

REFLECTIONS ON PROCEDURES AND PRINCIPLES OF SENIOR PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATOR APPOINTMENTS
IN PARLIAMENTARY AND PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEMS
IN TÜRKİYE

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ABSTRACT

REFLECTIONS ON PROCEDURES AND PRINCIPLES OF SENIOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR APPOINTMENTS IN PARLIAMENTARY AND PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEMS IN TURKEY

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The aim of this study is to examine the impact of appointment procedures and principles in the presidential system on the participation of senior administrators in political decision-making in Türkiye. Interviews with individuals who have served as senior administrators under both the parliamentary and presidential systems are employed to compare theoretical analysis with practical experience. The empirical and theoretical findings suggest that the new appointment procedures and principles in Türkiye have reduced the involvement of senior administrators in decision-making, while simultaneously increasing their affiliation with the president and her political party. This shift has raised concerns about increasing partisanship and a decline in professionalism within the bureaucracy.

Keywords: senior public administrators, appointment procedures and principles, presidential system.

ÖZ

TÜRKİYE'DE PARLAMENTO VE BAŞKANLIK SİSTEMLERİNDE ÜST KADEME KAMU YÖNETİCİLERİNİN ATANMASINA İLİŞKİN USUL VE ESASLAR HAKKINDA BİR DEĞERLENDİRME

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'de başkanlık sisteminde yer alan atama usul ve esaslarının üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin siyasal karar alma süreçlerine katılımı üzerindeki etkisini incelemektir. Hem parlamenter hem de başkanlık sistemlerinde üst düzey yönetici olarak görev yapmış kişilerle yapılan görüşmelerden elde edilen bulgular, teorik analizle karşılaştırılmaktadır. Ampirik bulgular ve teorik analiz, Türkiye'deki yeni atama usul ve esaslarının üst düzey yöneticilerin karar alma süreçlerine katılımını azalttığını, aynı zamanda cumhurbaşkanı ve siyasi partisi ile olan ilişkilerini artırdığını göstermektedir. Bu değişim, bürokraside partizanlığın artması ve profesyonelliğin azalması konusundaki endişeleri artırmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: üst kademe kamu yöneticileri, atama usul ve esasları, başkanlık sistemi.

To my dear mother,

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NATO	: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPM	: New Public Management
OECD	: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
TGNA	: Turkish Grand National Assembly
TODAİE	: The Public Administration Institute of Turkey and the Middle East
US	: United States

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In April 2017, a referendum transitioned Turkey from a parliamentary to a presidential system, amending 18 articles of the Constitution and significantly altering nearly half of its provisions (Üstüner, 2023, pp. 20-21). This shift marked a turning point for Turkish society, the executive branch (Ateş & Soner, 2021, pp. 148-149), and public administration (Üstüner, 2023, pp. 20-21; Aslan, 2023, p. 134), introducing changes that distinguish it from earlier reforms. The rationale for the presidential system centered on addressing bureaucratic oligarchy, tutelage, and the bureaucracy's resistance to adapting to modern dynamics. Historically, Turkish civil servants acted independently, formulating policies on behalf of the state, especially during the neoliberal transformation of the 1980s (Doğangün, 2005, p. 66). However, the strong state tradition persisted, and successive governments grew frustrated with bureaucratic resistance to change.

Despite public administration reforms from the 1980s to the transition to the presidential system, senior administrators were not the direct focus of these changes. Instead, reforms prioritized organizational and institutional adjustments (Üstüner & Yavuz, 2018, p. 822). The parliamentary system was often blamed for bureaucratic resistance, as it fostered a traditionalist, elitist, and authoritarian bureaucracy (Tutum, 1980, pp. 36-39), with deadlocks between the president and prime minister exacerbating the inefficiency of public administration (Tataroğlu, 2006, p. 102). The system's inefficiency was also tied to the limited power of elected officials relative to appointed bureaucrats, who could veto policies but not create them (Özbudun, 2015, pp. 11-12).

Additionally, the process for appointing senior administrators under the parliamentary system was hampered by legal and procedural constraints. Public

Personnel Laws No. 2451 and 2477 regulated appointments, but political negotiations within coalition governments often delayed these decisions. The merit and career principles enshrined in Public Personnel Law No. 657 ensured senior administrators' autonomy from political influence, granting them a degree of professional security. However, nepotism and favoritism in appointments persisted (Kaya et al., 2023, pp. 1530-1533). This system created a senior officialdom that was entrenched in bureaucratic expertise and decision-making experience, contributing to their political influence.

Despite successive governments blaming the bureaucracy for its resistance to reform, the culture of traditionalism and elitism remained deeply embedded in the administrative system (Tutum, 1980, pp. 36-39). This resistance was further complicated by patrimonialism and party patronage, which obstructed the establishment of a professional, meritocratic administration (Sözen, 2012, p. 173). While public administration reforms during the 1980s and 2000s were aligned with New Public Management (NPM) at the discourse level (Sezen, 2011, p. 340), senior administrators resisted these reforms, maintaining bureaucratic dominance over elected officials.

NPM, which seeks to insulate technocratic decision-making from the unpredictability of politics, aligns well with neoliberalism and the presidential system, emphasizing efficiency and depoliticization (Robison, 2006, p. 3; Clarke, 2004, p. 36). Prime Minister Özal, an advocate for the presidential system, expressed concerns about the bureaucracy's resistance to neoliberal reforms, prompting the creation of a parallel bureaucratic structure aligned with market-oriented policies (Güzelsarı & Kendir Özdiç, 2013, p. 69). This parallel system functioned alongside the traditional bureaucracy, aiming to implement neoliberal reforms more effectively.

When the Justice and Development Party (JDP) assumed power in 2002, it criticized the bureaucratic oligarchy and proposed an American-style presidential system to resolve governance deadlocks and streamline appointments (Yılmaz, 2018, p. 33). These efforts were aligned with the post-Washington Consensus, which advocated a more active role for the state within regulatory neoliberalism (Güven, 2023, p. 183).

The dual-executive structure under the parliamentary system had led to governance challenges, particularly in senior appointments, exacerbating inefficiencies and delaying reforms (Venice Commission, 2017, p. 21; Kırışık & Öztürk, 2020, pp. 167-168). In 2007, the '367 crisis,' which revolved around a dispute over the required quorum for the first round of the presidential election, triggered constitutional reforms, leading to the direct election of the president by the public. This was intended to protect the presidency from bureaucratic control (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, 2015, pp. 32-33). The 2007 constitutional amendment introduced semi-presidentialism (Özbudun, 2015, p. 11; Venice Commission, 2017, p. 4) and strengthened the president's mandate by enhancing its legitimacy (Aslan Akman & Akçalı, 2017, p. 578). Although the shift to a presidential system sparked debate (Güler, 2018, p. 308), the procedures governing senior administrative appointments remained unchanged, limiting the government's ability to appoint politically aligned senior officials.

International developments also pressured senior administrators to align politically with the government. By the mid-2000s, Turkey and other emerging powers gained recognition (Güven, 2023, p. 178). After the 2007-08 global financial crisis, the Washington Consensus, which favored minimal state intervention, was increasingly challenged (Kutlay, 2020, p. 686; Altınörs & Akçay, 2022, p. 1034), and authoritarian models, like those of China and Russia, gained appeal (Kutlay, 2020, p. 695). This shift facilitated presidential control over senior appointments, fostering state-business relations that favored loyal entities (Kutlay, 2020, p. 688).

The June 2011 elections, marking the JDP's third consecutive victory, ushered in a new era in Turkey's political economy, described as 'new developmentalism' or a transition to state capitalism (Öniş, 2019, p. 205). The JDP's post-2011 constitutional reform proposals aimed to transfer all presidential powers to the executive, including authority over senior appointments, but these attempts were thwarted by opposition parties (Yılmaz, 2018, p. 4; Uçar Yılmaz, 2023, p. 22).

The push for a presidential system stemmed from its compatibility with NPM-style reforms, particularly managerialism. This approach, which prioritizes efficiency and

effectiveness (Rosenbloom, 1983, p. 224), emphasizes a strong executive and a bureaucracy focused solely on policy implementation, distancing politics from public administration. In contrast, parliamentary systems value political responsiveness and accountability, giving the bureaucracy a more active role in decision-making.

The 2017 constitutional amendment established 'senior public officialdom' (Demirelli, 2023a, p. 93), granting the president sweeping authority over senior appointments. Decree No. 3 enabled the president to appoint candidates, internal or external, with minimal qualifications (five years of experience and a university degree), removing them from the civil service and merit-based systems. This undermined the autonomy and political involvement of senior administrators, making them more susceptible to presidential and partisan demands, thereby fostering nepotism and favoritism.

The literature presents both benefits and drawbacks of these reforms. Öztürk and Kırışik (2020) suggest that the reforms eliminate the traditional bureaucratic system, enhancing efficiency by simplifying technocratic appointments (Kutlu, 2021, pp. 236-238). Under these rules, ineffective individuals are no longer assured government roles (Öztürk & Kırışik, 2020, p. 180). However, the reforms also curtail bureaucratic influence, aligning NPM principles of efficiency, effectiveness, and economy with the elimination of bureaucratic oligarchy (Sobacı & Köseoğlu, 2018, pp. 17-20), thereby subordinating public administration to political authority.

Adar and Seufert (2021) caution that under the new governance system, public employment continues to serve as a partisan tool, favoring loyalists over merit or qualifications (p. 35). Concerns have also arisen regarding the introduction of customized criteria for appointments, given that the president holds exclusive authority over these decisions (Gözler, 2019; Albayrak, 2020, p. 120). Albayrak (2020) highlights the absence of mechanisms to safeguard merit in the appointment process (p. 110), arguing that there is little distinction between the appointment procedures for roles such as minister, deputy minister, and director-general (p. 119). All these officials derive their authority from the president, leading to a lack of hierarchical differentiation, which ultimately reduces efficiency and effectiveness.

Under the parliamentary system, senior administrators were generally more attentive to diverse interests, as the government was accountable to parliament (Albayrak, 2020, p. 116; Rosenbloom, 1983, pp. 220-221).

Semi-structured interviews with ten senior officials from various public organizations provided insights into the literature review and practical experiences. These interviewees, who held senior roles under both the parliamentary and presidential systems, shared their perspectives on the impact of appointment procedures and principles on senior public officials. In these interviews, participants discussed changes in the relationship between politics and public administration, as well as their challenges and suggestions. They also provided views on whether the new appointment process facilitated faster decision-making, improved coordination, and better utilization of bureaucratic expertise. The analysis revealed that although the political involvement of senior administrators has been significantly restricted, this has not diminished efficiency or effectiveness.

The empirical analysis confirmed a growing separation between politics and administration, a decline in the value placed on bureaucratic knowledge, and the incompatibility of loose appointment criteria with the effective functioning of the bureaucracy. The president's party membership or leadership has increased partisanship and highlighted the need for training externally appointed individuals. The interviews also raised issues not addressed in the literature. For instance, interviewees noted that the bureaucratic oligarchy and dual-executive structure had not posed significant challenges to public organizations. However, they observed that the lack of emphasis on professionalism in senior appointments has contributed to a decline in professionalism throughout the broader bureaucracy. Some interviewees suggested that, as the presidential system is still relatively new, differences may emerge between its first and second terms. Others emphasized the need to prioritize bureaucratic experience and expertise in senior appointments.

It is important to note that the interviewees gained most of their experience under the parliamentary system. As a result, their administrative culture and working procedures are likely shaped by that system, and their criticisms may reflect

challenges in adapting to the new appointment procedures and principles under the presidential system.

The analysis of the literature and empirical findings suggests that the new appointment procedures and principles have limited the political participation of senior administrators while intensifying the politicization of appointments, with increasing emphasis on loyalty to the president and her party. This alignment with the president has had significant implications for both the bureaucracy and the market, eroding the autonomy of the bureaucracy and undermining the internal cohesion of senior administrators. The broader bureaucracy has increasingly aligned itself with the president, sidelining merit-based considerations, which has affected workplace harmony. Newly appointed senior officials, coming from both internal and external sources, bring differing work ethics, principles, and administrative cultures, compromising the integrity of senior positions and hindering inter-organizational collaboration. In the market, the president's influence has grown, leading to increased personal and partisan interference in economic affairs, often at the expense of market competition.

This study's uniqueness lies in its comparison of theory and practice, examining whether significant issues have been overlooked in the literature. It avoids attributing senior official appointments solely to the presidential system and addresses the implications of these appointments for Turkish public administration. The findings may contribute to a redesign of senior public official appointment processes and serve as a reference for future analyses of the effects of senior officials on public organizations. In the event of amendments to appointment procedures, this study will facilitate comparative analysis, providing valuable insight into how internal actors perceive and experience organizational changes.

To strengthen its argument, the study introduces key concepts and their relationships in Chapter 2. It defines senior administrators and outlines their functions within public organizations, emphasizing their distinct features. The chapter also provides an overview of NPM, explaining its emphasis on senior managers in public organizations and the distinction between the new appointment procedures and previous reforms.

Another section explores the relationship between government systems and senior administrators, clarifying why such changes were not addressed under the parliamentary system and how the presidential system aligns with managerialism.

Following these explanations, the study examines Turkey's case, highlighting the NPM-driven reforms in Turkish public administration and how the new appointment procedures and principles have allegedly complemented earlier reforms. The discussion continues with an analysis of senior administrators' relations with political actors in both the parliamentary and presidential systems, with particular focus on the appointment procedures and principles.

Chapter 3 presents the empirical analysis, detailing the study's purpose, methodology, interview questions, and findings. The findings compare and contrast the literature with the empirical results.

The final chapter, the Conclusion, evaluates the findings from the literature and empirical analysis and considers the implications for the integrity of bureaucracy and the market.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study highlights that the new appointment procedures and principles in Turkey have reduced the involvement of senior administrators in politics while simultaneously increasing the politicization of senior appointments. There is now a greater emphasis on loyalty and alignment with the president and her party's agenda. This personal affiliation with the president and her political party has had significant consequences for both the bureaucracy and the market.

A reflection on the role of senior administrators and their relationship with New Public Management (NPM) and government systems offers a clearer understanding of the argument. Senior administrators occupy a unique position at the intersection of politics and public administration. However, they are difficult to define precisely, as their roles and functions vary depending on the time and place. Under NPM principles, senior administrators are assigned special roles in public administration. As leaders, they are expected to promote the three Es (economy, efficiency, and effectiveness) and maintain distance from political decision-making. This chapter begins by outlining the roles and functions of senior administrators to underscore their importance. The argument then shifts to the principal aspect of NPM that values senior administrators—managerialism. Managerialism emphasizes the technical expertise of senior administrators and their distance from political decision-making to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. These concepts help assess whether the current appointment procedures and principles align with managerialism's requirement that senior administrators remain apolitical.

Section 2.3 examines the relationship between senior administrators and different government systems. The system of government determines the appointment

procedures for senior administrators and shapes the interaction between politics and administration. In parliamentary systems, more veto players are involved in the appointment process, and accountability to the legislative branch requires bureaucratic experience and expertise (Rosembloom, 1983, pp. 220-221). In such systems, senior administrators enjoy autonomy in their political decisions as part of the civil service. By contrast, presidential systems prioritize managerial values and often favor external appointments to increase efficiency (Rosembloom, 1983, pp. 219-220). In these systems, the president's authority to define appointment procedures makes senior administrators more dependent on the executive branch. Since presidential systems are more closely aligned with NPM principles, they tend to minimize the political autonomy of senior administrators. This analysis helps explain the preference for presidential appointments.

Within this framework, the sections "Emergence and Definitions of Senior Administrators," "New Public Management (NPM)," and "Systems of Government and Senior Administrators" define key concepts and explore their relationships.

Section 2.2 focuses on the appointment procedures and principles for senior administrators in parliamentary and presidential systems, as well as the impact of these procedures on the relationship between politics and senior administrators. Initially, a brief account of Turkish public administration reform towards NPM is introduced to understand better the bottlenecks. The next section offers a brief analysis of the positions of senior administrators about politics in each system of government, providing a clearer understanding of the amendments to appointment procedures and principles. After these explanations, the appointment processes in parliamentary and presidential systems are outlined. The analysis shows that political involvement of senior administrators was more prevalent in the parliamentary system, while the appointment procedures and principles in the presidential system, along with the president's party affiliation, have significantly curtailed the political involvement of senior administrators.

Section 2.2 includes the following subsections: "Turkish Bureaucracy and Administrative Reforms Toward NPM" "Senior Administrators in the Parliamentary

System,” with its subsection “Appointment Procedures and Principles of Senior Administrators in the Parliamentary System,” and “Senior Administrators in the Presidential System,” with its subsection “Appointment Procedures and Principles of Senior Administrators in the Presidential System.”

2.1. Definition of Senior Administrators

Senior public administrators hold unique positions, bridging the artificial separation between politics and public administration. This distinction requires senior administrators to mediate between these two spheres. However, defining a "senior administrator" in organizational contexts is complex. Each public sector reform, in response to national and international changes and the evolving role of the state, has further complicated the definition of senior administrators. Eren and Saitoğlu (2021) note that the diversity of public organizations, their functions, varying sizes, legislation, and the reciprocal powers between politicians and senior administrators make this task even more challenging (pp. 304-305). One practical method to define senior administrative positions is to list them at a given time, using flexible tools to adjust when necessary. Moreover, expectations from senior administrators change in relation to the government systems. In presidential systems, they are seen as carriers of NPM, particularly managerial principles. The appointment procedures and principles of the senior administrators in Turkey also demonstrate these characteristics.

There is a broad consensus that senior administrators occupy hierarchical positions between elected officials and the broader bureaucracy. In most OECD countries, they are managed separately from the rest of the civil service, often under distinct employment terms (Gerson, 2020). According to Ergun (1983), senior administrators

are those who work at the highest levels of public institutions, formulating and advising on policies, making administrative decisions, and transforming ministerial and board policies into operational programs. (p.24)

Thus, their political functions and top-level positions are integral to their definition. Payashoğlu (1969, pp. 37-38) and Sürgit (1970, pp. 17-18) similarly define senior

administrators based on their functions and hierarchical positions. The OECD (1995, p. 9) further describes them as part of a "Top Management Service," a system designed to ensure stability, professionalism, and flexibility in managing high-level public managers.

Leadership by senior administrators plays a crucial role in implementing reforms and maintaining a balance between government demands and bureaucratic responsiveness. According to Halligan (2012, p. 116), senior administrators include heads of ministries, departments, bureaus, and other high-ranking officials. Hermann and Kaarbo (2020, p. 66) highlight their role as technocratic leaders, setting agendas, shaping policy debates, and contributing to decision-making processes.

The infusion of managerial values into public organizations, particularly during neoliberalism, places senior administrators at the heart of organizational transformation. As neoliberalism and NPM emphasize technocratic and elitist management, senior administrators, especially those with private sector experience, have become central figures. Halligan (2012, p. 116) notes a shift in their role from traditional policy advice to a more management-based leadership, integrating private sector values like performance management and corporate governance. Senior administrators' employment patterns increasingly resemble those of the private sector, with performance management becoming more central and greater flexibility in appointments and dismissals (OECD, 2021, pp. 138-139). In essence, managerialism emphasizes the separation of senior administrators from political influence and highlights their role in embedding managerial values within the bureaucracy.

The government system plays a critical role in shaping senior administrators' appointment procedures and principles. In the parliamentary systems, the appointment procedures require the consent of various political actors. Internal appointments by the government are common, emphasizing merit and career advancement over political alignment. Such appointments, which offer statutory job security, allow for more political voices in appointment and greater political engagement by senior administrators. In contrast, the appointment procedures in

presidential systems depend on the presidential choice. Such systems prioritize external appointments by the president, often under contractual terms, which limits the political involvement of senior administrators. Presidential systems reinforce their detachment from politics by appointing senior administrators from within and outside the bureaucracy.

In Turkey, the appointment of senior administrators is governed by Presidential Decree No. 3, which enumerates the positions and further distances senior administrators from political decision-making while increasing the risk of nepotism and partisanship. The president's broad authority to dictate appointment procedures and make appointments—both internally and externally—without external oversight heightens the vulnerability of senior administrators to presidential or partisan pressures. Despite the conformity of these appointment procedures with NPM principles, particularly managerialism, and the presidential system's emphasis on managerial values, senior administrators' contributions to political processes remain limited.

In conclusion, defining a senior administrator is challenging because their functions have changed over time. Currently, they are expected to adopt managerial principles. Despite the growing influence of managerial values in each government system, appointment procedures, and principles in a parliamentary system leave more room for the political engagement of other actors and senior administrators than in a presidential system. A parliamentary system appreciates merit, career principles, and appointment from within the bureaucracy. On the contrary, the appointment procedures in presidential systems prioritize presidential preferences, focus on managerial values, and appreciate external appointments more than internal appointments. In Turkey, Presidential Decree No. 3 regulates the appointment of senior administrators, outlining their positions and distancing them from political decision-making, but also increasing the potential for nepotism and partisanship. Without the involvement of any actor, the president's extensive authority over appointments makes senior administrators susceptible to political influence. Although these procedures align with NPM principles and managerialism, senior administrators' involvement in political processes remains minimal.

2.2. New Public Management (NPM)

Üstüner (2022) claims that each phase of capitalism has assigned a different role to the state and, consequently, to public bureaucracy. For instance, Weberian bureaucracy was prevalent during the reign of classical capitalism (Üstüner, 2002). When the welfare state emerged, bureaucracy was shaped by the Human Relations School, Comparative Public Administration, Modern Public Administration, and New Public Administration (Üstüner, 2002). In the current phase of capitalism, which began in 1995 with neoliberalism, public bureaucracy is primarily guided by NPM.

Neoliberalism disentangles politics and economics, prioritizes market principles, and promotes NPM—particularly managerialism—as a panacea for bureaucratic problems. It “wishes to see a central role accorded to the state in this process, not in a democratic way, but in a manner consistent with certain types of markets” (Bruff, 2017). Neoliberals typically prefer governance by experts and elites, often favoring executive and judicial decision-making over democratic and parliamentary processes (Harvey, 2005, pp. 64-66). The conflict lies between dismantling the state and establishing a self-contained techno-managerial system (Robison, 2006, p. 5). The defining characteristic of all neoliberal critique is its hostility to political ambiguity and commitment to the transparency of quantitative economic indicators (Davies, 2014, p. 19). “Neoliberalism is the pursuit of the disenchantment of politics by economics” (Davies, 2014, p. 19). This disenchantment involves eliminating notions of the 'common good' or the 'public,' discarding normative values, and replacing executive political authority with the rational authority of the manager (Davies, 2014, p. 21). In other words, neoliberalism “aims to insulate policy-making from democratic processes, either through an economization of the social domain conducted under the aegis of economists qua experts or through a depoliticization of the economic domain via restrictive constitutional frames or barriers” (Erensü & Madra, 2022, p. 159).

Influenced by other approaches, such as Public Management, New Managerialism, Reinventing Government, and Public Choice, which align with the New Right's

attempts to resolve fundamental contradictions within bureaucracy and neoliberalism (Üstüner, 2000, pp. 24-25), NPM is a set of assumptions and values universally adaptable to cultural, legal, or social differences (Diefenbach, 2009, p. 893; Hood, 1991, p. 8). It governs public organizations like corporations in the age of neoliberalism, focusing on managerialism. Senior administrators and bureaucrats, often blamed for inefficiency, ineffectiveness, and rigidity, are being reconsidered. Aiming to insulate technocratic decision-making from the uncertainties of representative politics (Robison, 2006, p. 5), NPM becomes the “administrative form of neoliberal governance” (Jai Dutta et al., 2023, p. 96). It suits neoliberalism’s prioritization of central management at the expense of politics (Nyland et al., 2020, p. 383).

NPM, as an economic and managerial approach, is a discourse for governments to depoliticize public issues with significant social and ethical considerations (Clarke, 2004, pp. 35-37). It aims to suppress opposition by presenting decisions as reasonable, logical outcomes of efficient management by public managers who possess practical knowledge of business operations (Ward, 2011, p. 212). The apolitical nature of NPM allows for the pursuit of varied interests and universality (Hood, 1991, pp. 8-9). It also continues the depoliticization and reductionism of public management, confining public administration to the executive branch and organizational analysis, with a focus on developing tools to make public managers more competent (Üstüner, 2000, pp. 17-19,).

One of NPM’s ideological pillars, managerialism, has been introduced as a cure for bureaucratic inefficiencies (Shepherd, 2018, p. 1669). Managerialism institutionalizes market principles in the governance of all organizations, integrating market values into the management of public services.

Managerialism combines management's generic tools and knowledge with ideology to establish itself systemically in organizations, public institutions, and society, while depriving business owners, workers, and civil society of decision-making powers. Managerialism justifies the application of its one-dimensional techniques to all areas of work, society, and capitalism on the grounds of superior ideology, expert training, and exclusive managerial knowledge necessary to run public institutions and society like corporations. (Klikauer, 2015, p. 1105)

Managerialism asserts the superiority of business-type managerialism and 'professional management' by managers. It emphasizes the need for high discretionary power to achieve results ('freedom to manage') and centralizing power to improve organizational performance. Managerialism separates the "conception and execution of tasks" (Shepherd, 2018, p. 1673). It claims that organizations can only function effectively if decision-making is centralized in the hands of professional, objective managers (Diefenbach, 2009, p. 902; Shepherd, 2018, p. 1673; Ward, 2011, p. 206).

