	12,4	28,9	36,1	21,8	100
9. Methods used in educational administration research don't yield applicable results.	f	2	33	109	145	91	380
	%	0,5	8,7	28,7	38,2	23,9	100
10. In the reports of educational administration research, how to apply the results of research is not clear.	f	3	30	86	166	95	380
	%	0,8	7,9	22,6	43,7	25	100
11. It is difficult to conduct applied reseach in the educational administration field because of lack of funding.	f	12	42	87	150	89	380
	%	3,2	11,1	22,9	39,5	23,4	100
12. It is hard to obtain permission to conduct applied research in the educational administration field.	f	23	91	87	117	62	380
	%	6,1	23,9	22,9	30,8	16,3	100

According to Table 1 most responses for reasons stemming from the features of the research were at the level of agree. Almost half of school administrators agreed that "research is not reported in an easily understandable language, difficulties following research in a foreign language, and a lack of time to use research for solving problems" contribute to theory-practice gap.

Table 2. School administrators's ideas about "reasons stemming from the relationships between researchers and practitioners"

Items		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
13. Educational administration research does not take into account the needs of school administrators.	f	1	17	42	137	183	380
	%	0,3	4,5	11,1	36,1	48,2	100
14. The results of educational administration research are not shared with school administrators.	f	3	11	29	159	178	380
	%	0,8	2,9	7,6	41,8	46,8	100
15. There are no communication channels between educational administration researchers and school administrators.	f	3	21	62	151	143	380
	%	0,8	5,5	16,3	39,7	37,6	100
16. Educational administration researchers and school administrators don't speak a common professional language.	f	10	44	74	137	115	380
	%	2,6	11,6	19,5	36,1	30,3	100
17. School administrators don't support researchers during the research process.	f	38	82	81	103	76	380
	%	10	21,6	21,3	27,1	20	100

According to Table 2, most responses for reasons stemming from the relationships between researchers and practitioners were at the level of strongly agree. Almost half of school administrators strongly agree that "the lack of attention in education research to the needs of school adminsitrators and the failure to share the research results with school administrators" contribute to the theory-practice gap.

Table 3. School administrators's ideas about "reasons stemming from characteristics of the practitioners"

Items		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
18. School administrators don't follow the research.	f	11	50	85	141	93	380
	%	2,9	13,2	22,4	37,1	24,5	100
19. School administrators don't trust the conclusions of research.	f	16	87	107	108	62	380
	%	4,2	22,9	28,2	28,4	16,3	100
20. School administrators think research is unvaluable in terms of applicability.	f	26	114	103	92	45	380
	%	6,8	30	27,1	24,2	11,8	100
21. School administrators are unwilling to apply the results of research.	f	19	79	111	116	55	380
	%	5	20,8	29,2	30,5	14,5	100
22. School administrators don't have competence in applying the results of scientific research.	f	47	63	116	103	51	380
	%	12,4	16,6	30,5	27,1	13,4	100
23.There is no supportive climate in schools to help administrators apply research to their practice.	f	11	41	87	136	105	380
	%	2,9	10,8	22,9	35,8	27,6	100
24. School administrators make decisions based on their experiences instead of scientific knowledge.	f	16	31	87	129	117	380
	%	4,2	8,2	22,9	33,9	30,8	100
25.School administrators don't engage in research themselves.	f	15	40	92	139	94	380
	%	3,9	10,5	24,2	36,6	24,7	100

Items		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
26. School administrators who apply the results of reserch are not rewarded for doing so.	f	7	26	40	133	174	380
	%	1,8	6,8	10,5	35	45,8	100
27. The lack of institutional resources (like library, computer) to access the results of the research.	f	49	98	83	83	67	380
	%	12,9	25,8	21,8	21,8	17,6	100
28. School administrators don't spend time reading research.	f	13	45	88	143	91	380
	%	3,4	11,8	23,2	37,6	23,9	100
29. Senior management does not allow implementation of the research results.	f	19	74	107	127	53	380
	%	5	19,5	28,2	33,4	13,9	100
30. School administrators don't want to change their practices unless they receive written, formal notification to do so.	f	9	25	71	142	133	380
	%	2,4	6,6	18,7	37,4	35	100
31. Teachers don't support school administrators during application of research results.	f	18	67	117	114	64	380
	%	4,7	17,6	30,8	30	16,8	100
32. School administrators think that they don't need research to improve their management skills and behaviors.	f	36	92	111	94	47	380
	%	9,5	24,2	29,2	24,7	12,4	100
33. School administrators aren't aware of the importance of following research to improve their professional skills.	f	46	72	113	110	39	380
	%	12,1	18,9	29,7	28,9	10,3	100
34. School administrators don't have experience or skills at sharing research with others.	f	15	44	115	124	82	380
	%	3,9	11,6	30,3	32,6	21,6	100
35. School administrators don't take the initiative to apply the research.	f	16	52	97	131	84	380
	%	4,2	13,7	25,5	34,5	22,1	100