With its faith in market supremacy and its aversion to state intervention, public administration reforms should inject private sector management into public administration. More centralization and fewer barriers, such as public engagement, the rule of law, separation of powers, and bureaucratic decentralization, are likely to be required by "strong state" and "entrepreneurial logic" (Üstüner, 2023, p. 30).

Furthermore, the requirements of NPM in terms of politics-administration separation, centralization, and managerialism are also related to the government system. A presidential system is associated with a strong executive under the leadership of the president, who is the head of the executive. Rosenbloom (1983) associates the managerial approach with a presidential system that underlines the executive branch, prioritizing efficiency and effectiveness (pp. 220-224). This approach necessitates strong executive leadership, with a bureaucracy solely tasked with policy implementation, thereby maintaining a clear distinction between politics and public administration.

Under the leadership of senior public managers, public organizations will become more market, stakeholder, and customer-oriented (Diefenbach, 2009, pp. 893, 895-896). Market orientation involves commodifying services, focusing on value for money. Public organizations will compete for profit to level the playing field. Stakeholder orientation ensures that they meet the goals of powerful external stakeholders, while customer orientation emphasizes service delivery to clients. Senior managers will drive bureaucratic changes, making organizations more efficient and effective. The approximation of 'public' to 'private' is furthered by the

motto of the 3Es (Efficiency, Effectiveness, Economy), with senior managers as gatekeepers.

These features of NPM also influence public employees' attitudes and behaviors, confining them within the boundaries of capitalism. The sense of responsibility and moral obligation to the public, which differentiates public employees from private-sector workers (Eryılmaz, 1993, p. 83), erodes. Public service ceases to be a lifelong vocation, and civil servants become merely public employees.

However, as discussed above, Üstüner (2000) rightly questions the relevance of separating state powers, law, and public administration from society (pp. 25-26). It is difficult to emulate actors in different spheres. While managers in the economic sphere act out of individual interests, senior administrators in the public sphere are subject to public scrutiny, the rule of law, and a complex organizational structure that "is not a means but has become an end in itself" (Üstüner, 2000, p. 26).

Lastly, despite pledges for decentralization to achieve flexibility and reduce hierarchy, NPM has led to more hierarchy and centralization. The significant autonomy given to public managers, challenges in controlling their actions, and relaxed regulations to promote initiative and risk-taking raise concerns (Urio, 2012, p. 89). These concerns include the risk of violating core principles of administrative law, such as legality, equal treatment, and commitment to governmental goals. Centralization, therefore, becomes a remedy applied through performance measurements. These measurements, based on the promotion of the 3Es, are disseminated throughout the organization by senior public managers.

The appointment procedures and principles of the Turkish presidential system reflect a pursuit of managerialism. Managerialism is seen as a solution to eliminating bureaucratic resistance, reducing senior officials' interference in political decisions, and achieving the "3Es"—efficiency, effectiveness, and economy. While public administration reforms since the 1980s addressed various NPM initiatives, the full implementation of managerialism awaited the presidential system, which realized it through its senior administrator appointment procedures and principles.

In conclusion, NPM, as the administrative ideology of neoliberalism, prioritizes senior managers' leadership and presents the 3Es and business-management initiatives as solutions to bureaucratic inefficiencies. By underscoring the politics-administration dichotomy, public administration is confined to the executive branch and organizational analysis, while senior administrators become managers who transform public organizations into private-like entities. This results in a separate group of senior managers identified by their expertise, ideology, and apolitical nature. The characteristics of managerialism align with the managerial approach favored by presidential systems, prioritizing the executive branch and emphasizing managerial values (Rosenbloom, 1983, p. 224). The appointment procedures and principles of Turkey's presidential system align with managerialism's focus on senior managers, the "3Es" (efficiency, effectiveness, and economy), and centralization.

2.3. Systems of Government and Senior Administrators

The system of government affects the appointment procedures and principles for senior administrators, as well as their engagement in politics. Differences in the rules governing the relationship between the executive and legislative branches lead to differences in the priorities and values of political actors. In a parliamentary system, multiple actors determine the procedures and principles, with the number of veto players in the appointment process serving as a source of negotiation among political actors. The government's accountability to the legislative branch also emphasizes the importance of bureaucratic professionalism. In a presidential system, appointment procedures involve fewer actors, and the involvement of others is largely symbolic. Due to the lack of executive accountability to the legislative branch, bureaucratic professionalism is less valued, and external appointments are more common. As a result, the parliamentary system allows for more political maneuvering than the presidential system, which is better suited to foster managerial values. Considering the impacts of neoliberal transformation and NPM-type reforms in Turkey, as well as the effects of the government system, appointment procedures and principles limit the political involvement of senior administrators.

Public administration and bureaucracy prioritize different values in each system of government, which affects appointment procedures and principles. Rosenbloom's

(1983) explanations of approaches to public administration theory are particularly illuminating. The political approach to public administration emphasizes representativeness, political responsiveness, and accountability to elected officials (Rosenbloom, 1983, pp. 220-221). This approach, which focuses on responsiveness and accountability, is closely associated with parliamentary systems.

In a parliamentary system, the appointment procedures for senior administrators involve multiple actors, including ministers, the Council of Ministers, and the president. This multiplicity may allow for political considerations but can slow down the appointment process. A higher number of veto players requires candidates to secure the support of various actors with diverse interests (Albayrak, 2020, pp. 114-115). The appointment process is even slower in coalition governments, where the consent of governing parties depends on political negotiation among coalition members. The accountability of the executive branch to the legislative branch influences appointment principles, requiring senior administrators with bureaucratic knowledge, expertise, impartiality, and the ability to consider multiple interests. As a result, senior administrators are often appointed internally, from within the bureaucracy, based on their seniority and expertise, in line with merit and career principles (Albayrak 2020, pp. 102-106). Statutory job security and the importance of bureaucratic experience enable senior administrators to participate in political decision-making.

In contrast, the managerial approach to public administration is associated with presidential systems (Rosenbloom 1983, pp. 219-220). This approach emphasizes managerial values such as economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, which promote market-oriented governance. The foundation of the presidential system is a strong executive branch (Akçakaya & İlhan 2021, p. 603). The association between the presidential system and managerial values drives the executive to centralize the bureaucracy, exerting control from the top (Moe & Caldwell 1994, p. 176). Consequently, presidential systems are more suitable for NPM, which prioritizes centralization. Under a presidential system, the scope for political involvement by senior administrators is limited due to the focus on centralization and managerial values. This has implications for balancing political affinity with the president and

assessing merit. Ideological alignment may take precedence over merit considerations, with the president defining merit on a case-by-case basis, sometimes deprioritizing bureaucratic knowledge and expertise.

Furthermore, the lack of executive accountability to the legislative branch and the president's authority to appoint senior administrators streamline the appointment process. With fewer veto players, appointments are made more quickly, as the president's authority is flexible, easily exercised, and reversible without the need for complex institutional designs or future planning (Moe 1985, pp. 245, 248). Presidential appointment authority is the most powerful tool at the president's disposal for influencing public administration (Wood & Waterman 1991, p. 804; Ouyang et al. 2017, p. 62).

The lack of accountability to the legislative branch, combined with the president's authority to appoint and the promotion of managerial values, encourages external appointments. Mills (1956) notes that in presidential systems, senior management positions are often held by "political outsiders" (pp. 234-235). These individuals have typically spent most of their careers in sectors linked to finance or the corporate world and have networks outside the political sphere. However, Mills (1956) warns that the proliferation of political outsiders leads to the "absence of genuine bureaucracy" (p. 235). This refers to the erosion of bureaucratic neutrality toward policy stakeholders and political influence. Mills suggests that political outsiders, by introducing management values and interests into the bureaucracy, obstruct alternative policy choices (Mills 1956, p. 235). Their sector-specific viewpoints prevent them from fully understanding the long-term societal impacts of their decisions, including effects on nature or other sectors. Mills's warning highlights the consequences of distancing senior administrators from political decision-making.

It should also be noted that both parliamentary and presidential systems allow for political considerations in senior appointments. In both systems, governments tend to appoint senior administrators who align with their political agenda. However, in parliamentary systems, a higher number of veto players, accountability to the legislative branch, merit and career principles, and statutory job security constrain

these political considerations. In contrast, in presidential systems, the president may prioritize ideological proximity. The candidate's designation may become a point of negotiation between the president and the legislature, and the nominee may seek legislative support in a presidential system (Resh et al. 2022, p. 62). However, such political bargaining does not significantly affect senior administrators' involvement in political decision-making.

Turkey's transition to a presidential system also reflects a desire for the president to determine senior administrators' appointment procedures and principles. Appointments now require only the president's will, and the general principles in place increase presidential discretion. These principles also allow for external appointments aimed at achieving the 3Es of NPM (Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness). The centralization of appointments and the inclusion of external candidates help dismantle the bureaucratic oligarchy—bureaucracy's resistance to elected officials and change. Therefore, the presidential system's appointment procedures and principles facilitate the exclusion of senior administrators from politics. However, the president's party membership or leadership risks politicizing appointments, making them vulnerable to personal or partisan interests.

In conclusion, the system of government determines the appointment procedures and principles for senior administrators. In parliamentary systems, more veto players are involved in the process, and accountability to the legislative branch demands bureaucratic experience and expertise. Senior administrators, as part of the civil service, enjoy autonomy in their political decisions. Conversely, presidential systems operate based on managerial values, allowing external appointments to improve efficiency. The president's authority to define appointment procedures and principles makes senior administrators more dependent on the executive. Presidential systems are more aligned with NPM by design, thus minimizing the political autonomy of senior administrators. Turkey's transition to a presidential system can be seen as an effort to reduce the political influence of senior administrators. The new appointment procedures and principles offer a solution to bureaucratic oligarchy, centralize appointment decisions, enforce managerial values, and reduce political involvement

by senior administrators. However, the president's party affiliation increases the risk of appointments being influenced by partisan interests.

2.4. The Case of Türkiye

This study highlights how the new appointment procedures and principles in Turkey have reduced the involvement of senior administrators in politics while intensifying the politicization of senior appointments. There has been an increased emphasis on loyalty and alignment with the president and her party's agenda. This personal affiliation with the president and her political party has had significant implications for both the bureaucracy and the market.

Understanding the Turkish public administration reforms and their relation to NPM facilitates why previous reforms could not initiate reforms in senior administrator appointment procedure, and principles facilitate the senior administrator's relation with political decision-making. Therefore, Section 2.1.1 briefly accounts the public administration reforms in Turkey and their relevance with NPM. From the 1980s to the transition to the presidential system, Turkish public administration reforms focused on institutional and organizational changes driven by NPM. However, these reforms neglected deeper bureaucratic issues such as centralization, reluctance to take the initiative, formalism, and adherence to the strong state tradition. While these problems were tied to the role of senior administrators, reforms in this area were delayed until the introduction of the presidential system. Governments sought to influence decision-making by politicizing appointments, particularly in key economic institutions, to control decision-makers and limit their autonomy.

The government's accountability to the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) allowed senior administrators to contribute politically through their professionalism. Constitutional oversight mechanisms, including those of the TGNA, the Ombudsman, the Court of Accounts (both affiliated with the TGNA), and the State Supervisory Council under the Presidency, ensured senior administrators' accountability to the TGNA. This accountability facilitated their political involvement and reinforced the importance of their professionalism. In this frame,

Section 2.2.2 accounts for the senior administrator's relation with politics in the parliamentary system.

Section 2.2.2.1 examines the appointment procedure and principles in the parliamentary system. This section concludes that they allowed senior administrators to participate in decision-making. While time-consuming and requiring approval from various executive actors, these procedures fostered interactions between administrators and political figures, emphasizing professionalism alongside political alignment. Senior administrators, appointed from within the bureaucracy, enjoyed statutory job security based on merit and career principles, granting them autonomy from political interference and greater leverage in political engagement.

Section 2.2.3 analyses the relations of the senior administrators with the political actors in general. It concludes that in the presidential system, the appointment procedures and principles diminished the political involvement of the senior administrators. The presidential system prioritizes managerial values and the executive branch, focusing on efficiency and effectiveness, as outlined by Rosebloom (1983, pp. 220-224). It discourages the political involvement of senior administrators. Furthermore, the centralization of power, the president's control over the budget, and the creation or dissolution of public organizations and legal entities have further restricted their political engagement. The president's dual role as party leader has also increased senior administrators' susceptibility to the president's and her party's demands. Section 2.1.3 accounts for the senior administrator's relationship with politics in the parliamentary system

Section 2.2.3.1 focuses on the appointment procedures and principles valid in the presidential system. The Constitution creates a group of senior administrators distinct from the broader bureaucracy. The appointment procedures and principles governing these administrators limit their political engagement, weaken bureaucratic integrity, and diminish professionalism. The president holds exclusive authority in determining merit, and the broad criteria established by the Decree further increase reliance on the president. The president's party membership or leadership promotes partisanship at senior levels, as candidates align with the president to secure appointments. This

disconnection between senior administrators and the rest of the bureaucratic system, coupled with their diverse backgrounds and differing work cultures, undermines the cohesion of the bureaucracy. External appointments further erode this integrity, as bureaucratic experience and expertise are often overlooked, reducing professionalism at lower levels. As a result, lower-level officials may prioritize partisanship over professionalism in their pursuit of appointments.

2.4.1. Turkish Bureaucracy and Administrative Reforms Toward NPM

Since the establishment of the Republic, the Turkish public administration system has undergone numerous reform efforts. Significant reform movements occurred in 1963, 1971, 1980, 1989, and 2000 (Üstüner & Yavuz, 2018, p. 822). Those from the 1990s onwards conformed to NPM (Güzelsarı and Kendir Özdiç 2013, p. 52; Sezen, 2011, p.340). These movements were fragmented, focusing on specific areas and levels of the system. Their primary goals were to enhance effectiveness and efficiency, leading to consistent diagnoses and solutions for systemic issues. These reforms primarily concentrated on the structural components of the system, particularly the reorganization of the institutional and organizational aspects (Üstüner & Yavuz, 2018, p. 822). The ultimate effectiveness of NPM-type reforms hinges on the design of institutional arrangements. In other words, political and administrative institutions establish the framework within which strategic actors make their choices (Sozen & Shaw, 2002, p. 477). However, these reforms largely overlooked issues related to senior administrators, who are pivotal to the successful implementation of reforms and did not address the problems emanating from their position vis-à-vis politics.

The presidential system's major impact on public administration has been its emphasis on the "role of agents," specifically senior officials. The principles and procedures governing their nominations and appointments have changed, altering their relationship with politics to improve efficiency and effectiveness. While NPM reforms called for the detachment of senior officials from political influence, this separation has yet to yield significant improvements in efficiency or effectiveness. Instead, it has led to increased partisanship within the bureaucracy, with negative consequences for both the market and society.

This section examines public administration reforms implemented after the 1980s, focusing on the role of agents, particularly senior officials.

Integration with the global market in the 1980s spurred public administration reform (Köseoğlu & Morçöl, 2014, p. 141). Güzelsarı and Kendir Özdiñ (2013, p. 52) note that reforms initiated in the late 1990s and accelerated in the 2000s are "commonly referred to as NPM among academic scholars." Turkey's administrative reforms align with the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm, both in discourse and objectives (Sezen, 2011, p. 340). Sezen (2011, p. 324) highlights the continuity of public administration reforms since then. Güzelsarı and Kendir Özdiñ (2013, p. 66-76) identify two key periods of public administration reform: 1) the 1980-2000 period and 2) the period from 2000 onwards. They describe the 1980-1990 phase as "first-generation neo-liberal reforms" (Güzelsarı & Kendir Özdiñ, 2013, p. 66). These reforms primarily focused on the internal organization and restructuring of public agencies through legislation (Köseoğlu & Morçöl, 2014, p. 150) without addressing the role of senior officials.

Despite these policy shifts, Prime Minister Özal expressed concerns about the civil service's ability to effectively implement the neoliberal economic reforms (Güzelsarı & Kendir Özdiñ, 2013, p. 69). The existing bureaucracy, deeply rooted in a strong state tradition, resisted market-oriented policies. This opposition from the entrenched economic establishment posed a significant challenge to the government's reform agenda. To address this resistance, Özal created a parallel bureaucratic structure aligned with neoliberal ideology (Güzelsarı & Kendir Özdiñ, 2013, p. 69). This new apparatus, operating directly under the Prime Minister's control, functioned alongside the traditional bureaucracy but focused specifically on implementing neoliberal policies.

The State Personnel Law was amended to facilitate the recruitment of market-oriented professionals into the public sector, allowing private sector managers to rise to the highest administrative positions. Consequently, a new cohort of civil servants, more attuned to market principles, was recruited from outside the traditional bureaucracy. These individuals were appointed to key economic agencies, including

the Undersecretariat for Treasury and Foreign Trade, the Central Bank, and state-owned economic enterprises. However, the rest of the bureaucracy remained largely unchanged. The government's goal was not to reform public administration as a whole, but to inject dynamism into the economic bureaucracy by appointing outsiders to critical positions (Güzelsarı & Kendir Özdiñ, 2013, p. 69-70). Thus, while Özal acknowledged the role of agents, his concerns were primarily focused on the economic bureaucracy.

From 1983 to 1990, it became common practice to violate merit principles in public service recruitment and promotions (Köseođlu & Morçöl, 2014, p. 141). Instead of appointing "competent bureaucrats" based on qualifications, "compatible bureaucrats"—those with personal connections to the Prime Minister or ministers—were often selected for higher positions in public agencies.

Güzelsarı and Kendir Özdiñ (2013, p. 72-73) identify three major barriers to public administration reform during this period. First, the Turkish state is strong, centralized, and highly bureaucratic (Sözen & Shaw, 2002, p. 479). The second obstacle is the entrenched system of clientelism and party patronage, which is deeply ingrained in Turkey's political system. Sözen and Shaw (2002, p. 481) argue that the nature of party politics in Turkey necessitates distributing state resources to supporters through clientelist relationships and political networks. Consequently, any reform threatening politicians' control over patronage faces significant resistance.

The third obstacle lies in the administrative attitudes of Turkish bureaucrats, which include a tendency toward strong state tradition (Sözen, 2012, p. 172), centralization, reluctance to delegate authority, resistance to initiative-taking, innovation, and paternalistic relationships between superiors and subordinates, political loyalty-based recruitment, and rigid adherence to laws (Yeşilyurt, 2022, p. 942) all acted as impediments to NPM reforms (Güzelsarı & Kendir Özdiñ, 2013, p. 72-73). These features, along with the reliance on formal authority and coercive power (Sözen & Shaw, 2002, p. 483), hindered NPM reforms and public administrative reform during this period. The centralized decision-making structure, seniority-based promotions, political loyalty in recruitment, and law-oriented administration also impeded the

introduction of delegated authority and performance-based appraisals advocated by NPM (Sözen & Shaw, 2002, p. 482).

The attitudes of the senior administrators not only impeded the NPM reforms but also caused tensions between the government and the senior administrators. Whereas the government demanded flexibility, speed, result-orientedness, and initiative, the senior administrators adhered to formal rules and procedures, were slow to act, and avoided risk-taking. The senior administrator appointment procedures and principles in the parliamentary system hardly allowed for appointing other senior administrators to work with.

The second phase, referred to as the “second generation of neoliberal reforms,” began in the late 1990s (Güzelsarı & Kendir Özdiñ, 2013, p. 76). This phase saw a surge in legal changes and reform efforts to transform the administrative system. These reforms not only altered the state's socio-economic functions but also brought about profound changes in its institutional organization, operational dynamics, underlying judicial framework, public personnel regime, and the conceptualization of public services.

The reforms of the early 2000s were more comprehensive than their predecessors. Alongside economic and political reform programs, the government implemented a far-reaching public sector reform initiative (Köseođlu & Morçöl, 2014, p. 142). This marked a significant departure from previous approaches, as the first AKP government program explicitly incorporated the concepts of "governance" and "New Public Management" (NPM) into its policy agenda for the first time in Turkish history (Köseođlu & Morçöl, 2014, p. 142). In this phase, the government undertook both "managerial reforms" (focusing on improving efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery and adopting business-like management techniques) and "governance reforms" aimed at enhancing transparency, accountability, responsiveness, and fostering citizen engagement (Sözen, 2012, p. 168; Köseođlu & Morçöl, 2014, p. 137).

Sözen (2012, p. 169) associates these managerial reforms with NPM, citing the introduction of strategic plans, performance-based budgeting, decentralization to

empower local governments, the establishment of Regional Development Agencies, and efforts to reduce red tape. Sezen (2011, p. 329-335) adds that this period also saw privatization and outsourcing. In this "regulatory phase" of neoliberalism, independent regulatory agencies (IRAs) and councils were established (Üstüner & Yavuz, 2018, p. 822). These efforts primarily focused on institutional and organizational restructuring through legislation, yet the role of senior administrators was not addressed.

Regarding the bureaucracy, Sezen (2011, p. 334) claimed that a key government objective was to expand contractual employment in the public sector. However, a draft law that aimed to convert a significant number of civil servants into contractual employees faced strong opposition from public employee unions, leading to its postponement. Sezen (2011, p. 334) also noted that appointments to senior positions were often based on political preferences, despite formal criteria like education or length of service.

Nonetheless, the 2003 Draft Law on Public Administration Reform, later annulled by the Constitutional Court, represents one of the most significant steps in the AKP's broad public sector reform efforts (Zengin, 2003, p. 193). It was perhaps the most comprehensive attempt to transform the state's administrative structure since the Republic's founding (Zengin, 2003, p. 193). The draft was pivotal for clarifying NPM and governance principles (Güzelsarı & Kendir Özdiñ, 2013, p. 77; Albayrak, 2017, p. 1; Güneş, 2009, p. 90). It proposed restructuring the relationships between central and local administrations, abolishing provincial administrations and inspection boards, and establishing human resources departments. Zengin (2003, p. 198-202) noted that the emphasis on flexible and vertical organization reflected a preference for private sector practices. The draft also introduced performance-based evaluations, private sector participation in public services, and contractual employment. Reducing hierarchical layers was expected to expedite decision-making (Albayrak, 2017, p. 7). Thus, the draft addressed both the institutional structure and public personnel (Albayrak, 2017, p. 1). Despite not being passed into law, many of the draft's principles have since been implemented through various measures (Albayrak, 2017, p. 1).

The draft law included a provision concerning the senior administrators allowing for the dismissal of senior officials (undersecretaries, general directors, heads of institutions) upon a change in government. This provision may have allowed the government to work with individuals aligned with its preferences. However, it potentially undermined bureaucratic continuity and promoted politicization (Zengin, 2003, p. 199-200).

Amendments concerning senior administrators were delayed until the introduction of the presidential system. However, the procedures and principles introduced by the presidential system differ from those outlined in the draft law. These amendments grant the president full authority to appoint senior administrators, both internally and externally, according to her preferences. Unlike the previous limitations, this authority now extends to all public institutions.

The obstacles to administrative reform during the second period were similar to those in the previous one. From the 1970s to the 2000s, ruling bureaucrats, often politicized and dependent on politicians, believed they had a superior understanding of national and societal needs compared to the public. As a result, public administration and policies were primarily shaped by the views of these senior administrators (Kaya et al., 2023, p. 1527). For this state elite, unity and integrity historically took precedence over service delivery, leading to resistance to reforms (Sözen, 2012, p. 172). The AKP governments actively pursued policies to reduce the influence of bureaucratic oligarchy within the political-administrative system (Sözen, 2012, p. 173). "Successful implementation of current reforms relies heavily on public officials adapting to their new roles" (Sözen, 2012, p. 173). However, the administrative culture, characterized by public officials' attitudes and behaviors, might hinder these reforms (Sözen, 2012, p. 173). The persistence of patrimonial patterns and party patronage further obstructed efforts to establish a meritocratic and professional administration (Sözen, 2012, p. 173). Kaya et al. (2023, p. 1530-1533) also highlighted centralization, organizational growth, confidentiality, conservatism, prescriptiveness, avoiding responsibility, politicization, nepotism, corruption, and bribery within Turkish public administration. Kaya et al. (2023, p. 1531) argued that governments used two main strategies to influence the public administration system:

either replacing senior officials with politically aligned individuals or persuading existing officials to adopt reform agendas. Without these measures, achieving desired results was challenging, as senior managers often lacked sensitivity to reforms aimed at improving management and simplifying bureaucratic procedures. However, these measures were still subject to the career and merit principles of Law No. 657.

By the 2010s, several countries, including Turkey, began questioning the effectiveness of traditional public administration approaches such as delegation, independence, and autonomy. As a result, there was a growing emphasis on centralization, executive discretion, the politicization of bureaucracy, increased political control over economic governance, and a retreat from the principles of good governance (Güzelsarı & Kendir Özdiç, 2013, p. 85). The AKP sought to reduce bureaucratic dominance in key sectors without compromising its control. Legal changes aimed to curtail bureaucrats' autonomy while avoiding public accountability. Ironically, the government justified these changes by criticizing the "lack of democracy," the "hegemony of bureaucracy," and the "bureaucratic oligarchy." However, Güzelsarı and Kendir Özdiç (2013, p. 85) noted that appointing bureaucrats did not result in increased efficiency or effectiveness due to tensions between board members appointed by different governments. This centralization and increased control reflect the role of senior administrators in administrative reform.