According to Table 3, almost half of school administrators strongly agree that the lack rewards for using research in practice helps to explain the theory-practice gap. On the other hand, approximately 40% of administrators agree that practitioners' failure to spend time reading research and their resistence to change their practice unless they receive a written directive to do so are also important reasons for the theory-practice gap. Thirty percent of school administrators partly agree that a lack of teacher support for applying research results helps to explain the theory-practice gap. One third of the school administrators disagreed that research findings are unapplicable to their practice. This finding suggests school administrators attitudes are generally positive about research. Combined with previous findings, perhaps adminisrators are actually willing to apply the results of research if they understand the results and find them relevant.

When the answers strongly agree and agree are combined, according to school administrators the biggest reasons for the theory-practice gap were "the failure to share the research results with school administrators (88,6%), the lack of attention in education research to the needs of school administrators (84,3%), the lack of being rewarded for using research in practice (80,8%)."

In response to the research question, "Do the views of school administrators vary according to school level in which they work?" statistically significant differences were found for two items. For "school administrators don't support researchers who conduct research" item differences were found (x^2 =17,406; p=,026<,05). Chi-square for primary school administrators was 2,420; for middle school, 8,935; for high school, 6,071. According to comparisons as pairs there was a statistically significant difference between primary school and secondary school (p=,037<,05) and secondary school and high school (p=,007<,05). When the percentage values are taken into account secondary school administrators strongly agree in lower percentages (10,9%) when compared with primary school (23,4%) and high school administrators (27,4%). This might be related to characteristics of the participants. As addressed before, the school administrators who attended graduate school were more likely to work in a

secondary school. These administrators might learn about research processes during graduate school education. For the item "school administrators don't conduct research" a difference was also found (x^2 =18,442; p=,018<,05). Chi-square for primary school administrators was 7,125; for middle school, 3,927; for high school 7,389. According to comparisons as pairs there was a difference between primary and high school administrators. Primary school administrators strongly agree more often (30,5%) when compared with high school administrators (17,9%) that administrators don't engage in research themselves, and this contributes to the theory-practice gap.

For the research question, "Do the views of school administrators vary according to the socio-economic level of the district they work?" statistically significant differences were found for several items below.

Significant differences were found for the item, "research about educational administration field is not reported in an easily understandable language" item (x^2 =18,701; p=,017<,05). Chi-square for administrators in developed districts was 5,057; for middle developed districts, 5,347; and for the least developed districts it was 8,269. According to comparisons as pairs there was a difference between developed and least developed districts. Administrators from least developed districts strongly agreed at a higher percentage (39,4%) that reseach is not reported in easily-understood language when compared with developed ones (20,9%).

Differences were also found for the item "statistics used in educational administration research are difficult to understand" item (x^2 =19,256; p=,014<,05). Chi-square for administators in developed districts was 7,274; for middle developed districts, 4,922; for least developed districts, 7,060. According to comparisons as pairs there was again a difference between developed and least developed districts. Thirty-two percent of administrators from the least developed districts strongly agreed that statistics used in research were hard to understand when compared with the administrators from developed districts (17%). These differences might again be related with the characteristics of the participants. As mentioned before the administrators, from least developed districts were less likely to attend graduation school.

Another significant difference was found for the item, "problems encountered during the data collection process" item (x^2 =30,154; p=,000<,05). Chi-square for administrators in developed districts was 13,246; for middle developed districts, 8,842; for least developed, it was 8,065. According to comparisons as pairs, a difference was found between developed and middle developed (p=,001<,05). Also there was a difference between developed and least developed districts (p=,003<,05). The school administrators from developed districts totally agree at a lower percentage (14,4%) when compared with the ones from middle developed districts (23,4%) and least developed (31,3%). Administrators from developed districts were thus less likely to believe that problems encountered during the data collection process contribute to the theory-practice gap.

A statistically significant difference was found for the item "educational administration researchers and school administrators don't speak in a common way" (x^2 =18,075; p=,021<,05). Chi-square for developed districts was 2,566; for middle developed, 5,999; for least developed, it was 9,510. According to comparisons as pairs, a statistically significant difference was found for least developed and middle developed districts (p=,008<,05). Also a difference was found between the ideas of school administrators from developed and least developed (p=,05). The school administrators from least developed districts totally agree with higher percentages (39,4%) when compared with the ones from developed (26,1%) and middle developed (28,1%) districts. This might be related to the location of the universities, which are mostly around developed districts and they are more easily reachable for developed districts.

A statistically significant difference was found for the item "school administrators don't support researchers who conduct research" (x^2=34,881; p=,000<,05). Chi square for developed districts was 10,046; for middle developed districts it as 5,436: it as 19,399 for least developed districts. According to comparisons as pairs there was a difference between developed and middle developed districts (p=,046<,05). A statistically significant difference was found for least developed and middle developed districts, too (p=,000<,05). Also school administrators responded differently from developed and least developed districts (p=,001<,05). The ratio of strongly agreement increase from developed districts (10,5%) to least developed (34,3%).

A statistically significant difference was found for the "school administrators don't follow research" item, according to the chi-square test (x^2 =23,003; p=,003<,05). Chi-square for developed districts was 7,443; 8,002 for middle developed districts; and 7,556 for the least developed districts. According to comparisons as pairs, a difference was found between the most developed and least developed districts (p=,022<,05). Also a difference was found for developed and middle-developed districts (p=,014<,05) and middle-developed and least developed distics (p=,031<,05). Administrators who work in middle-developed districts partially agree more often (32%) that administrators don't follow research when compared with administrators in the developed (15%) and least developed districts (21,2%). Administrators in developed districts agree more (43,1%) when compared with middle developed (33,6%) and least developed districts (32,3%). The school administrators from least developed districts strongly agree that practitioners don't follow research (34,3%) when compared with developed (21,6%) and middle-developed districts (20,3%). According to this finding, then, administrators from the most developed and least developed districts are critical of practitioners not following research when compared with the ones from middle-developed districts.

School administrators also think differently about whether there is a supportive climate in schools to apply research results (x^2 =25,891; p=,001<,05). Chi square for developed districts was 9,282; for middle developed districts it was 9,939 and for least developed districts it was 6,670. According to the comparisons made as pairs there was a statistically significant difference

between developed and least developed (p=,025<,05), between middle-developed and developed (p=,027<,05), between middle-developed and least developed districts (p=,003<,05). School administrators from middle-developed districts (32%) partially agree that there is not a supportive climate in schools for using research results more often compared with the ones from developed (18,3%) and least developed (18,2%) districts. The ones who work in least developed (44,4%) districts agree more when compared with the ones from developed (28,8%) and middle developed (37,5%) districts. The ones from developed districts (15,7%) don't agree more when compared with the ones from middle-developed (7%) and least developed districts (8,1%).

A statistically significant difference was found for the "school administrators base their decisions on their personal experiences instead scientific knowledge" item (x^2 =20,432; p=,009<,05). Chi square for developed districts was 4,319; for middle developed districts it was 6,469; for least developed districts it was 9,644. According to comparisons done as pairs there was a difference for middle-developed and least developed districts (p=,011<,05) and for developed and least-developed districts (p=,040<,05). School administrators from least developed districts (43,4%) strongly agree with this item compared with the ones from developed (29,4%) and middle developed districts (22,7%). In conjunction with the previous finding, this may suggest that school administrators from developed districts think they don't follow research enough and this might be the reason for not using scientific knowledge during decision-making practices.

A statistically significant difference was found for the "school administrators don't conduct research" item (x^2 =18,605; p=,017<,05). Chi square for developed districts was 5,904; for middle developed ones 2,397; for least developed districts it was 10,304. According to comparisons as pairs a difference was found for middle-developed and least developed districts (p=,047<,05); and for developed and least developed districts (p=,004<,05). The school administrators from the least developed districts (36,4%) strongly agree that practitioners not conducting their own research contributes to the theory-practice gap when compared with the administrators from developed districts (18,3%) and middle developed districts (23,4%).