The presidential system's senior appointment procedures and principles aimed to eliminate the bureaucracy's resistance to reforms. External appointments, loose appointment criteria, and the absence of any other consultation or approval mechanism allow the president to increase her political control over the bureaucracy. Nonetheless, they also increased their avoidance of taking the initiative and delegating decision-making and centralization. Senior administrators' distance from the political environment has translated into partisanship and nepotism, and party patronage has increased tremendously.

Given the neoliberal direction of reforms since the 1980s, the role of agents (managers) in promoting NPM and implementing public administration reforms, and the alignment of senior administrative appointment principles with NPM-type

managerialism, the president has brought all senior administrators of public institutions under her influence. This has effectively eliminated senior administrators' discretionary power in decision-making and further distanced them from political involvement.

In conclusion, Turkish public administration reforms from the 1980s to the transition to the presidential system focused primarily on institutional and organizational changes required by NPM. However, these reforms did not focus on bureaucracy and adequately address deeper issues such as centralization, reluctance to take initiative, prescriptiveness, formalism, and adherence to the strong state tradition. Even though many of these problems were linked to the role of senior administrators, the role of agents awaited the presidential system. Governments tried to influence decision-making by politicizing appointments to senior positions in key economic institutions. When the autonomy of these institutions became problematic, governments sought to control decision-makers to limit their influence. The presidential system recognized the importance of senior administrators in achieving political goals and implementing public sector reforms. As a result, one of its initial changes was to amend the principles and procedures for appointing senior officials. These procedures and principles did not terminate many of the persistent problems of Turkish public administration. They distanced the senior administrators from the political environment. This distancing had repercussions for bureaucracy and society.

2.4.2. Senior Administrators in the Parliamentary System

After the 1980s, governments were committed to implementing New Public Management (NPM) reforms within parliamentary systems. These reforms aimed to establish institutional and organizational foundations, such as outsourcing, public-private partnerships, and privatization. However, the traditional structure of public bureaucracy remained largely intact. Senior administrators continued to be civil servants governed by principles of career advancement and merit, with statutory job security. Consequently, they retained a significant degree of autonomy from the government. Despite these safeguards, political considerations, nepotism, and favoritism remained pervasive. The features of the parliamentary system connected

senior administrators to political actors such as the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA), its affiliated institutions, and the State Supervisory Council. As a result, in addition to their relations with the government, senior administrators were influenced by other political and institutional actors, and their actions were governed by these actors' demands and regulations.

The government's accountability to the TGNA created an indirect form of accountability for senior administrators to the parliament (Akbat, 2022, pp. 317-318). The government's liability required bureaucratic expertise, and the TGNA's demands to justify government actions underscored the value of bureaucratic professionalism. Thus, senior administrators' accountability was administrative rather than political (Akbat, 2022, p. 311). In other words, they justified their involvement in politics through their professional expertise.

The TGNA exercised oversight of the government and ministers using tools specific to parliamentary systems, which also linked senior administrators to the TGNA. Supervisory institutions such as the Ombudsman and the Court of Accounts, which were affiliated with the TGNA, further increased the political interactions of senior administrators. Even though senior administrators were not directly accountable to the TGNA, parliamentary oversight of the government necessitated their involvement in political decision-making.

Article 98 of the 1982 Constitution outlined the TGNA's supervisory tools, which included general debate, parliamentary inquiry, parliamentary investigation, and written and oral questions. General debate, also regulated by the TGNA By-Law, involved the discussion of specific subjects and state activities in the Plenary (1982 Constitution - Parliamentary System). While no votes leading to government accountability were cast at the end of such debates (Orak, 2003, pp. 31-33), these debates could still bring governmental decisions and actions, and consequently senior public administrators, to the political forefront. Senior administrators thus became attentive to parliamentary politics. Parliamentary inquiries sought information on specific issues and did not entail political responsibility. Nevertheless, if irregularities, corruption, or deficiencies in public administration were identified,

senior administrators could be held accountable (Ergül, 2012, pp. 88-89). Despite their potential significance, general debates and parliamentary inquiries were rarely pursued due to the TGNA's limited consideration of such requests (Sağlam, 2012, p. 96). Parliamentary investigations, on the other hand, focused on the criminal responsibilities of the prime minister and ministers related to their official duties (Dönmez, 2020, p. 45). Although these investigations could result in Supreme Court trials, they were infrequently conducted, with only a few cases referred to the court (Akbay, 2022, p. 316). In cases where a parliamentary investigation concerned crimes committed by government members during their tenure, senior administrators could also be implicated.

Written and oral questions, directed at the prime minister or ministers, served to criticize government actions and gather information on policy decisions and future directions (Özer, 2000, pp. 38-40). These questions kept the executive branch, including senior administrators, under continuous scrutiny and pressure (Akbay, 2022, p. 313). Although the ministers responded to these questions, senior administrators were often the actual interlocutors, prompting them to exercise caution in their decisions (Akbay, 2022, p. 313).

Interpellations, which could result in the referral of government members to the Supreme Court, reinforced the alignment of the government with the parliamentary majority rather than resulting in the dismissal of ministers or governments (Özer, 2000, p. 40). The most significant aspect of the TGNA's influence on senior public administrators was its power of sanction through a vote of no confidence following an interpellation, potentially leading to the downfall of the government (Kılıçoğlu, 2013, pp. 56, 61). However, strict party discipline, combined with the governing party's parliamentary majority, diminished the TGNA's capacity to exert pressure on senior administrators (Akbay, 2022, p. 318).

Another mechanism through which the TGNA could exert control over senior administrators was the annual budget negotiations. During this process, the government and senior administrators were subject to scrutiny and evaluation (Akbay, 2022, p. 317). The rejection or reduction of financial allocations could force

the resignation or dismissal of senior administrators. If the TGNA failed to approve the budget, it could prepare an ad hoc budget (Çalışkan et al., 2020, p. 732). Thus, the budget approval process provided an avenue for the TGNA to exert pressure on senior public administrators, albeit indirectly.

Furthermore, the demands of constituents, conveyed through MPs, fostered relations between MPs and senior administrators. Requests for appointments, healthcare access, credit, and transfers cultivated a sense of obligation on the part of senior administrators, particularly when these demands came from members of the governing party (Eryılmaz, 1993, p. 85).

Senior administrators were also subject to scrutiny by the Ombudsman Institution and the Court of Accounts, which operated under the authority of the TGNA. The effectiveness of the Ombudsman's advocacy for good governance principles depended on the TGNA's influence over the bureaucracy. Likewise, the TGNA's strength enhanced the impartiality and impact of the Court of Accounts. Consequently, senior administrators were mindful of adhering to good governance principles and budgetary concerns in their political engagements.

The State Supervisory Council, an independent constitutional body under the command of a neutral president, further influenced the political activities of senior administrators. The president had the authority to audit the profitability, efficiency, effectiveness, and legality of public bodies, and to forward investigation reports to the Prime Ministry or judicial authorities (Eryılmaz, 1993, p. 88). The constitutional justification for this body highlighted the need for an institution immune to political influence to oversee public administration. Therefore, the president's neutrality empowered the council to ensure that senior administrators adhered to the rule of law in their political participation.

In sum, the government's accountability to the TGNA enabled senior administrators to make political contributions through their professionalism. The constitutional supervisory tools of the TGNA, along with oversight by the Ombudsman and the Court of Accounts (both affiliated with the TGNA) and the State Supervisory

Council attached to the Presidency, rendered senior administrators accountable to the TGNA. This, in turn, facilitated their political participation and reinforced the value of their professionalism.

2.4.2.1. Appointment Procedures and Principles of Senior Administrators in the Parliamentary System

The appointment procedures and principles within the parliamentary system allowed senior administrators to participate in political decision-making. These procedures were regulated by Laws No. 2451 and 2477, with the underlying principles defined in the organizational laws of various institutions. However, only general rules concerning the length of public service and educational qualifications were established for appointments to senior management positions (Albayrak, 2020, p. 132). Although time-consuming and requiring the consent of multiple actors within the executive branch, these procedures brought senior administrators into contact with political actors in the executive. In turn, this increased the value of professionalism, as administrators were required to persuade these actors, although political affinity also played a significant role. The general nature of the appointment principles expanded the pool of candidates for the government. These principles, along with the Constitution and Law No. 657, ensured internal appointments. The merit and career principles, along with statutory job security, further enhanced the autonomy of senior administrators. The parliamentary system endowed the bureaucracy with considerable power, enabling it to extend control over the administrative system, potentially leading to bureaucratic tutelage (Öztürk & Kırışık, 2020, p. 175).

While the procedures were time-consuming and required consent from various actors within the executive branch, they facilitated interactions between senior administrators and political actors. These procedures also underscored the importance of professionalism in persuading such actors; however, political alignment remained influential. The appointment of senior administrators was regulated by Law No. 2451 on the Appointment Procedure in Ministries and Subsidiaries and Law No. 2477 on the Appointment Procedure to Public Institutions and Organizations Outside the Scope of Law, enacted on April 23, 1981.

Law No. 2451 governed appointments in the Prime Minister's Office, ministries, and affiliated organizations. It outlined two appointment procedures: the Council of Ministers' Decision and Joint Decree. In appointments by the Council of Ministers' Decision, the appointment decision required the signatures of all ministers, the prime minister, and the president. The relevant minister initiated the process by proposing a candidate. Table 1 of the Law listed the positions to be appointed through this process.¹ Furthermore, some public organizations required senior administrative appointments to be subject to the Council of Ministers' Decision.² Notably, appointments through the Council of Ministers' Decision were a key feature of the parliamentary system, but the process was time-consuming and challenging to implement, limiting it to critical tasks (Albayrak, 2020, p. 114). Since the government emerged from the parliament, the relevant minister had to consider political circumstances and diverse interests to avoid conflicts, especially during coalition governments (Albayrak, 2020, pp. 113-115). This approval process allowed parliament to indirectly influence senior appointments (Albayrak, 2020, p. 115). The government's accountability to parliament and the involvement of multiple actors in the appointment procedure allowed for senior administrators' political participation through a consensus on appointments (Albayrak, 2020, p. 115). However, political appointments were not completely avoided.

Appointments through Joint Decree (Tripartite Decree) allowed the minister to whom the appointee would be responsible to propose a name, which the prime minister and president then signed. The positions to be appointed through Joint Decree were listed in Table 2 of the Law.³ Some organizations required senior administrative appointments to follow the Joint Decree procedure.

¹ Governors, ambassadors, permanent representatives, permanent delegates, the president of Religious Affairs, Members of the High Council of Religious Affairs, chairman and members of the Supreme Auditing Board, and the president of the Turkish Statistical Institute.

² Chairmen and Members of Certain Independent Regulatory Bodies, Chairman and members of the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund, Governor of the Central Bank, members of the Council of Higher Education, TRT General Manager and members of the Board of Directors, Chairman and members of the Right to Information Review Board, Chairman and members of the Public Officials Ethics Committee, Chief of General Staff.

³ The positions were deputy ministers (including the deputy minister of the Ministry of National Defence), undersecretaries and their deputies (including the Secretary-General and deputies of the

This procedure, excluding the Council of Ministers, accelerated the appointment process compared to the Council of Ministers' Decision. Nevertheless, the process still required the signatures of the minister, prime minister, and president, and any differences of opinion among these actors could cause delays in appointments.

The appointment procedures through the Council of Ministers' Decision and Joint Decree often led to conflicts between the president and prime minister, contributing to complaints about the double-headed executive problem.

In 1992, the prime minister proposed amendments to Law No. 2451 and the cancellation of Law No. 2477 (TBMM, 1992, p. 1). The proposal aimed to reduce the workload of the president and the Council of Ministers by significantly decreasing the number of positions requiring their approval. The goal was to limit the president's interference and increase the government's ability to appoint politically aligned senior administrators. However, the proposal did not become law. Opposition parties argued that the president's role in the appointment process ensured public officials' job security and the impartial provision of public services. They feared the absence of the president's oversight could lead to arbitrary appointments, turning public officials into party officials (TBMM, 1992, p. 4). This resistance from parliament underscored the concern for senior administrators' autonomy and professionalism in political decision-making and implementation.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs); general directors and deputy directors (including the secretary general of Foreign Trade of the Ministry of Commerce and his deputy, the director general of the Treasury and the secretary-general and deputy of the International Economic Cooperation Organization, the Head and Deputy of the Civil Defense Administration of the Ministry of Interior), members and secretary general of the Scientific and Technical Research Board of Turkey, chairman and members of the Administrative Council of the General Directorate of Foundations, president of the Revenue Administration, vice presidents of the Revenue Administration, heads of Departments of the Revenue Administration and heads of Tax Offices, president and vice presidents of the Turkish Public Hospitals Institution, president and Vice presidents of the Turkish Medicines and Medical Devices Agency, president and vice presidents of the Public Health Institution of Turkey, president of State Personnel Administration, secretary general of the Atomic Energy Commission, chairmen and members of boards in ministries, heads of Strategy Development Departments, heads of Guidance and Inspection, Guidance and Supervision, Supervision Services of ministries, vice presidents of the Tax Inspection Board, inspectors of the Ministry of Finance (including tax inspectors and sworn auditors of the banks) and labor inspectors of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, ministry advisors (including the Ministry of National Defense, first legal advisor, heads of ministry departments, heads of Provincial Administrative Branches, regional directors and chief directors, deputy governor, district governor, provincial director of Legal Affairs, president of the Police Academy, Provincial Police Chief.

In 1996, an amendment to Law No. 2451 required that during coalition governments, appointments had to be approved by the deputy prime minister from the second-largest ruling party (Yavuz, 2007, p. 313). This change mirrored the countersignature by the president. During coalition governments, appointments via the Council of Ministers' Decision were not straightforward, as multiple actors were involved in the process, and appointments became subject to political negotiations among coalition parties, making it possible to appoint an unfavorable senior administrator.

The Turkish experience with Law No. 2451 illustrates how the appointment process in the parliamentary system complicated the political compromises required to appoint senior administrators. The president's veto power and the numerous approvals required for appointments slowed down the process. Although appointment by proxy was adopted to reduce the need for presidential approval, tensions within the ruling elite destabilized the executive. Furthermore, as Karasu (2001, p. 217) noted, senior administrators were sometimes more influential over personnel and had more public visibility than elected officials, which unsettled governments. Senior administrators, therefore, were more politically active in the parliamentary system.

Law No. 2477 outlined the appointment procedure for senior administrative positions in the affiliated institutions of ministries and public economic enterprises.⁴ The process followed for the Joint Decree applied here as well. Some organizational laws also required the Joint Degree Procedure for senior administrative appointments.⁵ Similar to Law No. 2451, the presence of multiple veto players slowed the appointment process. However, considerations of merit, public interest, and public

⁴ President, vice president, general director, deputy general director, members of boards, head of departments except for those who are elected (1st and 2nd degree), director of the enterprises, head of the group (1st and 2nd degree), secretary general, advisor, head of the board (inspection, science, examination), regional directors (1st and 2nd degree).

⁵ Presidents and Vice Presidents of the Institute of Forensic Medicine, President of Turkish Cooperation And Coordination Agency, President of The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, President of Turks Abroad and Related Communities, President of Centre for Assessment, Selection, and Placement, General Director of State Hydraulic Works, President of Atatürk Culture, Language and History Institution, President, Vice Presidents and Members of the Board of Directors of the Turkish Patent Institute, General Manager and Deputy General Managers of Turkish Employment Organization.

service requirements helped mitigate negative reactions, thus ensuring that the senior administrators of institutions listed in the annex of Law No. 2477 remained part of the political sphere.

The parliamentary system's appointment principles did not define senior administrators as a separate class. There was no reference to their appointments or definitions in the Constitution. Article 128 stated that a specific law should regulate the procedures and principles governing the training of senior public administrators. However, the Constitutional Court annulled the law (Demirelli, 2023a, p. 111; Öztürk, 2019, p. 1282). The constitutional requirement (Article 128/2) that laws determine the qualifications and appointments of public administrators and other public officials ensured that senior administrators were part of the civil service. The positions listed in Laws No. 2451 and 2477 were subject to merit criteria outlined in the organizational laws governing senior administrators, although the procedures themselves were subject to these two laws. If no special regulations existed in an institution's establishment law or in its rules for appointments and relocations, general rules applied, and any civil servant with the required service time and education could be appointed to senior positions (Aslan et al., 2016, p. 89).

Although external appointments to institutions critical to the economy were uncommon, they did occur. Externally appointed officials also became part of the civil service and were subject to the same laws as their counterparts already in public service. Senior administrators were primarily internally appointed bureaucrats who thus formed part of the public service.

Furthermore, Public Personnel Law No. 657 guaranteed statutory job security for all civil servants, including senior administrators. The law's career and merit principles provided political leverage for senior administrators. The career principle required providing civil servants with opportunities to advance to the highest grades within their ranks, based on the knowledge and training conditions relevant to their roles. Merit referred to the principle of basing entry into public service, as well as advancement, promotion, and termination, on the merit system while ensuring job security and equal opportunities. Senior administrators in the parliamentary system

were primarily career bureaucrats with tenure security, thereby linked to public service regardless of their administrative positions. This ensured the integrity of the bureaucracy. As a result, the job security afforded by career and merit principles allowed senior administrators greater autonomy in their decisions and provided them with some leverage against elected officials.

Moreover, an amendment to Article 68/B of Civil Servants Law No. 657 in 2011 allowed individuals with sufficient professional experience in both the public and private sectors, as well as the required educational qualifications, to be appointed to senior positions (Aslan et al., 2016) through procedures outlined in Law No. 2451. This article did not define senior administrators or provide detailed merit criteria but specified the minimum years of service required for appointment.

Law No. 657, however, does not explicitly define senior administrators. Article 68/B of Law No. 657 designates senior officials as those in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades, who are entitled to salary increases based on their administrative duties (Sobacı & Köseoğlu, 2018, p. 35). For positions with an additional index of 5300 or more in the 1st grade (e.g., general directors, presidents of public institutions), a minimum of twelve years of service is required. For positions between the 1st and 2nd grades with an additional index below 5300 (e.g., deputy director generals, deputies of public institution presidents, heads of departments), a minimum of ten years is required. Similarly, for positions between the 3rd and 4th grades (e.g., heads of branches, chiefs), a minimum of eight years of service is necessary. An amendment introduced in 2011 allowed all service periods in the private sector to be counted toward the total period of service for individuals appointed to positions such as undersecretary, deputy undersecretary, general manager, and president within the Prime Ministry and its affiliated and related institutions (Aslan et al., 2016, p. 90). Thus, professional experience in the private sector was deemed equivalent to that in the public sector.

Nevertheless, partisanship in appointments has been a persistent feature of the parliamentary system (Tataroğlu, 2006, p. 116; Eren & Saitoğlu, 2021, p. 310), and merit has often been loosely defined, with criteria focusing primarily on length of

service and education. Although a newly appointed minister in the parliamentary system is required to work with the existing senior staff in the bureaucracy due to the principle of continuity, in practice, ministers frequently appoint individuals aligned with their own and their party's ideas and views to senior executive positions that can influence strategic and political decisions (Karasu, 2001, p. 216). Eren and Saitoğlu (2021) argue that the lack of a legal framework regulating the procedures and principles for appointing senior public administrators in Turkey has granted political leaders broad discretionary power (p. 311). Governments have generally preferred to work with administrators who are ideologically aligned and loyal to the government. In appointing high-level bureaucrats in Turkey, qualities such as reliability, confidentiality, and loyalty to party interests have often been prioritized over merit and experience (Altunok, 2016, p. 171). Nonetheless, senior administrators still had ample opportunities to engage in politics.

In conclusion, the appointment procedures and principles within the parliamentary system enabled senior administrators to participate in decision-making processes. Although these procedures were time-consuming and required approval from various actors within the executive branch, they facilitated interactions between senior administrators and political figures. These procedures emphasized the importance of professionalism in influencing these actors, though political alignment also played a significant role. Senior administrators were appointed from the ranks of the bureaucracy, thereby becoming part of the civil service. Their statutory job security, grounded in merit and career principles, ensured autonomy from political interference, thereby providing them with greater leverage to engage in politics.

2.4.3. Senior Administrators in the Presidential System

During the parliamentary system, bureaucratic resistance was a consistent source of complaint for all governments. This resistance arose from senior administrators' political connections with the parliament and other institutions, which prioritized bureaucratic professionalism. Furthermore, the parliamentary system fostered this resistance by weakening governmental power through the double-headed executive issue (Öztürk & Kırışık, 2020, pp. 167-168, 170, 175) and weak coalition

governments (Akçay, 2016, p. 39). The Public Personnel Law also safeguarded senior administrators' autonomy from political interference. Consequently, the parliamentary system impeded public administration reforms concerning senior administrators. Under the presidential system, however, the relationship between senior administrators and the parliament has weakened. Centralization has curtailed senior administrators' decision-making autonomy, diminishing their connections with the parliament and its affiliated institutions. Additionally, the president's authority to issue decrees regarding the budget and the establishment of public organizations and legal entities further constrains senior administrators' autonomy, limiting their political engagement.

Centralization consolidates political power within a single decision-making center, placing political actors above the bureaucracy (Güzelsarı, 2019, p. 41). In a presidential system, this central authority is the president. Such centralization limits parliamentary and, to some extent, judicial oversight, equating the executive branch with the presidency (Üstüner, 2023, p. 22). Yılmaz Uçar (2023) contends that the presidential system's discourse on bureaucratic oligarchy not only transforms the relationship between the legislative and executive branches but also reshapes vertical relations within the executive branch (p. 13). The presidential system concentrates power in the president, promoting a technocratic management approach within public administration (Güzelsarı, 2019, p. 41), thereby excluding senior administrators from political engagement. The insulation of technocratic decision-making from political uncertainties (Robison, 2006, p. 5) and the centralization of power underscore the managerial focus of the presidential system.

The changed relationship between parliament and senior administrators has diminished their political participation and devalued bureaucratic expertise and experience. The presidential system reduces the influence of the TGNA (Turkish Grand National Assembly) over the executive branch and, by extension, senior public administrators. Unlike the parliamentary system, where the government could be overthrown through interpellations or votes of no confidence, the presidential system precludes such actions. Instead, parliamentary oversight of the executive is exercised through general debates, parliamentary inquiries, investigations, and

written questions. General debates and parliamentary inquiries remain largely unchanged from the parliamentary system (The amended 1982 Constitution; TBMM, 2022, p. 82). Akçay (2016, p. 57) and Alkan (2017, pp. 1-3) argue that parliamentary inquiries may become more effective under the presidential system, as the separation of the executive from the legislative branch weakens the executive's influence over such inquiries. Oral questions, which were already ineffective in the parliamentary system (Alkan, 2017, pp. 1-3), were abolished under the presidential system, as the government rarely participates in TGNA proceedings. Written questions may be directed to the vice president and ministers, but there are no penalties for failing to respond (Adar & Seufert, 2021, p. 9). Notably, the president, as head of the executive, is exempt from written questions (Akbay, 2022). Senior administrators, who were responsible for answering such questions under the parliamentary system, often disregard information requests, particularly those from opposition parties (Anka Haber Ajansı, 2023; PolitikYol, 2023). According to Adar and Seufert (2021), the government increasingly rejects questions on the grounds that they contain "crude" or "hurtful" statements, often citing terms such as "assimilation," "torture," "discriminatory practices," "Kurdish entity" (in Iraq), "violation of civilians' rights," or "sexual violence" (p. 14). As a result, senior administrators have become increasingly indifferent to parliamentary inquiries, further limiting their involvement in politics

While parliamentary investigations may hold senior administrators accountable, Dönmez (2020) observes that the increase in the number of deputies required to initiate an investigation from 55 to 301 under the presidential system has made such inquiries more difficult to commence (p. 53). Even if an investigation is initiated and the report reaches the plenary, a referral to the Supreme Court requires a secret ballot from 400 deputies—an almost unattainable majority (Dönmez, 2020). Consequently, the political participation of senior administrators has significantly diminished.

The constitutional power of the president, as outlined in Article 104/17, to issue presidential decrees on executive matters weakens the involvement of senior administrators in the decision-making process within the TGNA. This article stipulates that such authority excludes fundamental rights, individual rights, and

duties outlined in the first and second chapters, as well as the political rights and duties listed in the fourth chapter of the second part of the Constitution. In the hierarchy of norms, presidential decrees are subordinate to laws, meaning no presidential decree can be issued on matters regulated exclusively by law (Akçay, 2016, p. 55).