A statistically significant difference was found for the item "school administrators don't spend time reading research" (x^2 = 24,705; p=,002<,05). Chi square for developed districts was 7,847; for middle developed ones 7,321; for least developed districts it was 9,537. According to the findings there was a difference between developed and middle developed districts (p=,022<,05); between middle developed and least developed districts (p=,028<,05); between developed and least-developed districts (p=,013<,05). The school administrators who work in the least developed districts strongly agree more often (36,4%) that practitioners do not make time for reading research when compared with the ones from middle developed (17,2%) and developed disticts (21,6%). The ones from middle developed districts had higher levels of partial agreement (31,3%) when compared with the ones from developed (16,3%) and least developed districts (23,2%). The school principals from developed districts (16,3%) disagreed more often when compared with the ones from middle-developed (9,4%) and least developed districts (8,1%). This finding suggests that administrators from developed districts are more likely to read research.

A statistically significant difference was found for the "school administrators don't have experience or skills at sharing research with others" item (x^2 = 19,817; p=,011<,05). Chi square for developed districts was 8,075; for middle developed districts it as 8,595; for least developed ones it was 3,147. According to comparisons as pairs there was a difference between the school administrators who worked in developed and middle developed districts (p=,003<,05). The school administrators from developed districts (23,5%) more strongly agreed that "not having experience or skills at sharing research with others" contributes to the theory-practice gap when compared with the administrators from middle developed districts (15,6%). This might be related with the higher attendance rate of school administrators to graduate school in the middle developed districts. They would be able to share and discuss their information they learned from graduate school process.

A statistically significant difference was found for "school administrators don't take the initiative to apply research their practice" item (x^2=16,781; p=,032<,05). Chi square for developed districts was 6,825; for middle developed ones it as 4,849; for least developed ones it was 5,107. According to the comparisons as pairs a statistically significant difference was found between developed and middle developed districts (p=,048<,05). The school administrators from middle developed districts reported more partial agreement (33,6%) that "not taking the initiative to apply research" contributes to the theory-practice gap when compared with the ones from developed districts (18,3%).

For the research question, "Do the ideas of school administrators change according to their age?" statistically significant differences were found for several items. These differences are described below.

A statistically significant difference was found for the "statistics used in educational administration research are difficult to understand" item (x^2 =18,876;p=,016<,05). Chi square for the 30-40 age range was 7,451; for 41-50 it was 4,464; for 51-years-old or more it was 6,906. According to the comparisons as pairs there was a difference between 30-40 and 41-50 (p=,030<,05); also there as a difference for 30-40 and 51 or more (p=,020<,05). The school administrators from 30-40 ages reported less disagreement (3,3%) with this item than administrators in the 41-50-year-old (13,2%) and 51-year-old or older (12,8%) ranges. This means the administrators from 30-40 age range are more likely to think that understanding statistics is difficult. It might be related with attending graduate school more within these ages so they would be able to understand more complicated statistics.

A statistically significant difference was found for the item, "educational administration research can not be translated into useful strategies for practitioners" (x^2 = 18,590; p=,017<,05). Chi square for the 30-40 age range was 5,350; for 41-50 age it as 6,532; for 51-year-old or more it was 6,706. According to comparisons as pairs there was a difference between the 30-40 range

and the 41-50 range (p=,036<,05) but also there was a difference between 41-50 and 51 or older (p=,026<,05). School administrators from 41-50 strongly agree at a lower percentage (16,5%) that "educational administration research can not be translated into useful strategies for practitioners" when compared with the 30-40 age range (26,7%) and 51 or older age group (33,3%). According to this the administrators in their 40's was more likely to think research has relevant implications for practice.

A statistically significant difference was found for the "school administrators don't support researchers during the research process" item (x^2 =18,391; p=,018<,05). According to the comparisons done as pairs a difference was found for 30-40 and 41-50 age ranges (p=,005<,05). The school administrators who were 41-50 years old agreed more often (30,8%) "not supporting researchers during the research process" causes the theory-practice gap when compared with the 30-40 year old range (22,5%). This might be related with school administrators at the 30-40 age range having attended graduate school more often. Perhaps young administrators would be able to facilitate data collection because they also understand the research process.

A statistically significant difference was found for the item, "school administrators don't benefit from research because they don't trust the results" (x^2= 19,407; p=,013<,05). Chi square for 30-40 year olds was 11,741; for 41-50 year olds it was 4,694; it was 2,701 for 51 or more. According to comparisons as pairs, a difference was found for 30-40 and 41-50 (p=,003<,05); for 30-40 and 51 or older (p=,035<,05). School administrators from 30-40 age range (12,5%) disagree less with "they (practitioners) don't use the research because they don't trust the results" when compared 41-50 ages (28%) and 51 or older age group (26,9%).

A statistically significant difference was also found for the "school administrators think research is unvaluable in terms of applicability" item (x^2=17,861;p=,022<,05). Chi square for 30-40 year olds was 10,959; for 41-50 it was 5,626; for 51 or older it was 1,275. According to comparisons as pairs a difference was found for 30-40 and 41-50 year olds (p=,003<,05). The school administrators in the 30-40 year old range partially agree (40%) that "research is unvaluable in terms of applicability" more often when compared with 41-50 year olds (19,8%).

A statistically significant difference was found for the "school administrators don't want to change their practice unless they receive written, formal notification for a supervisor" item (x^2 = 28,847; p=,000<,05). Chi square for 30-40 year olds was 15,502; 41-50 it was 2,939; for 51 or older it was 10,406. There was a meaningful difference between 30-40 and 41-50 (p=,003<,05) and 30-40 and 51 or older (p=,000<,05). The school administrators from the 30-40 year old age range (30,8%) agree with "they don't want to change practices unless they receive written, formal notification" at a lower rate when compared with the ones from 41-50 (40,1%) and 51 or older (41%). This suggests the young school administrators might be more willing to try the new methods. Older school administrators might be more beholden to bureaucratic processes. This might be related to the youngest group's higher rate of attendance in graduate school. While young school administrators become aware of different strategies because of graduate education and more open to trying new applications of research, older school administrators may be awaiting supervisors' directions to apply scientific knowledge.

For the research question, "Do the views of school administrators change based on to attendance in graduate school?" a difference was found for "school administrators don't spend time reading research" (p=,049<,05). School administrators who attended graduate school strongly agreed with this item at lower rates (22,8%) when compared with the ones who did not attend (24,6%). This finding suggests that the administrators with graduate school experience may spend more time reading research.

Findings for "What do the educational administration researchers think about the reasons of theory-practice gap in the educational administration field?" research question can be seen from Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 4. Educational administration researchers' ideas about "reasons stemming from the features of the research"

Items		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
1. Research about educational administration is not reported in an easily understandable language.	f	1	19	19	17	1	57
	%	1,8	33,3	33,3	29,8	1,8	100
2. Following research written in a foreign language is difficult.	f	7	13	18	16	3	57
	%	12,3	22,8	31,6	28,1	5,3	100
3. Statistics used in educational administration research are difficult to understand.	f	2	15	21	13	6	57
	%	3,5	26,3	36,8	22,8	10,5	100
4. Using research to solve problems in educational administration requires funding.	f	3	17	15	13	9	57
	%	5,3	29,8	26,3	22,8	15,8	100
5. Using research to solve problems in educational administration requires time.	f	1	12	10	23	11	57
	%	1,8	21,1	17,5	40,4	19,3	100
6. Educational administration research can not generate relevant findings.	f	3	14	16	14	10	57
	%	5,3	24,6	28,1	24,6	17,5	100
7. Findings from educational administration research can't be translated into useful strategies.	f	3	13	17	18	6	57
	%	5,3	22,8	29,8	31,6	10,5	100
8. Problems encountered during the data collection process.	f	1	7	13	23	13	57
	%	1,8	12,3	22,8	40,4	22,8	100
9. Methods used in educational administration research don't yield applicable results.	f	2	12	15	20	8	57
	%	3,5	21,1	26,3	35,1	14,0	100
10. In the reports of educational administration research, how to apply the results of research is not clear.	f	1	11	15	19	11	57
	%	1,8	19,3	26,3	33,3	19,3	100
11. It is difficult to conduct applied reseach in the educational administration field because of lack of the funding.	f	1	14	18	12	12	57
	%	1,8	24,6	31,6	21,1	21,1	100
12. It is hard to obtain permission to conduct applied research in the educational administration field.	f	3	10	7	18	19	57
	%	5,3	17,5	12,3	31,6	33,3	100

According to Table 4, most reponses for reasons stemming from the features of the research are at the level of partly agree. One third of the researchers strongly agree that "difficulities in obtaining permission to conduct applied research in educational administration" contributes to the theory-practice gap. Almost half of the participants agree that "time requirements for conducting research to solve problems in educational administration field" and "problems experienced during data collection process" help to explain the theory-practice gap.