However, the Venice Commission (2017, pp. 19-20) has noted that the term "matters related to executive power" is so vague that it is difficult to distinguish executive matters from legislative or judicial ones. Koç (2023, p. 83) argues that the president is allowed to regulate social and economic rights and duties, such as the protection of family and children's rights, the right and duty to education, the use of coastal areas, land ownership, protection of agriculture and husbandry, expropriation, nationalization, privatization, union rights, health services, and environmental protection. Thus, presidential decrees can potentially limit the social and economic rights specified in these areas (Law Library of Congress, 2022). While these "positive rights" can be regulated by presidential decrees, provided they fall within the bounds of executive authority (Law Library of Congress, 2022), there is potential for the executive to interpret and expand its scope of activities.

On the other hand, the TGNA retains the authority to legislate on any issue and can override executive orders (Koç, 2023, p. 83; İriş, 2021, pp. 36-38), compelling senior administrators to seek parliamentary support for legislation (Bakırcı, 2021, pp. 80-83; Koç, 2023, pp. 83-85). However, overriding presidential decrees can be exceedingly difficult. Reaching a consensus on legislation is often challenging, especially if the president is a member or leader of a political party with parliamentary representation. Furthermore, the requirement of 301 MPs to override a presidential veto further complicates the possibility of overturning a presidential decree.

As a result, in addition to the centralization of power, the president's authority to issue decrees on executive matters further limits the political role of senior administrators. The president, as the central decision-maker, determines executive issues, and the decrees set the course for their implementation. Consequently, senior administrators are relegated to the role of implementers of presidential decrees.

Additionally, the president has the authority to establish and abolish duties and powers, define the organizational structure of ministries, and create their central and provincial organizations via presidential decree (1982 Constitution, Art. 106/11). While such organizational changes previously required legislation under the parliamentary system, the president, as head of the executive, can now reorganize nearly the entire administrative structure via decrees under the presidential system (Aydın, 2023, p. 47). The president also determines which positions are considered senior and outlines their duties and authorities. Kırışik & Öztürk (2020) argue that this presidential authority contributes to the organized, harmonious, and efficient functioning of the system (p. 176). Thus, the powers, functions, and duties of senior administrators are subject to the president's discretion, and presidential decrees are issued without input from senior administrators in the decision-making process.

Moreover, budgetary provisions further diminish the link between senior administrators and the TGNA. Under the parliamentary system, the budget had to be approved by the TGNA through the passage of a law. If the budget was not approved, the government could fall. While Akçay (2016) asserts that it was unlikely for the TGNA, where the government held a majority, to reject the budget, the mere possibility of such a scenario could have prompted senior administrators to justify their actions to avoid political conflicts (pp. 55-56).

In contrast, under the presidential system, senior administrators know the budget will eventually be approved. Article 161/4 states that if the budget law cannot be enacted within the designated period, a provisional budget law shall be enacted (Akçay, 2016, p. 54). If even this provisional law cannot be enacted, the previous year's budget shall be applied, adjusted for inflation, until the new budget law is adopted. As such, the budget as a key leverage for the TGNA is now controlled by the president (Keskinsoy, 2023, p. 25). Like the president and ministers, senior administrators no longer need to convince the TGNA to approve the budget (Akçakaya & İlhan, 2021, pp. 601, 609). Furthermore, the president's role as both a political party leader and member can influence the TGNA's decisions. The weakening of the TGNA's most significant political tool—the budget—limits the political engagement of senior administrators.

Moreover, the political engagement of institutions affiliated with the TGNA, such as the Ombudsman Institution and the Court of Accounts, is likely to decline due to the diminishing political interactions between the TGNA and senior administrators.

Another notable feature of the presidential system is the president's authority to establish public legal entities (Article 123/3). This authority includes decisions regarding organizational structure, senior administrative positions, and the duties and powers of senior administrators, thereby extending executive power to influence the market. This presidential authority also increases the dependence of senior administrators in these institutions on presidential preferences, as institutional design reflects the president's priorities. As a result, the autonomy of senior administrators from the central authority and presidential decisions is significantly constrained.

With regard to the State Supervisory Council, its capacity to foster political relations between the presidency and senior administrators is limited. A key innovation introduced with the presidential system is the Council's authority to conduct administrative investigations in all civil and military institutions, excluding judicial ones. This includes examination, investigation, and audit activities (Erdem, 2016, p. 16). The president may initiate administrative investigations into senior public officials without the need for approval from the highest-ranking senior public official. Upon the president's order, the Council can assume control of investigations into public institutions. Despite these extensive powers, the Council has yet to be fully utilized.

The president's dual role as a political party leader further restricts the political contributions of senior administrators, exacerbating the already weakened relationship between senior administrators and the TGNA. Consequently, the influence of the TGNA's affiliated bodies over senior administrators will also diminish. As senior administrators become more removed from political decision-making, they will increasingly prioritize the demands of the president and her political party. Koç (2023) argues that senior administrators may prioritize presidential preferences over the implementation of laws (p. 84).

In summary, the presidential system emphasizes managerial values and the executive branch, prioritizing efficiency and effectiveness as defined by Roseblom (1983, pp.

220-224). It does not encourage the involvement of senior administrators in politics. Additionally, the weakening of political relations with the TGNA, alongside the centralization of power and the president's authority over the budget and the establishment and dissolution of public organizations and legal entities, has further limited senior administrators' political engagement. The president's dual role as party leader has also made senior administrators more susceptible to the demands of the president and her political party.

2.4.3.1. Appointment Procedures and Principles of Senior Administrators in the Presidential System

In the presidential system, the procedures and principles for appointing senior administrators are governed by the Constitution, Decree Having Force of Law (DHFL) No. 375, and Presidential Decree No. 3. These legislative frameworks create a group of senior administrators distinct from the broader bureaucracy. Exempt from the provisions of Public Personnel Law No. 657, this group is appointed directly by the president. However, the appointment procedures and principles limit the political participation of senior administrators, undermine the integrity of the bureaucracy, and diminish the value of bureaucratic experience and expertise. The president's party membership or leadership exacerbates these issues by making senior administrators more partisan and susceptible to the influence of the president and her political party.

The Constitution mandates that the rights, duties, and appointments of public servants and officials be regulated by law. Before the 2017 amendments, the Constitution included no specific provisions regarding senior administrators, who were considered public servants and subject to the same legislation as the broader civil service.

However, the amended Constitution (Article 104/9) grants the president the authority to appoint and dismiss senior administrators, as well as determine the procedures and principles governing these appointments. This authority represents an exception to Article 128/2, which stipulates that laws regulate the appointments, rights, and duties

of public servants and officials, and does not envision a separate group of senior public administrators (Koç, 2023, pp. 87-90; Öztürk, 2019, p. 1283). When these two articles are examined together, it becomes evident that the amended Constitution establishes a new category of senior public administrators, distinct from the general civil service. While the Constitution does not explicitly define "senior administrators," the concept of 'senior public officialdom' has been introduced (Demirelli, 2023a, p. 93).

The authority to appoint senior officials is unique to the presidential system, allowing the president, as the head of the executive branch, to select individuals with whom to work (Öztürk, 2019, p. 1295; Öztürk & Tozak, 2019, p. 356). Önder (2017, p. 577) suggests that this authority could lead to "a more effective public administration if used rationally." When considered within the framework of New Public Management (NPM), the creation of a separate group of senior administrators aligns with managerialism (Diefenbach, 2009, p. 902; Shepherd, 2018, p. 1673; Ward, 2011, p. 206), reflecting expectations that differ from traditional policy advice and process implementation. Furthermore, the Constitution facilitates the appointment process (Esen & Kalağan, 2020, pp. 271-272). The Constitution does not authorize any other actor to participate in the appointment process, thereby expediting the procedure. Even if a constitutional requirement for legislative approval existed, it would not function as a consultative or oversight mechanism for assessing the suitability of nominees. A president who is a member or leader of a majority political party with a strong party tradition could further consolidate presidential power in both parliament and decision-making (Esen & Kalağan, 2020, p. 265). Thus, the president would become the sole authority directing appointments.

Two key pieces of legislation regulate the appointment procedures and principles for senior administrators: DHFL No. 375 and Presidential Decree No. 3. While DHFL No. 375 does not define senior administrators or list senior administrative positions, it does provide a framework for some of the appointment principles.

According to DHFL No. 375 (Additional Article No. 35), in order to be appointed to the cadres, positions, and duties of senior public administrators, it is necessary to

fulfill the conditions specified in the Presidential Decree. DHFL No. 375 also establishes the calculation of professional experience, allowing the president to make appointments both internally and externally based on contracts. In calculating the length of service required for those appointed to senior public administrator positions, all periods of work in public institutions and organizations, international organizations (provided that they are subject to social security institutions), the private sector, or freelance work after completing four years of higher education are taken into consideration. Thus, DHFL No. 375 grants the president the authority to determine appointment procedures and principles, including the ability to appoint senior officials internally or externally without the limitations set by Public Personnel Law No. 657. This demonstrates that those appointed internally are not subject to the merit and career principles of Public Personnel Law No. 657.

According to DHFL No. 375, individuals appointed to senior public administrator positions may also be employed on a contractual basis, without being bound by the provisions of Law No. 657 or other laws governing contracted personnel. The president determines the base and ceiling salaries for these contracts, taking into account factors such as the institutions and organizations involved, the title of the position, the difficulty, responsibility, and risks associated with the role, work intensity, working conditions, socio-economic factors, and the geographical characteristics of the place of service. The president may also consider differences in service conditions compared to peers in similar positions, or in the absence of peers, those in comparable roles. In essence, DHFL No. 375 authorizes the president to employ political outsiders or technocrats—individuals who are not career bureaucrats but possess substantial knowledge and experience in the field of public administration (Demirelli, 2023b)—based on administrative contracts. While external appointments were previously limited to critical economic institutions, they have become the norm rather than the exception under the presidential system.

Additional Article No. 35 of the DHFL prohibits seeking conditions such as previous position, class, profession, and institution as criteria for appointments. This prohibition aims to prevent the formation of a closed, elitist group of senior administrators.

DHFL No. 375 thus demonstrates the limitation of the autonomy of senior administrators. The separation of senior administrators from the rest of the civil service, based on their employment conditions, undermines the integrity and professionalism of the bureaucracy. Internally appointed administrators are not subject to Public Personnel Law No. 657, meaning they lack statutory job security, which reduces their autonomy from political actors and opens the door for their participation in political decision-making. Externally appointed administrators, likewise, have only temporary, contractual relations with the public service. This stands in contrast to the traditional model of bureaucracy, where permanency and career progression in public service were dominant. Consequently, senior administrators are primarily concerned with fulfilling the terms of their contracts, leaving politics outside their purview.

The integrity of the bureaucracy is further threatened by the minimal qualifications required for appointment. A five-year period of professional experience and a four-year university degree are deemed sufficient for both internal and external appointments. These criteria significantly increase the number of potential candidates for senior positions but threaten the coherence of the bureaucracy. The devaluation of experience and expertise means that nominees are likely to become partisan due to the president's party membership or leadership. Furthermore, whether five years of work experience is sufficient for senior administrative positions is questionable. Disregarding merit and career principles, particularly in relation to bureaucratic experience and expertise, results in the appointment of senior administrators who may lack sufficient experience. This lack of a shared understanding of administration, compounded by diverse professional and educational backgrounds, impedes the integrity of senior officialdom and, consequently, the bureaucracy as a whole.

Moreover, in evaluating professional experience, employment in both the public and private sectors is considered equivalent. Thus, no distinction is made between public and private sector experience. However, the bureaucracy operates under its own rules, administrative culture, and procedures, which differ significantly from those in the private sector. Assigning equal value to both types of experience reflects a

diminished appreciation for bureaucratic expertise and professionalism. When bureaucratic professionalism is devalued in senior administrative positions, it risks being similarly devalued at lower levels of the bureaucracy. Additionally, the partisan inclinations of senior administrators may further politicize the bureaucracy, shifting its focus toward partisan interests.

Presidential Decree No. 3 determines the procedures and principles concerning the appointments of senior public administrators. The Annexed Table I⁶ indicates the senior administrative positions. In other words, while a senior administrator is not explicitly defined, senior administrative positions are listed in Annexed Table I. This reflects the unique position of senior administrators, situated between politicians and the bureaucracy.

Regarding the appointment procedure, the Decree does not provide specific details. It merely authorizes the president to directly appoint individuals to the senior administrative positions listed in Table I and to approve the appointments for those in Table II, annexed to the Decree. No other consultative or approval actors are involved in the process for either category. In addition to the absence of formal arrangements, there is no available information in the literature or secondary sources, such as newspapers, regarding the procedure. Consequently, it remains unclear how

⁶ Head of Religious Affairs, head of the National Intelligence Organization, Secretary General of the National Security Council, Chairman and Members of the State Supervisory Council, President of Defense Industry, Deputy Ministers, Heads of the **Presidential** Office, Heads of Institutions and Boards Affiliated to the Presidency, General Manager and Members of the Board of Directors of Turkish Radio-Television Corporation, Governor of the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, Head of Privatization Administration, Chief Prosecutor of the Court of Auditors, Governors, Ambassadors, Permanent Representative(S), Chairmen and Members of Regulatory and Supervisory Institutions (Except For The Members of RTÜK and Personal Data Protection Board elected by TGNA), Chairman and Members of the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund, Members of The Council of Higher Education, Members of The Internal Audit Coordination Committee, Yunus Emre Foundation Board of Trustees Members, President and Members of The Human Rights And Equality Institution Of Turkey, Rectors (Including Rectors Of National Defense And Turkish-Japanese Universities of Science And Technology) Head of Disaster and Emergency Management, Vice Presidents of Disaster and Emergency Management, Head of Guidance and Supervision of the Presidency of Disaster and Emergency Management, Chief **Revenue** Officer, President of the Social Security Institution, President of the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Development and Support Administration, President of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, President of The Turkish Statistical Institute, President of Turks Abroad and Related Communities, Head of Operations of Fuel Supply and Nato Pol Facilities, President of Atatürk High Council of Culture, Language and History, Heads of the Board of Inspection, Inspection, Guidance And Inspection, Guidance and Inspection, Guidance And Supervision, Audit Services and other Heads of The Boards of The Ministries, General Directors, President of the Agriculture and Rural Development Support **Institution...**

nominees are determined, selected, and appointed. Unlike the parliamentary system, where an institution or unit proposes a candidate, the entire process under the presidential system begins and ends with the Presidency. The president is able to make appointments unilaterally, as she sees fit (Albayrak, 2020, p. 119).

For senior administrative positions listed in Table I of the Decree, the procedure does not require the creation of a candidate pool reserved for senior administrative roles from which the president can select appointees. Sobacı (2018) argues that such an exclusive category may result in a closed group with values and interests aligned with a bureaucratic oligarchy (p. 544).

However, the exceptionally high number of positions makes it nearly impossible for the president to adequately assess all candidates, which reduces the likelihood of appointing highly capable senior officials (Gözler, 2019). The absence of other actors in the process may stem from the distrust that emerged following the July 15 Coup Attempt. Supervision of presidential appointments is essential to limit executive dominance (Yılmaz, 2018, p. 54). Demirelli (2023a, p. 93) warns that with the creation of senior public officialdom and appointments made solely by the president, senior officials may feel compelled to align themselves with the president. Albayrak (2020) further argues that, due to the appointment procedure and presidential selection of ministers, there is effectively no distinction between the roles of minister, deputy minister, director-general, or deputy director-general (p. 119). All derive their authority from the president and adjust their actions accordingly (Albayrak, 2020, p. 119), resulting in a lack of hierarchical differentiation among them (Demirelli, 2023a, p. 125). The exclusive appointment power of a president who is also a political party leader risks placing the bureaucracy at the center of party politics, increasing the risk of politicization (Akçakaya & İlhan, 2021, p. 614).

"As a result, government officials can now be considered more like 'secretaries' to the president" (Üstüner, 2023, p. 24). In other words, ministers occupy administrative rather than political roles (Dik, 2023, p. 75; Ateş & Soner, 2021, p. 162; Kutlu, 2021, p. 243; Aydın, 2023; Ateş & Soner, 2022, p. 48). Ministers could be viewed as akin to undersecretaries, with deputy ministers serving as deputy undersecretaries, similar

to their roles in the parliamentary system (Şahin & Erdoğan, 2021, p. 61; Bölükbaşı, 2021, pp. 293-294).

The absence of other political actors in the appointment process, combined with the president's party membership/leadership and exclusive authority to select nominees and determine contractual conditions for external appointments, increases partisanship. Senior officials may become subject to the demands of the president and her political party. Power struggles, party politics, suspicion, and the demand for unwavering loyalty complicate the employment of qualified individuals. Adar & Seufert (2021, p. 19) assert that “the collapse of state institutions into crony networks—and the influence of the President and his family—is expansive.” Consequently, issues of merit and preventing partisan appointments have not been adequately addressed in the presidential system. It is also questionable whether the system will reduce partisanship and address concerns regarding merit, as Gözler (2019) suggests.

Regarding appointment principles, the criteria outlined in the Decree grant the president significant discretionary power. These criteria are so broad that they allow the president to consider both merit and political affiliation when selecting nominees. The option for contractual employment further enables the appointment of individuals from outside the bureaucracy. However, the combination of a limited term of office and the president's party membership or leadership, coupled with such discretionary powers, heightens the potential for partisan considerations in the selection of senior administrators.

The appointment criteria in Decree No. 3 require that nominees meet the basic conditions to be civil servants. Additionally, candidates must have graduated from at least a four-year higher education institution and possess at least five years of experience in the public sector and/or international organizations, the private sector, or freelance work, provided they are subject to social security institutions. These criteria are overly broad and expand the pool of potential candidates. Since the appointment process does not involve any consultative or approval mechanisms, the president has sole authority to determine a nominee's suitability for each senior

administrative position. Although a balance between merit and loyalty may be sought, the president's party membership or leadership risks fostering partisanship. Nominees may align themselves with the president and/or her political party in order to secure appointments. This undermines the integrity of the bureaucracy, as seniority—namely, bureaucratic experience and expertise—no longer plays a decisive role in appointments to senior administrative positions.

Furthermore, the reduction in the required years of professional experience to five years (previously eight for lower levels and twelve for higher levels), the prohibition on setting specific criteria for particular professions, classes, or careers, and the authority to make external appointments has facilitated the shift from a "closed career system" to an "open appointment system" (Albayrak, 2020; Tutum, 1990). The disregard for bureaucratic experience and expertise as an appointment criterion highlights the diminishing value placed on these qualities.

This devaluation of bureaucratic experience and expertise is most evident in the removal of undersecretaries from senior administrative positions. Under the parliamentary system, the undersecretary was the most powerful civil servant subject to Public Personnel Law, second only to the elected minister (İstikbal Çetinkaya, 2023, p. 84; Bölükbaşı, 2021, p. 287). Given the importance and authority of the position, merit played a significant role in undersecretary appointments. Although political considerations influenced these appointments, undersecretaries could rely on the security of their tenure. This tenure security allowed them to represent the bureaucracy's experience, expertise, and stability (Bölükbaşı, 2021, p. 287). Undersecretaries were responsible for ensuring cooperation and coordination within and between ministries (Kutlu, 2021, p.). They acted as mediators between politics and public administration (Dik, 2023, p. 85; Demirelli, 2023a, p. 123). Positioned immediately below the minister, the undersecretary was the highest public official subject to Public Personnel Law, with no political qualifications or authority. The undersecretary's role in mitigating the minister's potential partisan inclinations was crucial. Typically, each ministry had only one undersecretary (Bölükbaşı, 2021, p. 293), which ensured the unity of organizational activities and consideration of how policies would impact the status quo. The absence of undersecretaries in the Table I

annexed to Decree No. 3 signals that bureaucratic experience and expertise are no longer prioritized at senior administrative levels. The term of office for individuals listed in Annex I of the Presidential Decree shall not exceed the president's term in office. When the president's term ends, the terms of these senior administrators also cease. However, they may continue in their roles until their replacements are appointed, and those whose terms have expired may be reappointed.

While the limited term of office may offer some predictability for senior administrators, knowing their tenure in advance, it could also lead them to view their public positions as personal assets, detached from societal concerns (Eren & Saitoğlu, 2021, p. 322).

Senior administrators listed in Table I annexed to the Presidential Decree may also be employed on a contract basis. As noted in DHFL 375, these appointees are exempt from the career and merit principles outlined in Public Personnel Law No. 657. They must meet the conditions to be civil servants, hold a degree from a four-year higher education institution, and have at least five years of experience in the public sector and/or international organizations, the private sector, or freelance work, provided they are subject to social security institutions. Once again, these broad criteria grant the president extensive authority to appoint virtually anyone. The president's party membership or leadership raises concerns about whether merit and loyalty are appropriately balanced in these appointments.

Thus, in the case of external appointments, a contractual relationship is established between the senior administrator and the government. The employer, in this case, is granted significant discretion in determining a wide range of contractual terms, including payment and conditions of service (Albayrak, 2020, p. 131).

Öztürk & Kırışık (2020) argue that the new appointment procedures and principles will effectively end the traditional bureaucratic administration that persisted from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey (p. 179). In the presidential system, conflicts between elected officials and public administrators, as well as bureaucratic resistance, are mitigated by the president's ability to appoint individuals to higher

ranks (Kutlu, 2021, pp. 231–232). The new rules for appointing senior public officials will curtail the power of bureaucracy, which once dictated policies to elected officials, reducing its role to technical expertise removed from politics. This change will facilitate the radical transformation of the bureaucracy under the leadership of senior administrators (Kırışık & Öztürk, 2020, pp. 178–179; Sobacı & Köseoğlu, 2018, p. 7; Esen & Kalağan, 2020, p. 273). Sobacı & Köseoğlu (2018) contend that the president will aim to strike a balance between loyalty and merit in appointments rather than disregarding merit entirely (p. 20).

However, external appointments could undermine the integrity of the bureaucracy. The influx of political outsiders may lead to the "absence of genuine bureaucracy," a situation in which the impartiality of the bureaucracy is compromised due to political influence and favoritism (Mills, 1956, p. 235), particularly in cases of partisan appointments. Furthermore, senior administrative positions could be filled by individuals from diverse backgrounds who have been socialized in different work cultures, potentially affecting the cohesion and effectiveness of the bureaucracy.

Moreover, if low-profile or unqualified candidates are appointed based on favoritism or loyalty, this could result in the inefficient use of public resources, poor administration, and a range of social problems (Kara, 2019, pp. 230–231). Although the Decree aims to attract technocrats—those with substantial experience related to the organization's field of activity (Demirelli, 2023a, p. 117)—it is questionable whether individuals with only a university degree and a minimum of five years of professional experience would possess the necessary expertise. Adar and Seufert (2021) argue that efforts to establish an efficient and effective bureaucracy have failed because senior administrative appointments are based not on qualifications, but on affiliations with religious networks and political parties. They claim that "public employment in the new governance system continues to be a partisan tool for infiltration into the state, while also serving as a means to favor loyalists regardless of their merit and credentials" (Adar & Seufert, 2021, p. 35). There are also concerns that criteria for appointments are being tailored to suit specific candidates (Gözler, 2019).

In its current form, the appointment principles for senior officials resemble favoritism or political appointments due to the broad discretionary powers of the

president—who is also a political party member—in determining positions, criteria, and appointments. The limited term of office, combined with the absence of any external actors in the appointment process and the president's party membership and leadership, could exacerbate partisanship (Aydın, 2023, pp. 48, 69). Albayrak (2020) also highlights the absence of mechanisms to protect merit in the appointment process (p. 103). As a result, the new appointment procedures may lead to a "loyalty race" to the president and her political party.

The party membership of the president influences bureaucrats toward partisan politics. Consequently, senior officials may become partisan figures (Demirelli, 2023a, pp. 130-131) or act as political civil servants outside their formal remit in order to secure appointments (Adar & Seufert, 2021, p. 109). Moreover, the possibility of the president being re-elected for a third term, as allowed by the TGNA's decision to hold elections—which "would de facto give the President a third term, thus extending the total length of her mandate far beyond the original ten years" (Venice Commission, 2017, p. 14)—may further intensify the partisanship of senior officials, as they seek to be appointed and retain their positions.

As a result, the participation of senior administrators in politics is further restricted by the appointment procedures and principles. The president's party membership or leadership reduces the role of senior administrators in politics to mere partisanship. Furthermore, the integrity of the broader bureaucracy is compromised. Senior administrative positions are no longer integrated into the civil service, and are instead characterized by temporary and largely contractual relationships with public service. The diverse backgrounds of senior administrators also impact the administrative culture of the bureaucracy. Senior administrators at various hierarchical levels with experience in public, private, or international organizations introduce differing values into the same public institution. This diversity can hinder inter-organizational cooperation, as individuals from varied professional backgrounds, not socialized within the same bureaucratic environment, may struggle to work cohesively. The partisanship of senior administrators could also influence lower-level bureaucrats to align themselves with the president and her political party. The diminished emphasis on bureaucratic professionalism in senior appointments, alongside the generality of

appointment criteria, devalues professionalism at lower levels, thus increasing partisanship.