Table 5. Educational administration researchers' ideas about "reasons stemming from the relationships between researchers and practitioners"

Items		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
13. Educational administration research does not take into account the needs of educational administrators.	f	3	11	12	24	7	57
	%	5,3	19,3	21,1	42,1	12,3	100
14. The results of educational administration research are not shared with educational administrators.	f	3	7	10	22	15	57
	%	5,3	12,3	17,5	38,6	26,3	100
15. There are no communication channels between educational administration researchers and educational administrators.	f	1	2	14	21	19	57
	%	1,8	3,5	24,6	36,8	33,3	100
16. Educational administration researchers and educational administrators don't speak a common professional language.	f	0	8	17	19	13	57
	%	0	14	29,8	33,3	22,8	100
17. Educational administrators don't support researchers during the research process.	f	1	3	25	18	10	57
	%	1,8	5,3	43,9	31,6	17,5	100

According to Table 5, responses are mostly agree or partly agree. Almost 40% of the participants agree that "the needs of educational administrators aren't taken into sufficient account" and "results of educational administration research are not shared with education administrators." Approximately half of the researchers partly agree that "school administrators don't support researchers during the research process."

Table 6. Educational administration researchers' ideas about "reasons stemming from the features of the educational administration field"

Items		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
18. Educational administration researchers aren't aware of actual problems of the schools.	f	1	9	8	23	16	57
	%	1,8	15,8	14,0	40,4	28,1	100,0
19. Educational administration field can't yield believable results because many theories of school leadership can't be supported with evidence.	f	3	9	20	20	5	57
	%	5,3	15,8	35,1	35,1	8,8	100,0
20. The theories that educational administration field is based on are disconnected from practice.	f	2	15	16	19	5	57
	%	3,5	26,3	28,1	33,3	8,8	100,0
21. Theories about educational administration are not consistent.	f	8	34	7	6	2	57
	%	14,0	59,6	12,3	10,5	3,5	100,0
22. Educational administration researchers are not sufficiently informed about practice.	f	2	7	18	25	5	57
	%	3,5	12,3	31,6	43,9	8,8	100,0
23. Educational administrators conduct their research according to assignment and promotion criteria.	f	1	6	10	21	19	57
	%	1,8	10,5	17,5	36,8	33,3	100,0
24. Courses taught in educational administration are not focused on practice.	f	2	10	15	20	10	57
	%	3,5	17,5	26,3	35,1	17,5	100,0
25. There is no internship experience for master and PhD students.	f	4	6	9	19	19	57
	%	7,0	10,5	15,8	33,3	33,3	100,0
26. Educational administration field research isn't aligned with international trends.	f	2	14	16	15	10	57
	%	3,5	24,6	28,1	26,3	17,5	100,0

Table 6 shows that most researchers answered the items from this dimension with the "agree" response. Almost one third of the researchers strongly agreed that "there is no internship experience for master and PhD students" as a reason for theory-practice gap. Approximetly 40% of the participants agreed that "educational administration researchers lack sufficient information about practice," "educational administration researchers aren't aware of actual problems of the schools" and "educational administrators conduct their research according to assignment and promotion criteria" are causes for the theory-practice gap.

When the responses of "strongly agree" and "agree" are combined most of the educational administration researchers think that not having communication channels between educational administration researchers and school administrators (70,1%), educational administrators's conducting their research according to assignment and promotion criteria (70,1%), and to being aware of actual problems of the schools (68,5) contribute to the theory-practice gap.

Educational administration researchers's ideas were evaluated to determine if they vary according to their title, experience as practitioner, and years of overall experience. Only one statistically significant difference was found for "conducting research to solve problems in educational administration requires time" based on title (p=,029<,05). Research assistants agreed more often (75,9%) than lecturers (42,9%).

The items meet the assumptions for chi-square were evaluated for principals and school administrators. There were significantly meaningful differences between the ideas of principals and scholars for "statistics used in research are difficult to understand (p=,001<,05); using research to solve problems require funding (p=,000<,05); educational administration research cannot generate relevant findings (p=,008<,05); findings from educational administration research can't be translated into useful strategies (p=,001<,05); methods used in educational administration research don't yield applicable results (p=,006<,05); conduct applied research is difficult because of lack of the funding (p=,009<,05); obtain permission to conducting applied research in educational administration field is difficult (p=,024<,05) items.

RESULTS

In this study, school administrators and education researchers in Ankara were surveyed to identify their ideas about the theory-practice gap in educational administration. School administrators reported that research not presented in easily-understandable language, problems reading research in foreign languages, and the difficulty of finding time to use research to solve professional problems were key issues in the theory-practice gap related to the research itself. In Armağan and Yıldırım's (2015) research, more than half of the principals (n=37) referred a lack of training about scientific research. Struggling to understand research reports might also be related with that lack of education. Because education would effect the point of view about research and the level of benefiting from it. Karataş et al (2015) found that 87% of school administrators declared they understand English but just 12% of them evaluated their knowledge as very good. In Onural's (2005) study, some administrators refer to lack of English as a reason for not to follow up with studying the international literature. These two findings help to explain the problems that practitionars live problems to understand the international literature. The reasons stated here might be related with the appointment type of principals, too. According to Onural (2005) more principals needed to be appointed with educational administration certification.

Regarding issues related to the relationships between researchers and practitioners, administrators most often reported that researchers don't take into account the needs of school administrators while designing and conducting research and do not make a sufficient effort to share the research results with school administrators. These findings suggest school administrators would be more willing to read and apply the research results if they are asked for their ideas for research topics. In the research conducted by Karataş et al. (2015), school administrators responded that "scientific research related to school administration does not address the problems they face" as "maybe" with 38% and as "agree" with 22%. This is consistent with the findings of this study that the lack of taking into account the needs of school administrators during research may help to explain the theory-practice gap. In another research study, identified the following topics as they wanted academicians to research: issues about teachers, the education system, training and school management (Armağan and Yıldırım, 2015). The other reason stressed by principals was failure to share the research results. In the study of Armağan and Yıldırım (2015) more than half of the principals (n=35) declared that they don't follow any scientific journal. This might be related with their thoughts about failure to share research results.

School administrators also identified possible contributions to the theory-practice gap related to characteristics of the practitioners themselves. The most commonly-identified reasons included that administrators are rarely rewarded for using research in their practice. Similarly, in the research by Armağan and Yıldırım (2015) principals identified a lack of system to direct them to use research. On the other hand, approximately 40% of administrators agreed that practitioners' failure to spend time reading research and their resistence to change their practice unless they receive a written directive to do so are also important reasons for the theory-practice gap. According to Onural's (2005) study, administrators stressed that their work schedules did not provide sufficient time to review the research. Thirty percent of school administrators partly agree that a lack of teacher support for applying research results helps to explain the theory-practice gap. Similarly, the study done by Karataş et al. (2015) also suggests that 30% of school administrators partly agree that they can not get the support of subordinates when they try to apply the findings of research into practice. According to these findings, school administrators need more support from subordinates for research based applications. One third of the school administrators disagreed that research findings are unapplicable to their practice. This finding suggests school administrators' attitudes are generally positive about research. Combined with previous findings, perhaps adminisrators are actually willing to apply the results of research if they understand the results and find them

relevant. Similarly, in the study done by Karataş et al. (2015) school administrators mostly (63%) emphasize they are interested in research results to improve their professional skills. On the other hand, in Armağan and Yıldrım's (2015) study less than half (n=20) of the participants said they use research when they could probably benefit from doing so. The level of schools in which administrators serve does not appear to create much difference in their views about the theory-practice gap. Secondary school administrators strongly agreed in lower percentages when compared with other levels about principals don't support researchers during the research process. Primary school administrators strongly agree more than high school administrators that they don't engage in research themselves.

Socio-economic level of the district is an important variable that contributes to difference in administrator's perspectives about the theory-practice gap. The administrators from the least developed districts think research reports and statistics are not easly understandable and researchers are not supported when conducting research compared with administrators from developed districts. The participants from least developed districts think researchers and administrators don't speak in a common professional language, practitioners don't follow research, they would rather make their decisions based on their experiences instead of scientific knowledge and they don't engage in research themselves when compared with the ones from other disticts. The school administrators from developed district think that lack of experience or skills at sharing research with others contributes to the theory-practice gap when compared with the administrators from other districts. They are less likely to agree that there is a supportive climate in schools to apply of research results. In the developed districts lack of sharing experience and skills might be related with a supportive climate could not be established.