Moreover, the literature does not address the possibility that senior administrators can simultaneously hold multiple senior administrative positions while continuing to work in the private sector. The broad appointment criteria permit such multiple appointments, which undermines the integrity and effectiveness of the bureaucracy. Public service ceases to be a vocation, becoming either contractual or temporary. The lack of a clear separation between appointees and the private sector raises concerns about transparency and impartiality and could distort the market. This absence of separation allows the president to favor private actors aligned with her or her party's agenda. Given the New Public Management (NPM)-style reforms—such as outsourcing, public-private partnerships, privatization, and state subsidies—simultaneous work in the public bureaucracy and private organizations may make senior administrators more susceptible to the demands of the president or her political party. The president may also prioritize appointing senior administrators with connections to sectors she deems important.

Additionally, the appointment criteria do not require external appointees to demonstrate success in or participate in in-service training, as noted in the literature. These individuals, unfamiliar with the bureaucracy, may clash with career bureaucrats and face difficulties adapting to bureaucratic procedures.

The presidential system as a whole does not emphasize the training of civil servants, particularly senior administrators. While the newly established General Directorate of Personnel and Principles under the Presidency of Administrative Affairs is expected to provide in-service training to senior managers, no such training is offered for external appointees. Moreover, there is no central institution responsible for training senior officials (Albayrak, 2020, p. 132). In 2018, the Public Administration Institute of Turkey and the Middle East (TODAİE), which played a key role in training not only senior public administrators but all civil servants, was abolished. Although some have argued that TODAİE was inefficient in training senior administrators (Sobacı & Köseoğlu, 2018, p. 37), its closure has left a gap in public

servant training that has yet to be filled (Albayrak, 2020, p. 132). The Human Resources Office within the Presidency, due to its heavy workload, has also been unable to provide this training.

Furthermore, the appointment procedures and principles limit the decision-making contributions of deputy ministers. The president has the authority to appoint as many deputies as she wishes, and the minister determines their duties (Akbay, 2022, p. 364). However, the absence of clearly defined roles for deputies, combined with the presence of multiple deputies within a ministry without a hierarchical structure, may complicate policy coordination.

The positions indicated in Table 2 of the Decree⁷, which are chiefly deputies to those in Table 1, the traditional principles of security of tenure and career that deem the public service provision as vocation showcases the respect for bureaucratic knowledge and experience at lower levels of hierarchy despite some exceptions. On the other hand, the recent decision of the Constitutional Court (Anayasa Mahkemesi, 01/12/2023, E: 2018/120, K: 2023/171) ruled that the positions listed in Table 2 are not considered senior positions. This is because, in the presidential system, proposals from hierarchically lower levels for the appointment of senior administrators conflict with the presidential authority established by the Constitution (Article 104/9). The court's decision will enter into force nine months after its promulgation in the Official Gazette.⁸

For these positions, a proposal is submitted to the president, who approves the appointment. This process resembles the Joint Decree method used in the parliamentary system (Albayrak, 2020, p. 122). The term of office for these positions is not limited to that of the president; they are appointed internally, with candidates

⁷ Members of The Inspection Board of The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, President of The Academy Of Diplomacy, Committee Members of the Board of Directors of Halal Accreditation Institution, Deputy Chairmen of The Housing Development Administration, Vice Presidents of The Turkish Statistical Institute, Atatürk High Council of Culture, Language And History, Heads of Affiliated Institutions, Prosecutors of The Court of Auditors, Deputy Heads of Regional Development Administration, Vice Presidents of Turkish Cooperation And Coordination Agency, Provincial Directors Of The Ministries, Heads of Departments, Provincial Safety Directors...

⁸ These positions are worth considering since Table 2 is in force at the time of writing.

typically having experience in public organizations. Consequently, external appointments are rare for these positions, except for provincial and regional directors and board members of state economic enterprises. The president's approval of appointments ensures alignment between lower-level officials and presidential values. In a typical ministry, general directors, deputy general directors, and provincial directors may have experience in either the public or private sector. However, department heads are required to have at least five years of public sector experience. This requirement likely stems from the common understanding within the Turkish bureaucracy that department heads' units handle much of the technical work within a ministry. As a result, bureaucratic knowledge and experience are somewhat undervalued.

Merit-based considerations in appointments are reflected in Demirelli's (2023b) analysis of the educational and professional backgrounds of provincial directors at the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) (p. 1153). Demirelli (2023b) found that, out of 50 provincial directors, 52% were appointed from lower levels within AFAD, non-administrative positions in other public organizations, or individuals seeking career advancement who had been rewarded for their political contributions (pp. 1153-1154). The remaining 48% were appointed from within AFAD, bringing relevant experience (Demirelli, 2023b, pp. 1153-1154). The close balance between patronage and merit-based (experience and expertise) appointments, as well as the allowance for external appointments for provincial administrators, suggests that merit is taken into account. However, political loyalty remains a factor. In conclusion, the Constitution establishes a group of senior administrators distinct from the rest of the bureaucracy. The appointment procedures and principles governing senior administrators reduce their political engagement, compromise the integrity of the bureaucracy, and devalue bureaucratic professionalism. The president holds sole authority in determining merit. The broad criteria outlined in the Decree further increase dependence on the president. The president's party membership or leadership fosters partisanship at senior levels, as nominees align themselves with the president to secure appointments. The integrity of the bureaucracy is weakened because this group of senior administrators is disconnected from the rest of the bureaucratic system and includes individuals from diverse backgrounds with

differing work cultures. External appointments also affect this integrity, as bureaucratic experience and expertise are disregarded for senior administrative positions, undermining professionalism at lower levels. Consequently, lower-level officials may prioritize partisanship over professionalism in seeking appointments.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

A review of the literature highlights both the strengths and weaknesses of the new appointment procedures and principles. Öztürk and Kırışık (2020) argue that these reforms will dismantle the traditional bureaucratic administration, particularly the strong state tradition that persisted from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey (p. 179). The streamlined process for appointing technocrats is expected to improve efficiency and effectiveness within public organizations (Kutlu, 2021, pp. 236-238), and under this system, individuals who fail to perform efficiently will no longer be guaranteed government positions (Öztürk & Kırışık, 2020, p. 180). These changes are seen as reducing the bureaucracy's influence, which previously allowed it to impose policies on elected officials. Sobacı and Köseoğlu (2018) suggest that the president will seek to balance loyalty with merit in appointments, avoiding candidates lacking in qualifications (pp. 17-20). This aligns with New Public Management (NPM) principles, particularly the focus on efficiency, effectiveness, and economy (3Es), in efforts to curb bureaucratic oligarchy and bring public administration under political control.

However, Adar and Seufert (2021) warn that public employment remains a partisan tool for filling state positions with loyalists, often at the expense of merit (p. 35). Concerns have also been raised about the president's exclusive authority over appointments, which can lead to customized criteria that bypass merit (Gözler, 2019; Albayrak, 2020, p. 120). Albayrak (2020) argues that there is little differentiation in the appointment process for roles such as minister, deputy minister, or director-general, as all derive their authority from the president, resulting in inefficiency and reduced effectiveness (p. 119). Under the parliamentary system, senior administrators were more attuned to diverse interests due to the government's accountability to parliament (Albayrak, 2020, p. 116; Rosenbloom, 1983, pp. 220-221).

The empirical analysis confirmed an increasing separation between politics and administration, a decline in the value of bureaucratic expertise, and the inadequacy of loose appointment criteria for effective governance. The president's party membership has also contributed to rising partisanship, highlighting the need for training externally appointed officials.

However, the impacts of the appointment procedure and principles on the connection between senior administrators and the permanent bureaucracy, their effects on the relationship between senior administrators and the permanent bureaucracy, and the market.

3.1. The Purpose and Methodology of the Empirical Analysis

This study highlights how the new appointment procedures and principles in Turkey have reduced the involvement of senior administrators in politics while intensifying the politicization of senior appointments. There has been an increased emphasis on loyalty and alignment with the president and her party's agenda. This personal affiliation with the president and her political party has had significant implications for both the bureaucracy and the market.

However, to highlight its argument, insights cannot be derived solely from secondary sources such as articles and journals, as “the phenomenon of study is relatively recent” (Rathbun, 2009, p. 693). Given that the research question emphasizes the role of agency, semi-structured interviews represent the most appropriate methodology to explore how insiders interpret their reality. Therefore, qualitative, in-depth data gathered through semi-structured interviews best serves the aims of this thesis.

The interview questions are open-ended and non-directive, allowing interviewees to offer comments, with follow-up questions posed to clarify certain points or solicit additional information and examples. The open-ended format enables interviewees to share their experiences freely. Consequently, the practical insights gained from these interviews provide an opportunity to compare the findings with those of the literature review.

To enhance the internal validity of the research, the researcher sought feedback from her administrative superiors and colleagues on the clarity, intelligibility, and relevance of the interview questions. Given that these individuals are part of the bureaucracy, they offered valuable insights regarding whether the questions align with the research objectives.

Purposive sampling was employed to ensure inferential leverage in selecting interviewees. Since the research question necessitates a comparison between senior administrators in the parliamentary system and those in the presidential system, selecting interviewees from these two groups strengthens the internal validity of the interviews by ensuring that the right questions are posed to the appropriate individuals (Mosley, 2013, p. 21). Interviewees were chosen based on their experience as senior administrators either under the parliamentary system or in the Presidential Government System (PGS). This selection allows the researcher to compare and contrast the appointment procedures across both governmental systems and evaluate the broader implications of these changes for public administration and organizations. In doing so, the evolving role of senior administrators in politics will be examined. The positions outlined in Table I of Presidential Decree No. 3 and Law No. 2451 on the Appointment Procedure in Ministries and Subsidiaries guided the selection of interviewees.

To address the research's external validity, interviewees were selected from a range of public organizations. This approach enables the researcher to determine whether the introduction of managerialism and the withdrawal of politics is applicable to different organizations with diverse mandates. Ten interviewees from various public organizations were selected to meet the study's objectives. Given the recent implementation of the presidential system, the interviewees are primarily drawn from senior officials in the central administration, as more time is required to evaluate its impact at the local level.

It is important to note, however, that most interviewees gained the majority of their bureaucratic experience under the parliamentary system. As a result, their administrative culture and working procedures are likely shaped by that experience.

Consequently, they may face challenges in adapting to the new appointment procedures and principles, and their critiques may reflect difficulties associated with this transition.

The researcher minimized the potential impact of positionality—her awareness of her relationship to the interviewees (Mosley, 2013, p. 12)—by leveraging her own professional experience, which closely aligns with that of the interviewees. This professional alignment placed the researcher in an excellent position to understand the interviewees’ responses and to request further clarification when necessary. Moreover, the researcher’s prior literature review, combined with the consistency between the interviewees’ accounts and existing literature, enhanced the reliability of the research. In this way, the theoretical predictions were tested against practice to achieve praxis, thereby gaining deeper insights from empirical evidence.

The researcher’s position within the bureaucracy and the practical insights gained from within Turkish public administration contribute to the originality of this thesis. Future studies will be able to build upon this information for further analysis.

Table 1. The composition of selected interviewees

Interviewee	Position in the Parliamentary System	Position in the PGS
1	Director General (in a Ministry)	Director General (in a Ministry)
2	Governor	Governor
3	Deputy Head of a Board (affiliated with a Ministry)	Head of a Board (affiliated to a Ministry)
4	Director General (In an Institution affiliated to a Ministry)	Director General (In an Institution affiliated to a Ministry)
5	Head of an Institution (affiliated with a Ministry)	Head of an Institution (affiliated with a Ministry)

Table 1. (continued)

6	Deputy Undersecretary (in a Ministry)	Deputy Minister (in a Ministry)
7	Deputy Head of an Institution (affiliated with a Ministry)	Head of an institution (affiliated with a Ministry)
8	Director General (in a Ministry)	Director General (in a Ministry)
9	Deputy Director General (In a Ministry)	Head of Directorate for Guidance and Inspection (In a Ministry)
10	Director General (in a Ministry)	Head of a State Economic Enterprise (affiliated with a Ministry)

The interviewees voluntarily agreed to participate in the research and signed a consent form affirming their voluntary participation. Prior to the interviews, the researcher provided them with the questions in advance to allow time for reflection. At the beginning of each interview, the participants were reminded of the research's objectives, assured of the confidentiality of their identities and the data they shared, and informed of how to contact the researcher or her advisor if needed. The interviews were conducted face-to-face in the interviewees' offices. The researcher also sought permission to audio record the sessions, making it clear that the recording could be stopped at any point upon the interviewees' request. The researcher transcribed the recorded interviews immediately and took detailed notes on any information shared off the record, ensuring that confidentiality was maintained throughout the process. This off-the-record information was incorporated into the analysis with careful consideration of confidentiality. The anonymity and data confidentiality guaranteed to the interviewees allowed them to express their thoughts and comments freely, contributing to the uniqueness of this thesis.

Additionally, the interviewees' gender, age, and religious beliefs were not relevant to the research objectives. The sole criterion for selection was their professional experience within both the parliamentary and presidential systems.

3.2. Interview Questions and Their Analysis

This study underscores how the new appointment procedures and principles in Turkey have diminished the direct involvement of senior administrators in politics, while simultaneously increasing the politicization of senior appointments. There has been a growing emphasis on loyalty and alignment with the president and her party's agenda. This personal affiliation with the president and her political party has had profound implications for both the bureaucracy and the market. The distinctiveness of this study lies in its comparison of theory and practice. Accordingly, the interview questions explore the involvement of senior administrators in politics within both parliamentary and presidential systems.

The empirical analysis focuses on the personal experiences and perspectives of senior administrators who have served under both systems. These questions enable a comparison of their political roles in each system and help to assess whether, and how, their involvement in politics has evolved. The questions begin by eliciting the interviewees' general understanding of politics and public administration, with particular consideration of Turkey's social and historical context. Consequently, the study examines how senior administrators perceive their role in politics and whether their professionalism has been effective. The analysis addresses issues such as the abolition of bureaucratic tutelage/oligarchy—one of the primary motivations behind the presidential system—the reduction of the bureaucracy's role to technical expertise, and the transformative impact of senior officials on bureaucratic efficiency and effectiveness (Kırıřık & Öztürk, 2020, pp. 178-179; Sobacı & Köseođlu, 2018, p. 7; Esen & Kalađan, 2020, p. 273).

To analyze the interaction between politics and senior administrators, the interview questions explored the participants' opinions on the challenges facing Turkish public bureaucracy under the parliamentary system and whether the presidential system has the potential to address these issues.

Finally, the effects of the presidential system on public administration and organizations, through the actions of senior officials, are examined. In line with

Rosenbloom's (1983) argument that managerial values such as efficiency, swiftness, and effectiveness are characteristic of presidential systems, this study assesses the impact of appointment procedures and principles on efficiency and effectiveness (pp. 219-220). Moreover, the research examines whether the purported negative effects of the presidential system on bureaucracy and senior administrators persist, such as the elimination of senior positions like the undersecretary (Dik, 2023, p. 85; Demirelli, 2023a, p. 123), and the ineffectiveness of deputy ministers (Ateş & Soner, 2021, pp. 159-160; İstikbal Çetinkaya, 2023, p. 99).

Table 2 below indicates the question and the aims of this study.

Table 2. The Interview Questions and Their Aims

Questions	Aim to understand
1. The literature debates whether oppositional terms can define the relationship between those appointed by the government and bureaucrats. How do you evaluate this relationship?	Conflicts between politicians and bureaucrats. Whether highly criticized bureaucratic oligarchy affected public organizations.
2. How do you evaluate the relations between the governmental appointees and the bureaucracy in the PGS? Has there been a change compared to the parliamentary system?	Change in the relations between politicians and bureaucracy. Whether the bureaucratic oligarchy was eliminated.
3. What has been the most significant change brought by the PGS for public administration? Why might this change have been needed?	Problems of Turkish public administration associated with the parliamentary system. The solutions offered by the PGS.
4. How do you evaluate the change in senior officials' appointment procedures?	Whether the external appointments, changes in the appointment criteria, or the approval process have meaningful effects on administrative problems.

Table 2. (continued)

<p>5. Has this appointment procedure brought about any change in public administration compared to the parliamentary system?</p>	<p>Whether results anticipated by the NPM are realized or not.</p>
<p>6. Compared to the parliamentary system, did the procedure for appointing senior public officials impact good administrative principles such as compliance with the law, non-abuse of power, impartiality, transparency, accountability, and decision-making within a reasonable time?</p>	<p>The effects of the changes in appointment procedures on the good functioning of public organizations.</p>

3.3. Findings and Analysis of Interviews

This study highlights how the new appointment procedures and principles in Turkey have reduced the direct involvement of senior administrators in politics while simultaneously increasing the politicization of senior appointments. There has been a growing emphasis on loyalty and alignment with the president and her party's agenda. This personal affiliation with the president and her political party has had significant implications for both the bureaucracy and the market. The distinctiveness of this study lies in its comparison of theory and practice. Accordingly, the interview questions explore the involvement of senior administrators in politics within both parliamentary and presidential systems.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face, confidentially, and with open-ended questions. As a result, the interviewees felt free to provide extensive commentary, enriching their responses with personal anecdotes and observations, thereby broadening the scope of the analysis. Their experience as senior administrators under both governmental systems enabled them to compare and contrast how bureaucracy, particularly senior administrators, functioned under the two systems. Their

contributions, which open avenues for future research, underscore the value of practical experience for theory in public administration and reveal areas where theory and practice either converge or diverge. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the interviewees had the majority of their professional experience during the parliamentary system. Their criticism of the new appointment procedures and principles may stem from difficulties adapting to the presidential system.

The interview findings highlighted both the deficiencies and benefits of the new appointment procedures and principles from the perspective of senior officials. The analysis examined their relationships with politicians, whether changes occurred within public bureaucracy and organizations, and how the interviewees interpreted these changes. Their statements were compared to the existing literature to identify any gaps and assess whether the literature aligned with practical realities. The findings also revealed areas not previously addressed in the literature.

Regarding the findings in general, the interviewees expressed a lack of recognition for the separation between politics and public administration. They opposed reducing public administration and the role of senior administrators to mere technical and operational concerns. Furthermore, the interviewees were dissatisfied with the outcomes of the presidential system, particularly the appointment procedures and principles applied to senior administrators in Turkish public administration. According to them, the accelerated appointment process and decision-making compromised professionalism, effectiveness, and efficiency. Their dissatisfaction stemmed from a perceived lack of concern for professionalism in both the public and private sectors, along with the negative impact of partisan motives in the selection of appointees. The interviewees emphasized the importance of senior administrators' bureaucratic knowledge and operational expertise for the effective functioning of the bureaucracy. While not opposed to external appointments, they generally preferred internal appointments, citing the external appointees' lack of bureaucratic expertise and operational knowledge. The interviewees' similar views indicate the negative effects of the new appointment procedures and principles on the relationship between politics and senior administrators, as well as on the decline of professionalism within the bureaucracy. The interviews also revealed a reduction in political interactions

between senior administrators and ministers, alongside the adverse effects of centralization.

This section presents the interviewees' responses, comments, and analyses in comparison with the literature, organized around the structure used for grouping the questions. A general understanding of politics and public administration, the immediate consequences of the presidential system for Turkish public administration, and changes in the appointment procedures for senior officials and public organizations are examined. Within this framework, the findings are grouped into three sections:

1. "Relations between politics and public administration,"
2. "Effects of the amendments in appointment procedures and principles on public administration,"
3. "Effects of the amendments to appointment procedures and principles on the functioning of the bureaucracy."

These findings confirm the points highlighted in the literature while also presenting additional unexamined issues.

3.3.1. The relations between politics and public administration

The interviewees provided insights into the relationship between politics and administration in both governmental systems. They argued that senior administrators and the bureaucracy support politicians in decision-making through their professionalism. In other words, the bureaucratic experience and expertise of senior administrators render their participation in political decision-making inevitable. The interviewees also noted that politics and administration are more distinctly separated under the presidential system. While the new appointment procedures have expedited decision-making, the devaluation of bureaucratic professionalism impedes senior administrators' ability to contribute effectively to political decisions.

The interviewees' comments on the relationship between politics and public administration align with the concept introduced by Demirelli (2021) of "relational

antonyms" (p. 7). Although politics and public administration are interconnected, they remain distinct fields. For the interviewees, the existence of public administration is justified by its concern for the national interest, as articulated by Mills (1956) (p. 236). In other words, the interviewees agreed with the view that politicians and the bureaucracy, while occupying different roles, ultimately serve the same cause: the national interest and a commitment to public service. According to them, politicians and bureaucrats share similar motivations, though they may occasionally misunderstand one another and need to engage in persuasion.

The interviewees acknowledged that misunderstandings between politicians and the bureaucracy may arise due to politicians' focus on short-term goals, their inability to fully consider the broader impacts of a policy, or their lack of technical knowledge necessary for policy implementation. However, they emphasized that politicians are essential in guiding the bureaucracy in setting targets. While the bureaucracy advises politicians on the potential impacts of policies and the limitations of public organizations, the interviewees noted that the bureaucracy was more influential under the parliamentary system. This influence was particularly evident in the role of the undersecretary, who represented the highest level of decision-making authority immediately below the minister. Although conflicts between the undersecretary and the minister could slow the decision-making process, the minister ultimately had the final say in the parliamentary system. In any case, the interviewees viewed the bureaucracy as a valuable asset to politicians.

The interviewees acknowledge the subordination of public administration to politics in the relationship between political appointees and bureaucrats. However, they also emphasize the importance of the bureaucracy's role in advising politicians, assisting them in fulfilling their promises, and contributing to market development, despite expressing concerns about its diminishing influence in political affairs. While the technical knowledge of the bureaucracy is indispensable to politicians, the ultimate decision-making power lies with the political sphere, and the bureaucracy should refrain from overstepping its advisory role. As one interviewee remarked, "The bureaucrats have constitutional protection. They will be protected if the senior administrators persist in carrying out unlawful actions" (Interviewee 3). Another

statement, "I think that the bureaucrats, like the politicians, prioritize national interest," and, "Since the bureaucracy is permanent, it can better monitor how the state functions and maintain harmony in state affairs" (Interviewee 1), reflects a belief in the complementary role of the bureaucracy. The references made by the interviewees to national interest and public service indicate that, for them, the bureaucracy is not merely a means to an end but has become "an end in itself" (Üstüner, 2000, p. 26).

Table 3 below presents the points deduced from findings from Questions 1 and 2.

Table 3. Findings and Analysis of Questions 1&2

Questions	Analysis of the Interview
1. The literature debates whether oppositional terms can define the relationship between those appointed by the government and bureaucrats. How do you evaluate this relationship?	More pronounced politics-administration separation in the presidential system. Possibility of complete separation under particular conditions. Less importance and value of bureaucratic knowledge and expertise in the presidential system.
2. How do you evaluate the relations between the governmental appointees and the bureaucracy in the presidential system? Has there been a change compared to the parliamentary system?	Unsuitability of the presidential system with Turkish public administration. No direct impact of bureaucratic oligarchy or double executive on public organizations.

It is noteworthy that although the interviewees struggled to define the term *senior administrator*, they referenced its hierarchical position between elected officials and the broader bureaucracy, as well as its advisory function. For instance, Interviewee 1 stated, "We are here to help politicians with technical and administrative issues. I cannot clearly define a senior administrator, but I can list the senior administrators in ministries or my institution."

Similarly, Interviewee 2 claimed, "It is hardly possible to define 'senior administrator' in a way that applies to all public institutions. Senior administrators within an institution may vary depending on time and context. However, I can say

that senior administrators are those appointed by the elected officials to achieve the goals set by politicians. They do not have political responsibilities; they hold expertise and collaborate with politicians to deliver public services."

Interviewee 2 further recognized the subordination of public administration to politics in the relationship between political appointees and bureaucrats but also highlighted the value of the bureaucracy in advising politicians, aiding them in fulfilling their promises, and fostering market development, even while criticizing the bureaucracy's declining influence in politics. Interviewee 3 added, "Senior administrators stand between experts and politicians. They guide the experts based on the politicians' wishes, which are inherently political. We are the ones who turn those wishes into reality." Interviewee 4 echoed this sentiment, stating, "Politicians should listen to us. They provide direction, and we offer advice." In a similar vein, Interviewee 8 observed, "The seniors' experiences are torches for the politicians. They lay the path; we show how to proceed."

Interviewee 6 stated, "The center decides based on a need. They set a target for us, and we assess whether their decision is feasible and, if so, how to implement it. If their decisions are impractical, we explain the reasons. Yes, conflicts and tensions sometimes arise. It is in their best interest to listen to us because they will be held accountable for their poor decisions or mistakes. A senior administrator will not be liable if they adhere to the rule of law. If a hierarchical superior makes an unlawful demand, one is not obligated to comply unless it is requested in writing. We do not have personal interests, but the politicians do."

Interviewees 5, 7, and 9, whose decisions also affect the private sector, emphasized, "Politicians should consider our advice because what we propose will have direct consequences for the market. To succeed, we need to work collaboratively. We also work hard, analyze the market, and follow the rule of law and all relevant regulations. Our careers depend not only on the politicians but also on effective collaboration between us."