The ideas of school administrators significantly differed on some items according to their age range. Older groups disagree more often that statistics used in educational administration research are difficult to understand and their results are not trustworthy to use in practice when compared with the youngest group. The administrators from 30-40-year-old range agree less that they don't want to change practices unless they receive written, formal directive. This tendency of older groups shows that formal processes of encouraging the use of research can help to narrow the gap. The school administrators from 41-50 are less likely to strongly agreethat educational administration research can not be translated into useful strategies for practitioners when compared with the youngest and the oldest groups. They also agree more often that practitioners don't sufficiently support researchers when compared with the youngest group.

Ideas of administrators about "School administrators don't spend time reading the research" item change according to attendance of graduate school. School administrators who attended graduate school totally agreed with this item at lower rates when compared with the ones who did not attend.

Education researchers identified the most common reasons for the theory-practice gap related to problems with the research, including difficulties obtaining permission to conduct applied research, time requirements involved in conducting research to solve practical problems in the field, and problems lived during data collection process. Like administrators, researchers also identified researchers not taking into account the needs of administrators and a failure to share the findings with administrators as key causes for the theory-practice gap. The study done by Öztürk (2009) supports this finding. Half of the academicians in Öztürk (2009)'s study agreed that "research is not related to practitioners's current problems". Though the academicians are aware of this problem, pressures to publish and seek promotion may complicate their efforts to engage in more applied research. In İlhan Özkök's (2016) research seventeen academicians from educational administration evaluated the educational administartion's Turkish literature. In this study, working popular topics in West was critized with its failure to reflect and effect the real system, also (İlhan Özkök, 2016: 31). Researchers were also asked to identify problems in the field of educational administration training and research that may contribute to the gap. They identified a lack of internship experience during graduate school, a lack of information on the part of educational administration researchers about practice, ignorance about of the actual problems of the schools, and conducting research as the most important reasons. Similarly, in İlhan Öztürk's (2016:62) research, lack of practical lessons is also stressed for educational administration programmes. In İlhan Öztürk's (2016:79) study, making research just for promotion is crisized with its negative effect on the literature, too.

Ideas of researchers change for "solving problems with research is time consuming" item according to their job title. Research assistants agreed more often with this item than lecturers. There was no difference for experince as practitionar and year of working variables.

As a result, when the perspectives of scholars and practitioners are evaluated together, time constraints and problems encountered during the data collection process were identified as key contributors to the theory-practice to gap.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the authors suggest the following implications for future research;

Related institutions (like the Council of Higher Education or Ministry of Higher Education) can administer surveys to understand what kind of topics practitioners believe need to be investigated and researchers can choose from these topics while conducting new studies. Follow up studies further exploring the reasons for the differences between different kinds of districts are recommended. This research should be repeated with a bigger sample of education administration scholars and from a wider

array of contexts. Data collection tools from this study can be used for additional studies (for other fields like leadership, teacher training, medicine, and clinical psychology) to understand the reasons for theory-practice gap.

We further offer the following suggestions for practitioners:

Institutes and journals can encourage the authors to add reader-friendly notes to published research articles. To address the challenge of research written in foreign languages, translation services can be supplied to educators by the Ministry of National Education. Also some courses can be given to teachers to learn foreign languages. To address the problems of research relevancy, efforts to foster cooperation between researchers and practitioners should be encouraged (like payment for researchers by institiutions like TUBITAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey). Universities should also consider making applied research as a requirement for university promotion. Researchers might also consider emailing participants with the results of research when studies are concluded. Also practitioners can be trained about several ways to access research and theory. Training in the application of research to practice can be offered by university graduate programs in educational administration. Research applications should be requested with formal papers presented at conferences and education agencies should encourage practitioners to apply research-based findings. To improve data collection, in schools a staff member can be appointed to help researchers. To university appointment and promotion requirements "working as a practitioner or conducting applied research" can be added. Educational administration graduate programs can be revised to add practical courses like research internships and better prepare students to apply theory and research into practice. Organizing activities in which scholars and practitioners can share research findings and perspectives on application would also be useful to narrow the gap.

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