The interviewees thus acknowledge the difficulty of defining a senior administrator precisely. However, they highlight the senior administrator's position between

politics and the bureaucracy, and their political role in guiding politicians. These statements align with Ergun's (1983) definition of senior administrators based on their hierarchical position and function (p. 24). According to Ergun, senior administrators operate at the highest levels of public institutions and organizations, formulate central policies, advise on policy issues, make managerial decisions, and translate core policies into operational decisions (p. 24). Similarly, Hermann and Kaarbo (2020) describe senior administrators as leaders with the power to set agendas, gather and interpret information, shape decision-making processes, influence the tone of discussions, steer political and policy debates, and contribute to policy decisions and their interpretation (p. 66). The emphasis on the intermediary role between politics and public administration, as well as on leadership, also resonates with Gerson's (2020) assertion that senior administrators work toward governance objectives with the support of the broader bureaucracy (p. 9).

The interviewees' statements demonstrate that the professionalism of senior administrators—specifically their bureaucratic experience and expertise—has a significant impact on their relationship with politics. They advocate for the prioritization of this professionalism in higher levels of decision-making. These assessments remind the researcher of the position senior administrators held in relation to politics within the parliamentary system. However, the interviewees do not mention whether ideological alignment or divergence between senior administrators and government officials influences this relationship.

Furthermore, for most interviewees, bureaucracy is seen as dynamic, evolving in response to social, political, and economic changes. According to Interviewee 1, the bureaucracy's knowledge of legislation is invaluable and exemplifies public service principles. She stated, "The bureaucracy is not rigid, static, or destined for inertia; on the contrary, expert blindness emerges in the private sector, which tends to favor the status quo more than the public bureaucracy. The state and public administration expand the horizons of the private sector. The state has a greater capacity to monitor developments, guide, and support the market." For her, "the bureaucracy has always been innovative and has guided society." To illustrate, she recounted an experience from a meeting in Germany with representatives of small firms producing

components for a globally renowned motor vehicle brand. She was surprised to learn that the national government supported these firms' research and development activities. When she inquired about the reason for state subsidization, given the capabilities of the motor vehicle brand, she was told that it was due to expert blindness. "The state's ability to collaborate with universities and enhance the R&D infrastructure helps overcome this expert blindness. State funds and investments strongly encourage producers."

Interviewee 5 added, "Our decisions contribute to increasing the volume and quality of outputs in the market. We provide direction to the market." Similarly, Interviewee 9 highlighted the state's guiding role in the market: "What I decide affects the market and its development. If I decide to subsidize a particular product, a production method, or firms in certain locations, I will influence the infrastructure or investments."

However, the interviewees did not address whether partisan politics played a role in their market-related decisions. In other words, they did not indicate whether they were asked to favor certain actors at the expense of others.

As a former governor, Interviewee 2 recounted, "When I began my career in the East, I visited the organized industrial zone. It was in poor condition. I contacted the municipality and the technical high school, and I did my best to allocate the resources of the Special Provincial Administration to the industrial zone. By supporting production, I contributed to both regional and national development."

Interviewee 2 also emphasized how the decisions of senior administrators can impact the market. The discretionary power afforded to senior administrators allows them to support local or national actors. For instance, as a governor, the interviewee was able to take the initiative and contribute to the development of the local industrial zone. This example illustrates the intersection of discretionary power and politics in the actions of senior administrators.

Furthermore, Interviewee 5 pointed to the bureaucracy's adaptation to changes in the social and political environment, stating, "Fifteen to twenty years ago, we did not

consider financial support for newborns. Now, due to government preferences and declining birthrates, we are working to develop financial and social support mechanisms to encourage families to have more children." Interviewee 3 added, "Our work is directly related to the Turkish economy. Therefore, any political change leads to changes in economic policies. Previous governments might have decided to lower interest rates, and we acted accordingly. The next government may raise them, and we adjust ourselves immediately. We are civil servants and serve the state."

Interviewee 4 noted, "Policies are often difficult to change immediately. We inform the politicians that such changes will take time, but ultimately, we comply with political directives." Interviewee 9 remarked, "One can observe Turkey's political and social conditions by monitoring a few of the general directorates in the central administration. The general directors strive to comply with the minister's directives. Inspection is also a political issue. Even though the rules are strict, there is considerable room for interpretation. When the minister is displeased with a civil servant's actions, she has the right to initiate an inspection. The minister may conclude that the civil servant did not follow the ministerial order. This conclusion is a political matter. As long as the ministerial order to initiate an inspection adheres to the rules, we carry it out."

When asked whether legislation makes it difficult to adapt to social and political changes, Interviewee 8 responded, "Every piece of legislation is open to interpretation. We do our best to implement the legislation in line with changes. If we cannot, we request amendments. However, most of the time, we interpret the rules to align with political directives."

This response illustrates the effectiveness of senior administrators in translating political objectives into actionable policies, leveraging their discretionary power rooted in professionalism. Senior administrators strive to realize political goals, and their discretionary powers can assist politicians in achieving their objectives. However, it is important to note that these discretionary powers are exercised within the confines of the rule of law. In other words, senior administrators are bound by legislation and do not exceed its limits.

Interviewee 5 added, "Bureaucracy will adapt to political changes instantly. When there is a change in government, senior administrators and experts prepare their presentations to introduce the ministry." Similarly, Interviewee 6 remarked, "Bureaucracy is the first group to react to social and political changes. Bureaucrats are attuned to the shifting winds and adjust accordingly. You may see a bureaucrat who was highly critical of a decision change their stance immediately after a minister or director general is replaced by someone supportive of that decision. One cannot believe how quickly this change happens—overnight! This shift may be driven by concerns for national or personal interests."

These responses demonstrate that the attitudes of senior administrators resonate throughout the bureaucracy. The prioritization of merit or partisan attitudes by senior administrators has direct implications for the broader bureaucratic system.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that public bureaucracy reflects the social and political cleavages present in society. Interviewee 1 stated, "You can observe all social and political conflicts and changes in Turkey within the bureaucracy. For example, tensions between Alevis and Sunnis, gender inequality, and the repercussions of the FETÖ/PDY terrorist organization are visible throughout public administration." Interviewee 2 similarly noted, "When I observe who eats lunch with whom, I can discern their social backgrounds. Differences in social and political attitudes often lead to personal tensions within the organization."

As a reflection of society, these social and political divisions influence bureaucratic behavior. However, the interviewees did not indicate whether their perceptions of these cleavages affect their relationships with politicians or within the bureaucracy.

Only Interviewee 7 stated, "We are subject to international rules. Our services are pre-approved by the international bodies with which we cooperate. Therefore, social and political changes do not affect us. However, our services are determined by the social and economic needs of the day."

The interviewees agreed that conflicts between politicians and senior administrators occur, particularly in the parliamentary system, where political instability empowers

senior administrators and the bureaucracy. They suggested that tensions often arise due to legal or financial constraints that prevent compliance with political demands. In contrast, under the presidential system, conflicts tend to result in dismissals, leading senior administrators to avoid challenging political directives. According to the interviewees, while fewer conflicts occur in the presidential system, the scope of politics is more limited. Senior administrators are less inclined to take initiative compared to the parliamentary system.

From the moment they enter public service, bureaucrats are subject to legislative rules governing behavior, including attire and official correspondence, which are grounded in accumulated experience. Tensions arise when politicians, who may lack experience in policy matters, disregard these rules or bureaucratic expertise and impose their preferences on the bureaucracy. Conflicts occur when bureaucrats refer to legislation as a barrier to ministers' orders. If a compromise is reached, they work together; if not, senior administrators may be replaced. In the parliamentary system, dismissed administrators often awaited a change in government, viewing themselves as the best candidates for reappointment due to the perceived failure of the previous administration. As Interviewee 1 explained, "In the presidential system, it is much harder to resist politicians. You are removed from the system immediately."

For Interviewee 2, "The conflicts revolve around who knows the public interest best. Senior administrators may resist, and arguments and quarrels occur. It all depends on personalities. In the end, we are bureaucrats. Politicians have the right to choose us, and if they cannot work with us or we cannot work with them, we have other options." According to Interviewee 3, "Conflicts are mostly about determining the most appropriate action. Bureaucrats rely on their knowledge, but politicians ultimately choose from the policy options presented by the senior administrators."

Interviewee 5 concluded, "The solution to conflicts between politicians and senior administrators depends on how both parties manage the crisis. Political instability distracts the government and weakens it, allowing senior administrators to fill the gap." Interviewee 6 added, "When conflicts occur, I don't insist. I focus on my responsibilities and avoid interfering in others' matters. In the parliamentary system,

I had the security of tenure, which gave me more confidence to propose my views. In the presidential system, this is difficult because I can be easily dismissed."

Interviewee 8 stated, "Tensions are usually about determining the best course of action. Senior administrators possess technical expertise, while politicians have a future vision. The ideal approach is to reconcile the past with the future. Conflicts were more frequent in the parliamentary system, but they have decreased under the presidential system. This may be because the president and ministers can choose their preferred personnel." As an inspector, Interviewee 9 noted, "When tensions escalate, inspectors act as arbiters. We don't mediate but rather determine who is at fault." Similarly, Interviewee 10 observed, "Conflicts between politicians and senior administrators impair organizational efficiency and effectiveness, prolonging decision-making. Ministers should be allowed to work with their chosen team from the start. When tensions arise, I seek compromise. If that's not possible, I ask for the command in writing and implement the order. Senior administrators are not in a position to impose their will on politicians."

These responses highlight the autonomy senior administrators enjoyed under the parliamentary system due to their statutory job security. This security allowed them to engage in discussions with politicians about the course of action, prioritize long-term goals over short-term ones, provide insights into organizational capacity, and consider potential policy impacts. Thus, the involvement of senior administrators in politics appears to have been contingent upon their professionalism and the features of the parliamentary system. In contrast, the decrease in conflicts under the presidential system underscores the significance of appointment procedures and principles for the autonomy of senior administrators. In the presidential system, senior administrators lack statutory job security and are appointed by the president. Consequently, they may lack the experience and expertise to challenge political decisions, limiting their involvement in political decision-making.

Interviewee 4 remarked, "Government instability, frequent changes in governments or coalitions, strengthens the senior administrators' position. The government is weak when it is politically fragile or a coalition government." This observation aligns with Kırışık & Öztürk's (2020) argument that coalition governments weaken the

executive while empowering the bureaucracy (p. 175). When the government is politically unstable, and senior administrators have tenure security, they are more effective than politicians in the parliamentary system.

In the presidential system, senior administrators serve limited terms of office and are replaced when the government changes. As a result, they tend to be more invested in the president's continued tenure than in conflicts with politicians. This observation supports Yılmaz Uçar's (2023) claim that vertical relations within the executive branch have shifted under the presidential system (p. 13).

Drawing from her experience in the private sector, Interviewee 6 criticized bureaucrats, stating, "Bureaucrats are not as knowledgeable as they claim, and they often act by rote without questioning their actions or verifying compliance with legislation. Regardless of their experience, they do not strictly adhere to the rule of law but instead rely on a particular way of interpreting it, which is impossible to change." These statements align with Miliband's (1969) analysis of bureaucratic discretion, which allows bureaucrats to filter, tailor, or even sabotage commands based on their perceived superiority in professionalism (p. 139-140). They also echo Adler's (2012) critique that this professionalism is often exaggerated, as bureaucrats, lacking full information on cases, cannot always claim superior knowledge (p. 244).

Interviewee 6 further noted, "The bureaucracy operates in a formulaic manner. It has developed its own culture, interpersonal relations, administrative style, and official identity as defined by legislation. However, it lacks vision, capability, and responsibility." This perspective mirrors Lefort's (1986) argument that bureaucracy fosters a particular mode of behavior to create and maintain power structures (pp. 109-113).

Regarding the interaction between politics and bureaucracy in the presidential system, the interviewees expressed skepticism about its suitability for Turkish public administration. Interviewee 1 observed, "Turks prefer strong central leadership, so the presidential system may seem compatible with our state tradition. However, we also have a culture of consultation, and the only consultative mechanism available

now is the party officials of the president." Interviewee 2 added, "In the presidential system, the advisory boards attached to the president are ineffective. These boards do not provide meaningful feedback or guide the president on alternative policy options or potential consequences." Interviewee 3 noted, "Too many institutions are involved in economic policymaking, and none of us have a clear remit. It is up to the president and the minister to determine our responsibilities. We often stay back because we do not know why certain decisions are made." Interviewee 4 remarked, "Turks appreciate charismatic leaders, and our country has the reality of Tayyip Erdoğan. However, one person cannot make all decisions."

The centralization of power, the lack of consultative mechanisms, and both de jure and de facto processes are evident in the appointment procedures for senior administrators. It can be inferred that the president's political party plays a significant role in these processes.

Interviewee 5 noted, "The presidential system requires the support of bureaucratic expertise. There should be individuals with technical knowledge who are not part of party politics." According to Interviewee 6, "In countries like ours, where the state is vital and strong, political processes influence every aspect of life. Ideally, the political system should provide opportunities for individuals to shape their own lives, rather than dictate their paths. The presidential system has made some progress in this direction, but it does not align with our worldview of political or social development. Despite claims that the presidential system reflects our political history, which is shaped by patriarchy and loyalty to leaders, Turkey lacks an institutionalized political system. Every government with a different ideological position from its predecessor reconstructs the state because deep political cleavages prevent consensus. Politicians exploit and reproduce these divisions, and Turkey's political system is based on persistent conflict rather than a search for compromise."

Interviewee 6's statements suggest that politics should facilitate the functioning of the market without directly interfering with it. They also imply that while the presidential system was a step toward this goal, it failed due to a lack of institutionalization and the identification of the political system with the leader rather than with institutions.

The inappropriateness of the presidential system for Turkey is further emphasized by Interviewee 4. She stated, "Public administration is the driving force in both parliamentary and presidential systems; political leadership has always attempted to resolve tensions between politics and public administration by subordinating the latter to politics. Leadership has always been a prominent feature of Turkish politics and public administration. This was true in the parliamentary system and remains the case in the presidential system. However, despite its focus on leadership, the presidential system and democracy do not align with Turkey's state tradition because they are products of Western political and historical circumstances." In other words, the interviewees argue that the presidential system does not suit Turkish public administration or its strong state tradition. They also criticize the dominance of the party leader president, which comes at the expense of political consultation.

The interviewees' comments suggest that the presidential system prioritizes speed. For them, senior administrators are distanced from politics, and the role of the bureaucracy is limited to technical implementation. The appointment procedures and principles further diminish bureaucratic professionalism by expediting the appointment process. Interviewee 1 stated, "The presidential system requires us to act rapidly. It demands that we implement decisions without hesitation. However, we need time to evaluate policies and find ways to implement them properly." Interviewee 2 added, "Expectations from the bureaucracy differ between the two government systems. While the parliamentary system emphasized the preventive role of the bureaucracy, the presidential system focuses on its role in implementation. In the parliamentary system, the government wasted time in policy execution. The presidential system prioritizes speed and demands that bureaucrats act quickly. There is a fundamental shift in the understanding of bureaucracy between the two systems." Interviewee 3 remarked, "The demand for rapid action puts me in a hurry. Sometimes, I don't have enough time to determine if I'm making the right decision." Interviewee 4 added, "Public policies are multi-dimensional. When making decisions, I need to consider various stakeholders and other policies. I wonder if efficiency, effectiveness, and speed mean working blindly." Interviewee 5 further commented, "Public service is different. It requires time and careful consideration of

the consequences of decisions. The presidential system does not allow time for this reflection.”

These statements reveal the unique nature of public service. Bureaucrats must consider numerous factors when making decisions, whereas private firms primarily focus on profit. This complexity requires time and deliberation, yet in the presidential system, senior administrators' roles are reduced to technical implementation without sufficient attention to political or contextual factors.

The interviewees confirmed that the presidential system undermines bureaucratic experience, expertise, and professionalism. Interviewee 6 observed, “I was appointed based on my experience in both the public and private sectors. These sectors are different from each other. In the private sector, the only concern is spending less and earning more. In the public sector, political concerns complicate decision-making. Public sector experience is valuable for senior public administrators.” Interviewee 8 noted, “In the presidential system, public administration follows the commands of politicians. I understand this, but it contradicts bureaucratic life. Sometimes, what they ask us to do conflicts with the rule of law or established procedures.” Interviewee 9 added, “Bureaucratic professionalism is severely undermined in the presidential system. The bureaucracy is reduced to a mere tool for execution.”

On the other hand, Interviewee 10 discussed the consequences of this devaluation of bureaucratic professionalism, stating, "In the first term of the presidential system, relations between governmental appointees and the bureaucracy were unclear because the appointees were unfamiliar with both the bureaucracy and the system itself. Now, in the second term, the situation has improved. The appointed senior administrators have more bureaucratic experience compared to those in the first term. As a result, the second term has been more successful than the first."

While acknowledging the need for change, the interviewees emphasize that bureaucratic professionalism is indispensable. Interviewee 1 remarked, "Bureaucratic blindness does occur, I admit. External appointments can offer opportunities. However, public administration has a unique nature. Citizens may be seen as customers, but they remain citizens who deserve public service. The procedures,

methods, and knowledge of bureaucracy are essential." Comparing the appointment of Senior Executive Services (SES) in the U.S. presidential system, Interviewee 2 stated, "In the U.S., the president also appoints senior officials from a pool. It is the president's right to select her people, and we could take this as an example. However, in the U.S., the president selects senior officials from a trained pool of SES candidates prepared for senior public management roles. Direct presidential appointments to SES positions are limited to a predefined portion of the total SES. Even in the U.S., bureaucratic professionalism remains valuable. In the presidential system, we could train senior administrators, or externally appointed officials, to bridge the public and private sectors. However, the state has its own rules, and while simplification is possible, those rules are necessary." Sobacı (2018) argues that creating an exclusive category could lead to a closed group with values akin to a bureaucratic oligarchy (p. 544).

Interviewee 3 noted, "Economic institutions might seem ideal for external appointments, but in practice, they are not. Externally appointed officials, driven by market values like profit, may bring dynamism, but internally appointed officials understand the political costs of decisions." Interviewee 4 added, "Take social security, for instance. An administrator knows they need to promote the private sector, but there are limits. Balancing different interests and informing politicians accordingly makes bureaucratic professionalism inevitable." Interviewee 5 emphasized, "Bureaucratic professionalism also supports senior administrators. The laws and regulations governing public administration are different from those in the private sector, and senior officials must be supported by this professionalism."

Interviewee 6, with experience in both the public and private sectors, stated, "If asked which sector serves the job better, I would say the public sector. However, the public sector has much to learn from the private sector. Bureaucrats need to be encouraged to learn, be open-minded, take risks, and improve themselves." Interviewee 7 added, "In our institution, national and international bureaucratic professionalism is a must. External appointees cannot manage this institution." Interviewee 8 likened bureaucracy to driving, "It's like driving a car. Bureaucracy

urges one to look in the rearview mirror, but you can't move forward if you're always looking back. Senior administrators are the drivers, moving forward."

Interviewee 9, an inspector, commented, "Disciplinary rules in public administration differ from those in the private sector. Senior officials may bring fresh perspectives, but bureaucratic professionalism cannot be disregarded. Public organizations will never function like private ones." Interviewee 10, who leads a market-oriented institution, stated, "I value profit, but I also ensure that the commodities we produce are accessible to everyone, which means monitoring market prices and ensuring price stability. A private enterprise doesn't have these concerns. That's why bureaucratic professionalism is essential for coordinating with institutions like the Ministry of Finance and Treasury."

The interviewees believe that it is not meaningful to consider state powers, law, and public administration in isolation from society, which is why they value bureaucratic professionalism. They also question the feasibility of emulating private-sector management within public administration, given that the political and economic spheres are distinct, each with its own functions and units. Their arguments align with Üstüner's (2000) view that it is challenging to emulate actors in different spheres, as private-sector managers act in pursuit of individual interests, while public-sector administrators are bound by public scrutiny, the rule of law, and a complex organizational structure that has become an end in itself (p. 26). The interviewees also criticize the presidential system for its failure to promote the efficiency of public organizations, due to its disregard for bureaucratic professionalism. They are dissatisfied with the exclusion of bureaucracy from politics.

The interviewees further clarify that the separation of politics from public administration is evident in the division between policy-making and implementation in the presidential system. This division aligns with New Public Management (NPM) principles, which reduce public administrators to task executors (Shepherd, 2018, p. 1673). However, the interviewees argue that this division has only materialized on paper. Interviewee 1 stated, "The Policy Councils have never invited me. They

haven't sent us any information or requests." Interviewee 2 added, "The Policy Councils aren't effective yet. The ministries still create and execute policies. In time, as the system matures, the councils should become active." Interviewee 3 noted, "The Policy Councils deal with the economy, but I've never had contact with them. We do our own research, develop policies, and implement them." Interviewee 4 emphasized, "While the Policy Councils and the Presidency's departments were supposed to make policies, and ministries were supposed to implement them, this theoretical design hasn't been realized due to a lack of communication, follow-up, and coordination between policy-making and implementation."

Interviewee 4 also pointed to Turkey's struggle with cooperation, stating, "The Policy Councils consist of academics and others who lack practical knowledge. What they produce, if anything, is inapplicable to real life. The councils have failed to highlight the role of ministries or the advantages of the presidential system." Interviewees 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10 similarly acknowledge the ineffectiveness of the consultative Policy Councils. As a result, the interviewees' comments suggest that politics is institutionally separated from public administration in the presidential system.

Although the interviewees have not explicitly highlighted the creation of a separate group of senior administrators in the presidential system, and regard presidential appointments as a direct consequence of the system, they acknowledge a shift in values under the presidential system.

On the other hand, Interviewee 10 argued, "In the presidential system, where ministers are not politicians seeking electoral victories, they feel freer to reject market demands. Projects initiated with political motives in the parliamentary system remain unfinished in the presidential system. In the parliamentary system, ministers pledged to initiate such projects, but they were often inefficient, highly costly, technically impossible, or unnecessary—resulting in public losses due to the minister's partisan considerations. In the presidential system, ministers are free from these electoral concerns, allowing their technical capacities to take precedence." She also cited her experiences in meetings with the minister and market agents: "The minister admitted she did not know the details, but trusted those in lower ranks to

know, and then gave the floor to the bureaucrats. It was unbelievable, but I appreciated it greatly.” It is important to note, however, that the minister mentioned by Interviewee 10 was a deputy minister in the parliamentary system. These statements suggest that the minister's bureaucratic and managerial expertise, combined with her disinterest in future political involvement, allowed her to disregard electoral victories.

Interviewee 10's observations may be considered a best practice that demonstrates the benefits of a non-partisan ministerial approach. This attitude could positively influence senior administrators by encouraging them to enhance their knowledge and expertise.

The institution led by Interviewee 7 further underscores the importance of bureaucratic professionalism. This institution operates under strict international rules and scrutiny. According to Interviewee 7, “The change in the government system had no impact on our institution. We are insulated from political interference.” She added, “It is not in the interest of deputy ministers to ignore bureaucratic expertise and experience, as they are accountable to international bodies.” Interviewee 7 also recalled previous leaders of the institution, who lacked the necessary knowledge of the rules governing the organization and had to rely on the bureaucracy: “Their lack of technical knowledge was risky because they had financial and administrative responsibilities.” The highly technical nature of the institution's work, combined with international accountability, makes the appointment of senior officials with long-standing professional experience essential. Interviewee 7 remarked, “Whenever I reminded the deputy minister of the international regulations and her responsibility, she took them seriously. I remember when the deputy minister asked me to favor a certain individual. I explained the international rules, and while he might not have fully understood them, he recognized that failing to comply would cause significant trouble.”

The appointment procedures and principles in the presidential system aim to accelerate decision-making by centralizing the process, ostensibly increasing efficiency. However, these procedures often devalue bureaucratic professionalism.

Yet, the complexity of public administration necessitates such professionalism, as its nature differs fundamentally from that of private management.

Interestingly, the interviewees did not raise the issue of the bureaucratic oligarchy, a longstanding feature of Turkish political and administrative history, in relation to the relationship between politicians and bureaucrats. As Yılmaz (2018) mentions, when the Justice and Development Party (JDP) came to power in 2002, the prime minister at the time expressed concerns about a bureaucratic oligarchy based on social, cultural, and religious values, and its disregard for hierarchical relations with the executive branch (p. 13). This discomfort with the bureaucratic oligarchy intensified with the emergence of the post-Washington Consensus (Güven, 2023, pp. 183-184;), and the prime minister voiced frustration with the oligarchy's resistance to change (Yılmaz Uçar, 2023, pp. 13-14). When specifically asked about the bureaucratic oligarchy, the interviewees referred to historical conflicts between the government, judiciary, and military, as well as tensions between the president and prime minister. They denied any significant influence of a bureaucratic oligarchy or double-executive conflicts on political decision-making in ministries. Interviewees 1, 4, 8, and 9 noted, "In the parliamentary system, the president acted as a neutral control mechanism in appointments, though he did not personally know all of the nominees forwarded through ministerial decisions" (Interviewees 1, 2 & 4). Some vital appointments may have caused tensions with prime ministers, but appointing substitutes often resolved these conflicts (Interviewees 2, 5, 6, & 10). Interviewees 5 and 10 added, "There were delays in the president's approval of laws or other official correspondence due to ideological differences or conflicting interests between the president and prime minister. However, these struggles did not halt the functioning of the bureaucracy."

Interviewees 1, 2, and 5 reflected on the military bureaucracy's influence, stating, "Until the 367 Crisis, the military bureaucracy posed a significant threat to democracy and civilian governments. However, following constitutional amendments and the direct election of the president, the military's influence receded. The bureaucratic oligarchy did not pose a significant challenge to public administration, but the FETÖ/PDY terror organization emerged as a significant issue.

The July 15th Coup Attempt underscored the importance of careful selection of senior administrators." Interviewee 2 added, "The Coup Attempt demonstrated that the president should select senior administrators with great caution." When asked about the Gezi protests, all interviewees except for Interviewee 7 agreed that the protests led to increased centralization and swifter decision-making.

Thus, the interviewees concluded that the bureaucratic oligarchy did not directly influence the appointment, performance, or accountability of senior administrators, and conflicts over appointments were often resolved through interim nominations. They argued that the July 15th Coup Attempt expedited the transition to the presidential system, and both the Coup Attempt and the Gezi protests highlighted the need for a strong executive (Akgün, 2017, pp. 1-2; Altınörs & Akçay, 2022, pp. 1030, 1042).

In conclusion, the interviews revealed that politics and administration have become more distinct under the presidential system. The role of senior administrators has been reduced to the technical implementation of political decisions, with an emphasis on speed. Consequently, bureaucratic professionalism has been devalued. The appointment procedures and principles reflect these characteristics, as they expedite the process but fall short of ensuring professionalism. Given the unique nature of public administration, where bureaucratic expertise is critical, professionalism should be prioritized in the appointment process. Centralization and the lack of consultative mechanisms in decision-making are evident, and the president's party membership significantly influences the appointment procedures. As a result, candidates' chances of appointment depend on their connections with party representatives.

3.3.2. Effects of the Amendments in Appointment Procedures on Public Administration

The interviewees acknowledged that the presidential appointment of senior officials and the centralization of authority have expedited both the appointment and decision-making processes. However, they asserted that the existing appointment procedures and principles neither prevent partisan appointments nor ensure merit-based

selections. Regarding these procedures, the interviewees pointed out that centralization, the absence of a consultative mechanism, and the president's party membership or leadership have contributed to increased partisanship. Furthermore, they noted that the use of generic appointment criteria, along with the lack of emphasis on bureaucratic professionalism—particularly in external appointments—diminishes professionalism within the bureaucracy and exacerbates partisanship. The interviewees also suggested that these procedures and principles negatively impact both the integrity of the bureaucracy and the functioning of the market.

Additionally, the interviewees highlighted the diminishing influence of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) over administrative affairs, the simplification of the budgetary process, and the disregard for MPs' informational demands.

Although none of the interviewees directly referred to the effects of the president's political party membership or leadership, their emphasis on issues such as "political references in appointments," "the system's dependence on a single individual," "the absence of a legal framework-based system," "concerns about the priorities of appointing authorities," "appointments made without regard to partisanship," and "the rise of nepotism, cronyism, and partisanship in the presidential system" implicitly addressed the consequences of the president's party affiliation. As Gözler (2019) points out, the interviewees argued that the presidential system has not reduced partisan appointments; rather, it has increased them.

Regarding the appointment procedure, the interviewees concurred that it should allow the government to work with individuals they trust in both parliamentary and presidential systems. This trust may stem from ideological alignment or the capabilities of the appointee. The interviewees also acknowledged the discretion of the head of government in selecting senior officials as a necessary feature of the presidential system. The prerogative to appoint senior officials both internally and externally is seen as a logical consequence of the presidential system (Öztürk, 2019, p. 1295; Öztürk & Tozak, 2019, p. 356).

Table 4 below presents the points deduced from Questions 3 and 4's findings.

Table 4. Findings and Analysis of Questions 3 & 4

Questions	Analysis of the Interview
3. What has been the most significant change brought by the presidential system for public administration? Why might this change have been needed?	Loose appointment criteria, non-existence of justifications for dismissal, party member/leadership of president leading to partisanship, diminishing efficiency, effectiveness, and professionalism of bureaucracy
4. How do you evaluate the change in senior officials' appointment procedures?	

The parliamentary system also hindered the appointment of bureaucrats to senior administrative positions. However, appointment by proxy allowed governments to work with their desired senior administrators. Interviewee 1 remarked, "During the 2000s, nearly all senior administrators were appointed by proxy. The organizational activities did not stop, but the seniors could not receive the financial benefits they were entitled to." Interviewee 2 added, "Especially during coalition governments, the government struggled to appoint people they wanted to work with, as it was challenging to convince all coalition parties." Interviewee 10 shared, "I waited six months to be appointed, which caused uncertainty and affected my concentration on work." Similarly, Interviewee 6 explained, "During the coalition government, the minister I worked with could not convince other coalition members, so I was not appointed director-general. My qualifications, ideological stance, or experience were not the issue; it was the coalition negotiations that blocked my appointment." Interviewee 6 further recalled, "In 2012, I was qualified to be appointed director-general to a ministry under a single-party government. Although the president and prime minister shared the same ideological stance, the president did not approve my appointment. I was told the reason was not my qualifications or experience, but rather a conflict between the president and prime minister." These statements align with the arguments of Öztürk and Kırışık (2020), who claim that dual executive structures and coalition governments hinder appointments and government functioning (p. 175). Although the appointment procedure slowed the process,

appointment by proxy mitigated the issues caused by the parliamentary system's procedures and principles.

External appointments were also permitted under the parliamentary system, but the procedure governing these appointments was hampered by coalition governments, lengthy processes, and presidential vetoes (Interviewees 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10). Interviewee 1 stated, "External appointments could have been utilized in the parliamentary system, but it was difficult to overcome parliamentary opposition." Interviewee 2 observed, "Partisan politics in the TGNA prevented external appointments, as opposition parties resisted such decisions." Interviewee 5 noted, "External appointments often became a subject of debate among coalition parties, where one party would propose a candidate and the others would reject it, turning the issue into political negotiations." Interviewee 8 recalled, "In 2016, under a semi-presidential system, the president unofficially recommended a friend of mine for a senior position, but the prime minister rejected the recommendation, as it was his responsibility to officially propose the candidate. This double-executive issue blocked her appointment." Interviewee 9 stated, "I know a director-general candidate with valuable private sector experience whose appointment was rejected by the president because she had participated in an opposition party demonstration during her university days." Interviewee 10 added, "During coalition governments, it was also difficult to convince MPs of the governing party of the necessity of external appointments, as their electorates were frustrated when they were not considered for such positions." As Aslan et al. (2016) note, an amendment to Article 68/B of the Civil Servants Law No. 657 in 2011 allowed for the appointment of individuals with relevant professional experience and educational qualifications to senior positions (p. 89). The interviewees, however, clarified why this authority was rarely exercised.

Appointment by proxy was not possible for external appointments, and thus, governments were unable to fully exercise their authority in this regard. As a result, the integrity of the bureaucracy was preserved, and career and merit-based principles were upheld in the appointment of senior administrators. However, the interviewees' accounts also suggested that the appointment procedure permitted political

considerations, and the involvement of numerous actors with diverse political agendas often impaired the appointment process.

Regarding the appointment procedure in the presidential system, the researcher inquired whether the approval or consent of a second authority could enhance the merit of appointments. The interviewees generally contended that the president's party membership or leadership would reduce any potential benefits from involving the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) in the process. Interviewee 1 stated, "As long as the president is a member of a political party, parliamentary approval would not ensure merit or prevent partisan appointments. It would merely introduce bureaucratic delays. A second public institution involved in the process must be autonomous from the president." Similarly, Interviewee 2 noted, "In other countries, the approval of senior official appointments by a second authority, whether legislative or otherwise, is not a standard practice. TGNA's approval would be symbolic. The positive effects of the appointment procedure and the presidential system in general will emerge in the long term, as administrative practices and traditions settle." Interviewees 4 and 5 concurred, "The president holds wide discretionary power in appointments, and the criteria are too flexible to guarantee merit. It is ultimately the president's decision, and it serves her interest to use this extensive discretion. However, a consultative body could be helpful in guiding the president."

Interviewee 6 argued, "The involvement of another body would enhance transparency, as it is important for the public and appointees to understand the reasons behind appointments or dismissals." Interviewee 7 added, "Our institution's operations highly demand merit, so there is no need for approval by a second authority." Interviewee 8 pointed out, "The involvement of another body may suggest that the president is open to consultation on administrative matters, potentially leading to agreement on a better candidate." Interviewee 9 remarked, "Defining and achieving merit is complex. The nature of senior officialdom and its relationships with politicians, citizens, NGOs, MPs, ministers, and the wider bureaucracy complicates the assessment of an appointee's merit. Nevertheless, broader involvement in the appointment process may result in better candidates,

although it remains unclear which qualifications are prioritized." Interviewee 10 commented, "It is the executive's prerogative to select senior administrators, but the president should seek input from other ministers, MPs, and those who will work closely with the appointee. While ministers can already propose names, an institutionalized mechanism would help prevent appointment failures."

The lack of a formal or informal consultation mechanism reduces the likelihood of appointing the most suitable candidate and diminishes transparency. Even if there were a constitutional requirement for legislative approval, it would not serve as a genuine consultative or oversight mechanism due to the president's party affiliation. Consequently, the appointment procedure compels nominees to seek support from the president's political party.

Another point raised, contrary to expectations in the literature (Albayrak, 2020), is that although the president holds the authority to appoint all senior officials within a ministry or public organization, interviewees suggested that ministers typically propose candidates to the president, except for critical positions (p. 119). Interviewees 1, 5, 8, and 10 mentioned that for most appointments, except for those deemed vital by the president, ministers were consulted or proposed the appointees. Interviewee 1 explained, "The president may not be concerned about the director general of support services in a ministry, but positions like a general director in the National Intelligence Agency will matter." Interviewee 2 added, "The president cannot personally decide on all appointments, as this would entail an overwhelming workload."

Interviewee 3 claimed, "Although the president formally holds all appointment power, ministers effectively control the process." Interviewee 4 recalled, "Before my appointment under the presidential system, the minister spoke with me personally, informing me that she would propose my name to the president." She added, "During the first term, ministers were not influential in selecting senior administrators, which provided them with an excuse for their lack of success." Interviewee 5 noted, "I attended a meeting at the Presidential Office with the minister, and the president asked about our projects." Interviewee 6 appreciated the minister's role in proposing

candidates to the president. Interviewee 8 also emphasized that "the president takes into account the preferences of ministers and senior officials when making appointments in lower ranks."

The interviewees' experiences demonstrated that ministers played a central role in proposing names to the president, except for a few key positions. They agreed that if the president wants ministers to be effective, she should allow them to select their own colleagues. Some positions, however, are directly filled by the president. An inspector (Interviewee 9) explained, "Inspectors report directly to the minister, and absolute trust is required between the heads of the Directorate for Guidance and Inspection. Therefore, the minister makes these appointments." Interviewee 10 confirmed that ministers propose names for lower ranks, and the appointment process has been expedited as a result. She stressed, "Regardless of the system of government, it is essential for a minister to work with trusted colleagues to ensure her orders are carried out. If the president wants me to succeed, she should respect my choice of people to work with."

Contrary to Albayrak's (2020) argument, internal conflicts among appointees within the same ministry have emerged, as each claims equal status based on their presidential appointments (p. 119). Interviewees 1, 5, and 9 remarked, "We observed such conflicts during the first term of the presidential system, where department heads claimed equality with director generals or deputies. However, any senior official causing problems in the second term was promptly dismissed." Interviewee 3 confirmed, "A director general was dismissed a week after her appointment due to tensions with the deputy minister." The interviewees emphasized that these conflicts were more prevalent in the system's early years. Interviewee 4 noted, "In the first three years, tensions among appointees caused deadlocks and frustration. When I was appointed, the minister specifically instructed me to work harmoniously with others." Interviewee 5 added, "The tensions were due to personal ambitions, not a flaw in the presidential system."

Interviewee 6 observed, "When merit is properly considered, and appointees are deserving, internal conflicts tend to be resolved." Interviewee 8 noted, "Although proximity to the president and his political party remains influential, ministers have

become more powerful in the second term, reducing arrogance among appointees, though it has not completely disappeared." Interviewee 9 added, "These conflicts did occur, but the minister should exert her authority to resolve them." Interviewee 10 agreed, stating, "In the second term, ministers have asserted their authority more effectively, preventing internal conflicts." Thus, Kutlu's (2021) claim that presidential appointments resolve conflicts between elected officials and public administration does not hold for the first term of the presidential system (p. 233).

All interviewees concurred that the appointment procedure has significantly accelerated the process. "The most important reason for transitioning to the presidential system was to enable swift decision-making." The changes in the appointment procedure have facilitated quicker decisions and eliminated uncertainties, as Albayrak (2020) also observed (pp. 118–119). This presidential authority is characterized by its flexibility, ease of implementation, reversibility, and capacity to instill managerial values within the bureaucracy without requiring complex institutional frameworks or long-term planning (Moe, 1985, pp. 245, 248). Interviewee 1 commented, "My appointment was completed within a week, which was beneficial. Decisions were swiftly referred to the minister, who then sought the president's guidance." Interviewee 2 argued, "The change in the appointment process highlighted the need for a shift in bureaucratic mentality, prompting the bureaucracy to act more quickly and efficiently. The appointment of senior officials reflected the demand for individuals capable of making prompt decisions."

She also mentioned, "Approving appointments to mid-level administrative positions expedites the appointment process because the same person decides and approves the appointment. The responsibility rests with one individual." Interviewee 3 stated, "I could begin my duties within ten days. Under the parliamentary system, I waited at least a month to be appointed, during which I was anxious, wondering if the appointment would be canceled. Moreover, the economy requires swift actions and decisions, and fewer hierarchical levels within the ministry have accelerated the decision-making process."

Interviewee 4 added, "The acceleration of the appointment process is certainly an advantage, as it eliminates uncertainties. However, senior officials sometimes avoid

taking the initiative, deferring responsibility to higher levels." Interviewee 5 echoed, "The appointment process in the presidential system is completed within a week, whereas it took over a month in the parliamentary system." Interviewee 6 noted, "Appointments and dismissals are finalized within a few days. However, policies and legislation are not thoroughly discussed. This brings speed, but within the ministries, decision-making is concentrated in the minister's hands. The minister decides, and we implement."

Interviewee 8 emphasized, "The number of hierarchical levels that must approve decisions is fewer in the presidential system, so we avoid delays caused by red tape." Interviewee 9 acknowledged, "I can't deny that we move faster in the presidential system, which is an advantage, though it comes with side effects." Interviewee 10 commented, "Fewer hierarchical levels expedite decision-making, but the issue of over-centralization arises. Over time, ministers might become overwhelmed with having to decide on every issue." Thus, the interviewees appreciated the streamlined process for appointing senior administrators.

While the appointment procedure, which grants sole authority to the president, accelerates the process, the sheer number of positions makes it nearly impossible for the president to thoroughly assess all candidates, reducing the likelihood of appointing highly capable senior officials (Gözler, 2019).

Regarding the impact of merit criteria on senior administrators' appointments, interviewees acknowledged the presence of partisan appointments under the parliamentary system, noting that the critical issue lies in how the freedom of appointments is exercised. In Turkey, the appointment of high-level bureaucrats often prioritizes loyalty, confidentiality, and party interests over merit and experience (Altunok, 2016, p. 171). Interviewee 1 argued, "In the parliamentary system, director generals were mostly chosen based on their ideological proximity to the minister. Loyalty was key, and this remains true in the presidential system." Interviewee 2 added, "Bureaucracy is a reflection of society. If society elects a particular political party, it is not surprising that senior appointments align with that party's policies." Interviewee 3 noted, "While professional experience in public service was important,

partisan appointments also occurred. These appointments served as rewards and continue in the presidential system." Interviewee 4 stated, "At times, the government rewards its partisans." The interviewees thus agreed that neither the parliamentary nor the presidential system prevents partisan appointments or guarantees merit.

Political considerations were prevalent in the parliamentary system, though senior administrators were subject to Public Personnel Law No. 657, which emphasized merit and career principles. Additionally, the executive's accountability to the legislature implicitly required a degree of merit in senior appointments. However, the presidential system has exacerbated the problems associated with political appointments. Generic appointment criteria apply to both external and partisan appointments, and the absence of a structured process for presidential appointments, along with the president's party affiliation, pressures nominees to seek support from the president's political party.

Despite this, the interviewees were critical of the generic appointment criteria under the presidential system. They stressed the importance of bureaucratic professionalism for the success of the government and criticized the neglect of professionalism as an appointment principle. While defining the merit of an appointee is challenging, the interviewees highlighted that internal candidates with experience in public administration and familiarity with the bureaucracy tend to serve government objectives more effectively.

Interviewee 1 stated, "Merit is difficult to define. It encompasses education, professional qualifications, and interpersonal skills, but experience in public service is invaluable, as it facilitates smoother interpersonal relations. Neither the parliamentary nor the presidential system guarantees merit, but professional experience in public service has ensured a certain level of quality." Interviewee 2 remarked, "Appointing those aligned with the government is a right in both systems. However, internal appointments are more effective because the appointees are already familiar with the politicians."

Interviewee 3, an economist, observed, "I work with other ministries and public bodies. Familiarity with their rules is an advantage, as I know who to contact."

Interviewees 4 and 10 agreed, stating, "If a minister or senior official wants to succeed, they will choose those with bureaucratic professionalism. Internally appointed individuals, with their familiarity with policies and their overall impact on the sector, society, and public organizations, enhance efficiency and effectiveness."

Interviewee 5 added, "I was dismissed from my position in the parliamentary system and reassigned as a researcher. Shortly after the transition, a person with professional private-sector experience was appointed to my previous role, but she was unsuccessful. She lacked knowledge of the legislation and the workings of other public bodies. After the transition to the presidential system, I was reappointed to the same position because economic policies require familiarity with government interests, other public institutions, and the market."

Interviewee 6 noted, "Despite my network in the private sector, when I was appointed general director, I chose to work with deputies who had professional experience within the directorate general. They knew the people, their capacities, and available resources." Interviewee 8 emphasized, "The Court of Accounts inspects all public institutions. Senior administrators must ensure careful public spending and adherence to the rule of law. Governmental targets must also align with these regulations. Therefore, a senior administrator with knowledge of these rules is better equipped to achieve these objectives." Interviewee 9 added, "To enforce rules and oversee their compliance at lower levels, senior administrators need to understand how a public body functions." Interviewee 10 remarked, "Even though my work is directly connected to the market, my knowledge of government targets and how they relate to other public bodies allows me to make more effective decisions."

The interviewees thus highlighted not only the importance of senior administrators' knowledge of legislation, technical issues, and procedures but also the value of understanding the interconnectedness of public bureaucracy. They stressed that sharing the same administrative culture facilitates public service, a form of coordination absent in the presidential system. This is because the generic appointment criteria often preclude the selection of individuals with sufficient bureaucratic experience.

Regarding the appointment criteria, the interviewees argued that their generic nature hinders the selection of the most suitable candidates. The president's party membership or leadership further complicates the process by increasing partisan considerations for appointments, thus undermining professionalism in the bureaucracy. Interviewee 1 remarked, "This disregard for professionalism results in a lack of broader social, political, and administrative considerations in policy design, leading to inefficiencies and contradictions with other public organizations' policies. This, in turn, reduces public trust in the government."

Interviewee 2 shared a memory from a ministry meeting, stating, "I attended a meeting led by a very young woman who was tasked with informing us. I was surprised to learn she was a department head. Without intending to belittle anyone, I wondered if she had more knowledge and experience than me. By the end of the meeting, I felt it was a waste of time." Another interviewee observed, "Senior officials often act as political party representatives, feeling indebted to the party for their position. According to reports, state officials allocated protocol spots to representatives of the president's political party."

Following Demirelli's (2023a) argument, the conditions for appointment to senior positions—namely, five years of work experience and a university degree—are so general that many civil servants at any level are eager to follow presidential decisions to secure promotions (p. 117). Demirelli (2023a) also questions whether these qualifications alone sufficiently demonstrate the profound knowledge and expertise required for senior positions in public organizations (p. 117). As the interviewees implied, regardless of how merit is defined, the emphasis on loyalty to the president's political party casts doubt on the impartiality of the presidential appointment process.

According to the interviewees, the professionalism of the public bureaucracy has deteriorated due to partisan presidential appointments. Interviewee 1 stated, "Partisan appointments leave a lasting mark on bureaucracy. Their actions become part of the institutional memory and degrade it." Interviewee 3 shared, "I recounted my experience with an externally appointed minister who abruptly changed policies, and

we struggled to adapt. Eventually, we got used to it, but when we realized she was appointed based on partisanship, many bureaucrats took a passive approach, asking, 'Why should I work?' The office shifted from a place of productivity to one of leisure. You could see this change reflected in the bureaucrats' desks, which were cluttered with items unrelated to work."

Interviewee 4 argued, "There is no mention of performance or targets in senior appointments, including for department heads. These heads command their subordinates but are unable to supervise or direct them effectively due to their lack of experience and accountability. If this continues, the presidential system will not succeed. If performance management and accountability were integrated into the appointment process, internal candidates with experience and expertise in public organizations would be more valued. Even without formal performance evaluations, knowledge of public administration (*devleti tanimak*) has become increasingly important in the presidential system."

Interviewee 5 added, "Those appointed based on partisan considerations often hire recent graduates based on the same criteria, leading to a long-term decline in professionalism." Interviewee 6 observed, "Appointments based on loyalty to certain groups or cliques undermine public services. If a senior official tries to assert her authority, she will be pushed out of the system. A bureaucrat who knows more than her superior is likely to stay silent because speaking up will lead to being ignored or alienated."

According to the interviewees, there is insufficient consideration of bureaucratic knowledge and expertise, particularly that gained within the same public organization, in the appointment of senior officials. The absence of such expertise has not enhanced the productivity of Turkish public administration at the senior level; on the contrary, it has diminished efficiency and effectiveness. Interviewee 2 remarked, "It's not just partisanship; membership in sects and other religious groups is also a factor." Interviewee 3 stated, "Based on my experience in various ministries, I can say that religious sects share senior positions." Interviewee 4 added, "Partisanship signals loyalty. If someone is affiliated with the president's political

party, it implies loyalty. The same applies to sects, depending on their proximity to the president's party."

Interviewee 5 noted, "It's impossible to argue that merit is entirely ignored, but partisanship certainly plays a role in appointments." Interviewee 6 observed, "When a minister belongs to a specific sect, the other senior officials are also typically members of that sect." Interviewee 8 commented, "Political inclinations are indeed considered in appointments, but there should be a balance between merit and loyalty. Achieving this balance is neither easy nor consistent."

The interviewees suggested that in the presidential system, partisanship pervades all levels of public organizations. Interviewee 6, when referring to ethical degradation, was pointing to the impact of senior official appointments on the lower levels of bureaucracy. She argued that concentrating all appointment power in a partisan president, combined with loose criteria for appointment and dismissal, puts pressure on public administration and senior officials. She stated, "The rush to align with the president leads to ethical degradation across all levels of public organizations." She added, "There is an ontological difference in a person's mindset before and after assuming power. The key issue is not whether appointments are internal or external, but ethics. Unjustified appointments and dismissals result in ethical decay within the bureaucracy. Bureaucrats find it rational to align with politically appointed individuals and avoid telling the truth. This ethical decline extends into society. If used properly, external appointments could confront these realities and potentially change this culture." As Demirelli (2023a) and Miller (1956) argue, senior officials often have political affiliations and biases, which deepen as they strive to remain in office under the presidential system, as also noted by Adar and Seufert (2021). Interviewee 6 asserted that external appointments offered an opportunity to challenge these realities but also expressed skepticism about reforming public organizations, concluding that "ethical degradation is becoming the administrative culture."

Interviewee 9 emphasized the negative consequences of not having specific criteria for appointees' knowledge and familiarity with the public organization. She stated, "Senior officials had knowledge and experience under the parliamentary system."

However, in the presidential system, the criteria for becoming a director-general are so generic that anyone could be appointed. Five years of work experience or a university degree means nothing. Even someone from the street could become a senior official. A person from Ministry X could be appointed to Ministry Y. This doesn't align with the speed, efficiency, or effectiveness aimed for in the presidential system." She also highlighted that "bureaucratic professionalism has decreased compared to the parliamentary system. Under the parliamentary system, the appointment of a director-general depended on her experience and expertise within the directorate. Whenever someone asked about the directorate's work, the director-general could provide a satisfactory answer. In the presidential system, director-general roles have become places for practice and learning over one or two years. The appointee learns the work, becomes familiar with the organization, and runs it if she's capable. If not, she leaves, and the learning process begins again for the next appointee."

Another interviewee claimed, "To receive state subsidies or reliefs, even if you are officially entitled, you need to find a member of the ruling party to assist you. It's unbelievable that one has to ask for favors to access their rights."

On the other hand, Interviewee 10 argued, "Partisan appointments were more common before the May 2023 elections, during the first term of the presidential system. Externally appointed ministers were unfamiliar with both public organizations and the presidential system. Ministers appointed people they trusted, such as those who excelled in the Public Personnel Selection Exam (KPSS) or graduated with top rankings. Are these qualifications relevant to success in bureaucracy? No. While these factors were unrelated to success in public organizations, the appointees were unfamiliar with bureaucracy. In the second term, we are seeing greater merit and bureaucratic knowledge among appointees." Like Interviewee 2, Interviewee 10 believed the benefits of the presidential system would become more apparent over time.

As a result of the generic appointment criteria, the president's party membership and leadership, and the lack of attention to candidates' bureaucratic professionalism, the

professionalism of the bureaucracy has diminished. These interviewees' views align with Adar and Seufert's (2021) analysis, which suggests that public employment is used as a partisan tool to influence the state and advance the interests of loyalists, regardless of qualifications (p. 35). Gözler's (2019) concerns about the president's exclusive authority to hire, using broad criteria, are shared by the interviewees. Furthermore, they implied that partisan senior administrators have a negative impact on both society and the market, as people must now establish connections with the president's political party to access state resources.

Except for Interviewee 10, none of the interviewees mentioned that performance, evaluation criteria, or expectations were part of their appointment process. Interviewee 10 stated, "The president conducts a pre-interview for positions he deems critical. He wants to personally know the person appointed to these roles. I had a similar interview, where the president asked me to sign a letter of commitment and promise to ensure the stability of prices and supply in the market."

The particular nature of the institution that Interviewee 10 leads, being a state economic enterprise, may explain why defining performance and evaluation criteria for senior officials is more straightforward. For other interviewees, establishing such criteria may be more challenging. Another argument raised by the interviewees is that the absence of predefined performance or evaluation criteria makes senior officials more vulnerable to the president, who, as a party leader, can dismiss them without justification.

The new appointment principles also expand the pool of candidates to include market actors. None of the interviewees criticized external appointments. In fact, they viewed these appointments as an opportunity to eliminate bureaucratic insularity, though they noted that the benefits have diminished under the presidential system due to partisan appointments and a lack of familiarity with the public sector (*devleti tanima*). While the interviewees valued bureaucratic professionalism, they acknowledged that it could benefit from improvement and change. They argued that disregarding sufficient bureaucratic experience and expertise in the appointment

process leads to a decline in professionalism, efficiency, and effectiveness in the bureaucracy.

However, none of the interviewees addressed the potential conflicts of interest arising from the lack of restrictions on externally appointed officials working in the private sector or maintaining connections with market actors, which could compromise their service. Nor did they mention the potential effects of these officials returning to the private sector after leaving public service. Given the profit opportunities created by New Public Management (NPM)-style reforms in Turkey, such as outsourcing, privatization, public-private partnerships, and state subsidies, senior administrators appointed from the market may be inclined to favor certain actors. The president may also appoint external candidates to favor specific interests. These officials, with insight into future public policies, could later direct private organizations based on this knowledge. Despite the risks to market fairness, the appointment principles do not address these possibilities.

Interviewee 1 argued, "The public bureaucracy has the capacity to shape market actors. It's also a dynamic structure that adapts to change. Bureaucratic personnel today are different from fifty years ago. Many now enter public service through highly competitive exams, are proficient in foreign languages, and develop over time through interactions with public and private institutions. I have met bureaucrats more capable than their private-sector counterparts. However, the external appointments, combined with loose criteria and the president's political affiliations, have led to appointments based on loyalty to the ruling Justice and Development Party (JDP). I know people whose only qualification is their proximity to JDP managers." Interviewee 2 added, "The state can no longer provide all public services. It is outsourcing these duties to the private sector, so it is beneficial to integrate market values with bureaucratic values. Though it may seem difficult, it is possible to train senior officials to update their skills. An updated bureaucracy would serve better than external appointments." She also remarked, "Some revisions to the presidential system are needed to prevent partisan appointments. The combination of party membership and lax appointment criteria confuses the bureaucracy. It's difficult to

work with people lacking the necessary qualifications who were appointed through political connections."

Interviewee 3 expressed appreciation for external appointments, stating, "Sometimes, we need a fresh perspective. We can learn from the externally appointed how to approach work differently. But the bureaucratic environment is distinct—it requires familiarity with political actors. I recall working with a deputy general responsible for economic affairs from the president's political party. She couldn't adjust to public sector work and was eventually dismissed." Interviewee 4 recounted, "We collaborated with an international institution on social security. The experts were highly qualified, and one of them was Turkish. Initially, I thought she could be a deputy general, but as the meeting progressed, it became clear that she was unaware of Turkey's social and political context. I no longer considered her suitable for the role. However, the individual who was ultimately appointed had no relevant experience and was recommended due to the company's relationship with the president's political party." Similarly, Interviewee 5 argued, "External appointees typically reflect their political connections, prioritizing the party's interests. However, political considerations require us to think about the broader societal and economic impacts of our decisions."

Interviewee 6 emphasized, "External appointments force public organizations to confront their deficiencies. The externally appointed hold up a mirror to the organization, which can help improve efficiency and effectiveness." Interviewee 8 agreed, stating, "Over time, institutional blindness occurs in public organizations. Bureaucrats, accustomed to dealing with similar issues, struggle to think differently. External appointments can help break this cycle. I don't mind where the appointees come from, whether they are from the private sector, international organizations, or other parts of the public bureaucracy." She added, "When I was appointed to Ministry X, I noticed that the strict discipline and rigidity within the ministry hindered personnel from taking initiative in urgent matters. I taught them how to handle these issues. I also found that many staff resisted using electronic file systems due to their lack of familiarity with technology. I insisted they adopt the system. We learned from each other."

Interviewee 9 pointed out, "External appointees often lack knowledge of bureaucratic principles and are unable to identify when a civil servant violates Law No. 657." Interviewee 10 remarked, "External appointments can be beneficial, but they should be used at levels below internal appointments. While external appointees may bring new ideas, the bureaucracy requires knowledge of the political landscape. A senior official cannot focus solely on the market." Conversely, Interviewee 7 stated, "Our work demands technical expertise, and we are accountable both financially and administratively to an international institution. Thus, the president cannot risk making partisan appointments."

The analysis of the interviews suggests that the criteria for professional experience in appointments must be revised to include hands-on bureaucratic expertise. Interviewee 1 stated, "One of the director generals was the CEO of a well-known public bank. While she undoubtedly understood the market, her appointment was influenced by political concerns over resource allocation. However, she didn't grasp how these decisions affected other ministerial policies, leading to contradictions and delays in subsidy distribution to firms."

Interviewee 2 emphasized, "Governors are responsible for the security of their provinces, which involves the use of military or police forces. This role has little to do with efficiency or effectiveness. You can't expect someone with just five years of experience to make decisions on such matters. Appointment criteria must specify that more relevant experience is required for sensitive posts."

Interviewee 3 noted, "The previous minister appointed deputy ministers and directors externally. Their CVs were impressive—graduates from prestigious universities with valuable private-sector experience. However, they struggled to collaborate with the bureaucracy due to their limited public-sector experience. The current minister, who has experience in both the ministry and the private sector, works more effectively and pays attention to the professionalism of the bureaucracy. He is more successful than his predecessor." For Interviewee 3, "This holds true for all ministries. Senior officials with experience in both the public and private sectors contribute to better functioning, but more public-sector experience is needed for policies to succeed and

for efficiency and effectiveness to improve. A senior public official must balance social, political, and economic considerations, which is very different from managing a private firm."

Interviewee 5 highlighted the ease of working with senior officials who have professional bureaucratic experience, stating, "The issue isn't the merit of the appointees but their lack of familiarity with the unique nature of public policymaking and its procedures. They need to understand how the state functions (devleti tanımları lazım)."

Interviewee 6 concluded, "The opportunity to transform the bureaucratic mindset is being wasted. The generic appointment criteria and authority for external appointments are akin to headhunting. Individuals who avoid public service but could add value to public organizations could contribute. However, the over-reliance on one person, the absence of a system based on legislation, and the lack of delegation of authority and responsibility to senior officials are squandering this potential."

Interviewee 8 also highlighted the challenges of working with ministers unfamiliar with bureaucracy. Interviewees 9 and 10 concluded, "For success, ministers and senior administrators must collaborate with bureaucrats."

These statements support Üstüner's (2020) argument that replicating private management practices in public administration is not feasible under the current separation of political and economic spheres, particularly regarding state powers, law, and public administration (pp. 26–27). Bureaucratic experience and expertise reflect the interconnectedness of the public bureaucracy with other political actors and its unique culture. Ignoring this connection, as well as professionalism, in favor of party membership or leadership results in increased partisanship and the failure of government operations.

Pointing to the effects of appointment principles on the erosion of integrity among senior administrators in the presidential system, Interviewee 9 stated, "In the presidential system, the legislation does not prohibit someone from being appointed

as a deputy minister to two different ministries, even if their scopes of work differ. I question the qualifications of such a person—how can we expect someone to perform efficiently with two deputy minister roles?" This comment implies that the appointment criteria are too lax, allowing for multiple appointments without regard for the appointee's suitability.

Nevertheless, the interviewees did not address the impact of the appointment principle on the integrity of the bureaucracy, particularly regarding the right of senior administrators to be reappointed to public service upon the expiration of their term or their dismissal. According to Additional Article 35 of DHFL No. 375, revised in 2022, dismissed senior officials have three options: First, if the senior administrators were previously employed in Group-A cadres under Law No. 657 (i.e., they were appointed after passing competitive exams, referred to as Expertise Cadres, and were career bureaucrats), they will be reappointed to their previous positions. Second, if the individual was not originally in Group-A cadres but served at least three years as a senior administrator, they will be appointed to Group-A cadres within the institutions where they previously served. Third, if neither of the above categories applies, the individual will be appointed to researcher positions.

While the first option may be considered a vested right, the second option contradicts the principles of merit, career progression, and equality outlined in Public Personnel Law (Eren & Saitoğlu, 2021, pp. 318-319). Appointment to these positions should be reserved for individuals who have previously served as civil servants and adhered to the principles of career advancement and merit.

The proposed policy may also lead to frustration among experts, as former senior administrators might not have passed the highly competitive exams that these experts have successfully completed. Additionally, criticisms have emerged regarding the unconstitutionality of this approach, arguing that access to public service is a political right that cannot be regulated through a presidential decree (Eren & Saitoğlu, 2021, pp. 318-319).

Furthermore, many of the researchers are often inactive individuals receiving salaries (ATM memuru), which could lead to an increase in public spending without

providing any tangible benefits, ultimately transforming public service into a system of spoils.

In the presidential system, public service is no longer seen as a vocation, and senior administrators can hold multiple positions simultaneously. This practice impairs the effective functioning of the bureaucracy and increases dependence on the president or her political party to secure multiple appointments.

Regarding relations with the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA), the interviewees agreed that TGNA's oversight of senior officials has diminished, and MPs' information requests often go unanswered, without corresponding gains in efficiency. Interviewee 9 remarked, "In the past, we were more diligent in responding to MPs' demands. We respected deadlines. Now, we ignore some requests that seem irrelevant or confusing, and we no longer strictly adhere to deadlines." Interviewee 3 noted, "The budget process was a nightmare under the parliamentary system. It took days to prepare, and negotiations in the TGNA were difficult at both the commission and plenary levels. I used to feel stressed responding to MPs' questions. Now, I feel more relaxed, as the presidency deals with these inquiries, and even ministers can ignore MPs' criticism."

Interviewee 1 added, "TGNA experts contributed to the development of laws under the parliamentary system, and MPs were more informed about the needs of ministries. As far as I know, fewer laws are being passed in the presidential system, and MPs are less knowledgeable and less involved in ministries. The quality of legislation has declined." Similarly, Interviewee 9 observed, "The weakening of TGNA's influence on senior officials has affected the legislative process. Senior administrators are now less responsive to TGNA's criticisms and are less concerned with the quality of legislation or considering different viewpoints."

The presidential system has reduced TGNA's pressure on senior administrators. However, the interviewees claimed this shift has not led to greater efficiency or decision-making freedom. Instead, a disregard for TGNA and its associated

institutions has developed, and the resulting lack of accountability has not translated into higher-quality decision-making.

The interviewees acknowledged that the presidential appointment of senior officials and the centralization of power have accelerated the appointment process. However, the absence of a formal consultative mechanism, a transparent appointment procedure, and the influence of the president's party membership/leadership have raised concerns about increased partisanship. Additionally, they noted that the appointment principles, characterized by generic criteria and a lack of focus on bureaucratic professionalism—particularly in external appointments—undermine professionalism in the bureaucracy and foster partisanship across the entire system. The current appointment procedures and principles neither prevent partisan appointments nor ensure a merit-based system. Instead, they have introduced ideological considerations that compromise the proper functioning of the bureaucracy.

The interviewees also allowed to suggest that these procedures and principles negatively impact the functioning of the market and the integrity of the bureaucracy. A partisan bureaucracy forces citizens to seek support from the president's political party more than under the parliamentary system, and senior administrators' decisions also affect market competition. However, none of the interviewees specifically addressed the consequences of appointment procedures and principles—particularly external appointments—on the market or the creation of various categories of senior administrators that further erode bureaucratic integrity.

3.3.3. Effects of the Amendments to Appointment Procedures in Organizations

The appointment procedures and principles have significant repercussions for the proper functioning of public organizations and bureaucratic systems, positioning the president at the core of appointment and policy decisions. This centralization has prolonged the decision-making process, including the appointment procedures, and has resulted in an overburdened presidential office. The issues associated with centralization are further aggravated by the loss of statutory job security for senior

administrators, as outlined in Public Personnel Law No. 657. Additionally, bureaucratic professionalism is overlooked in the appointment of these positions, as demonstrated by the removal of undersecretaries. Consequently, senior administrators are reluctant to take initiative due to their diminished autonomy and the absence of professionalism in appointments. Furthermore, all senior positions involved in decision-making are subject to presidential directives. The president's party membership and leadership contribute to partisan decision-making within public organizations. These appointment procedures and principles have failed to ensure quality in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, leading to a decline in both within public organizations and bureaucracies.

Table 5 below presents the points deduced from Questions 5 and 6 findings.

Table 5. Findings and Analysis of Questions 5 & 6

Questions	Analysis of the Interview
1. Has this appointment procedure introduced any change in public administration compared to the parliamentary system?	Acceleration at the expense of efficiency and effectiveness. Ineffectiveness of deputy ministers. Removal of undersecretaries causing malfunctioning.
2. Compared to the parliamentary system, did the procedure for appointing senior public administrators impact good administrative principles such as compliance with the law, non-abuse of power, impartiality, transparency, accountability, and decision-making within a reasonable time?	Significance of professionalism for efficiency and effectiveness. Need for training for the externally appointed. Deterioration of professionalism at the middle and lower levels of public bureaucracy.

The interviewees noted that, under the parliamentary system, decision-making in a typical ministry followed a strict hierarchy, progressing through the head of department, deputy director general, director general, deputy undersecretary, and minister. The appointment procedure also adhered to this hierarchy, which slowed down the process and created uncertainty within public organizations.

In contrast, the presidential system has expedited the decision-making process due to a smaller number of decision-makers and increased centralization. However, the interviewees expressed concern about the risks associated with this speed. In the presidential system, the president holds sole authority over appointments, with no actors to consult or delegate this responsibility. The large number of senior administrative positions and the diversity of public organizations make selecting the right appointee challenging.

Although the appointment process has been accelerated, it has not necessarily ensured the selection of the most suitable candidates. The incompatibility of some appointed senior administrators with the bureaucratic system could hinder the proper functioning of the bureaucracy.

The interviewees emphasized that appointment principles should prioritize bureaucratic professionalism. Their focus on the necessity and benefits of an undersecretary highlighted the importance of bureaucratic experience and expertise for the effective functioning of both the organization and the bureaucracy. They also argued that the diverse nature of public policies necessitated consultation and comprehensive monitoring, particularly in terms of coordination. For the interviewees, bureaucratic professionalism ensures knowledge of organizational priorities, the interests of other political actors involved in decision-making, the rule of law, and the administrative culture and procedures of the bureaucracy. Moreover, they were critical of the absence of a coordinator with sufficient bureaucratic expertise to manage organizational policies and activities. They argued that the lack of such coordination increases the potential for errors, which, in turn, reduces efficiency, effectiveness, and public trust.

Additionally, the lack of statutory job security for senior administrators has contributed to the decline in organizational decision-making efficiency and effectiveness. Their dependence on the president and the political demands of the president's party leads them to prioritize these over the organization's needs. In other words, the current appointment procedures and principles have undermined the proper functioning of organizations and their bureaucracies by distancing senior administrators from contributing meaningfully to political decision-making.

In this context, Interviewee 1 stated, "Public policies are inherently diverse. Their development requires time. However, there is often pressure to quickly implement presidential or ministerial orders, which can conflict with ministerial legislation. I do not believe that public administration should move at the same speed as market actors. Speed is not always beneficial for public affairs. The policy-making process should be longer and include a wider range of actors and consultations. Public policy must consider the long-term effects on society and various sectors of the economy, rather than focusing solely on one segment. The process should be open to different perspectives wherever possible." While acknowledging that speed allows for policy adjustments, Interviewee 1 cautioned, "When a policy is amended immediately after its implementation, public trust in organizations and legislation diminishes. The short-sightedness driven by speed reduces the quality of policies, leading to mistrust and instability. The legislative process under the parliamentary system allowed more time for careful consideration, with multiple control mechanisms offering diverse viewpoints. Although the TGNA was responsible for making laws, drafts were often prepared by bureaucrats in consultation with other public institutions and civil society organizations, before being revised by the Prime Ministry and then submitted to the TGNA. In contrast, the presidential system has resulted in more superficial legislation. The pressure on bureaucrats to prioritize speed over quality, along with the limited perspectives of appointees, has led to some viewpoints being ignored. We have even seen instances where presidential decisions repealed certain provisions of previous presidential decrees shortly after they were enacted."

These statements highlighted how the connections between senior administrators and other political actors have been curtailed. The acceleration of decision-making has been achieved by minimizing consultation. As a result, the role of senior administrators has been reduced to mere technical implementation, which has ultimately decreased efficiency, effectiveness, and public trust in organizations.

Interviewee 2 stated, "The appointment of senior officials who better understand presidential priorities has indeed accelerated the process. They know what the president wants and implement it immediately. As the presidential system continues, we can expect even further acceleration. The lower hierarchical levels within ministries have also contributed to the faster decision-making and implementation."

Interviewee 3 remarked, "Decisions related to economic issues require a delicate balance. One cannot afford to act too quickly, but neither can one delay too long. This balance demands prior knowledge and expertise. Under the presidential system, I worked with a minister whose policies shifted overnight, causing our stakeholders to lose confidence."

Interviewee 4 claimed, "Social policies require the participation of public institutions, employers, and employees. Without consulting these stakeholders, it is impossible to develop sound policies. This consultation process takes time. In the presidential system, decisions are swiftly implemented. However, I do not believe that the correct policies have been enacted, as we have neglected stakeholder input due to time constraints. This neglect also diminishes the quality of our contributions."

Despite the acceleration in decision-making, Interviewee 5 remarked, "Decisions now accumulate at the top of organizations, with ministers waiting for a presidential directive. Centralization has resulted in overload at the top due to the lack of delegated authority, preventing the full benefits of speed from being realized. The state is like a massive cargo vessel—one cannot easily change its course."

Similarly, Interviewee 6 argued, "In the parliamentary system, the bureaucracy took the initiative. However, in the presidential system, senior officials and bureaucrats at all levels avoid responsibility, delegating even routine decisions to higher levels and waiting for central directives. This avoidance of responsibility and over-centralization stifles productivity. While decisions are implemented without delay, this hastiness also leads to mistakes and failures."

Interviewee 8 added, "The most significant impact of the presidential system is its capacity to expedite decision-making."

Moreover, Interviewee 9 emphasized, "The acceleration of the law-making process is remarkable. Under the parliamentary system, the long legislative process often rendered proposed laws redundant. By the time a bill reached the plenary, it was often deemed unnecessary. Within ministries, ministers had to navigate the

hierarchy, including the undersecretary, to issue commands. In the presidential system, ministers communicate directly with director generals. While I cannot deny the increase in speed, this acceleration brings more drawbacks than benefits. Once a faulty decision is made, it is difficult to reverse. The pressure to act quickly leads to numerous errors, and bureaucrats face intense time pressure. Just look at the Official Gazette—even basic grammar rules are often ignored! In the presidential system, ministers no longer feel the need to consult their deputies or senior officials, even though they have direct access to them. In contrast, under the parliamentary system, ministers consulted with undersecretaries, who played a key role in persuading or dissuading them from certain actions."

These comments highlight the failures associated with excessive speed and the diminished political contribution of senior administrators. They also reveal the resistance of those with bureaucratic professionalism to the politically elected. The interviews suggest that acceleration, at the expense of consultation and professionalism, has resulted in over-centralization and led senior administrators to avoid participating in political decision-making. Their lack of bureaucratic knowledge and expertise has significant repercussions for organizational functionality. In other words, public organizations and bureaucracies have experienced dysfunction and instability, which will likely have adverse effects on society, particularly on the market.

Furthermore, all interviewees strongly emphasized that the abolition of undersecretaries has been the most detrimental consequence of the presidential system, decreasing both efficiency and effectiveness, as noted by Ateş & Soner (2021, pp. 158-160). Under the parliamentary system, undersecretaries were responsible for ensuring collaboration and coordination within and across ministries. Dik (2023) pointed out that they also acted as mediators between politicians and the public bureaucracy (pp. 85-86). As the highest-ranking public officials with statutory job security guaranteed by Public Personnel Law, undersecretaries had autonomy from political influence. Their role was to mitigate the minister's partisan impact. They embodied bureaucratic knowledge and skills and ensured the continuity of public service (Bölükbaşı, 2021, pp. 287, 290-291). Typically, each ministry had one

undersecretary tasked with resolving administrative issues and alleviating the minister's workload. Their familiarity with bureaucratic rules and procedures enabled the smooth functioning of the bureaucracy.

Thus, the interviewees' concerns regarding the abolition of undersecretaries suggest that the neglect of bureaucratic professionalism in appointments has restricted the political contributions of the bureaucracy, which had previously been grounded in expertise and experience. The presidential system has introduced no mechanism to link the government with a permanent bureaucracy.

For example, Interviewee 1 criticized the elimination of undersecretaries, stating, "The etymological root of the term 'undersecretary' in Turkish (*müsteşar*) refers to someone who is consulted. This indicates that two distinct wills value each other's opinions. However, deputy ministers are now expected to act as deputy undersecretaries, assisting the ministers. Ministers are considered equivalent to undersecretaries, and deputy ministers are mere assistants (*bakan yardımcısı*), meaning there is only one will instead of diverse viewpoints." Consequently, policy-making within ministries now excludes consultation.

Interviewee 2 added, "Deputy ministers in the presidential system have not reduced the minister's workload. Most lack bureaucratic experience and avoid responsibility."

Similarly, Interviewee 3 noted, "In the parliamentary system, the undersecretary was a problem-solver. They often resolved issues before escalating them to the minister and also coordinated the central and local branches of a ministry. In the presidential system, there is no authority to consult and coordinate ministerial affairs." Interviewee 3 further explained, "Due to legislative requirements, such as the trials of public officials, many investigative reports are still submitted to the minister, who lacks any knowledge of the investigation process. The absence of a central figure like the undersecretary to serve as a repository of institutional memory and policy expertise has severely impacted the organization." She also reported, "Two current deputy ministers, who have previous experience as director generals in our ministry,

have expedited decision-making compared to their predecessors during the early years of the presidential system. The earlier ones lacked bureaucratic knowledge despite their impressive educational and professional credentials, which made working with them difficult."

According to Interviewee 4, "The undersecretary was also in contact with other stakeholders, such as public bodies and civil society organizations. She could provide us with a general overview of social demands and their potential consequences." Interviewee 5 added, "The ministry to which our institution was affiliated had other associated or related bodies, all of which were under the undersecretary's authority. She ensured that our decisions complemented those of other bodies. In the presidential system, however, responsibility for affiliated bodies is divided among multiple deputy ministers, making policy coordination with these bodies extremely difficult."

Interviewee 5 further explained, "Undersecretaries provided a comprehensive view of organizational activities and significantly reduced the minister's workload by finalizing many decisions. They were selected from professionals with 30-40 years of experience in the same public organization, contributing to institutional memory. Undersecretaries knew how to resolve bottlenecks and acted as repositories of organizational knowledge. In the presidential system, ministers are expected to take on the role of undersecretaries, but they continue to act as both politicians and bureaucrats. This dual role increases the administrative burden on ministers. Each deputy minister oversees four or five general directorates, which limits their ability to maintain an overarching view of ministerial activities, especially when they are externally appointed and lack familiarity with the ministry. Since the president has the authority to modify the organizational structure, a position similar to that of an undersecretary could be reintroduced, as the presidential system offers such flexibility."

Similarly, Interviewee 6 stated, "In the parliamentary system, I had a single interlocutor to consult. Now, in the presidential system, I must schedule separate meetings with each deputy minister, as it is difficult to organize a meeting with all deputies present." Interviewee 6 continued, "Despite the continuity of the

government, almost all senior officials are dismissed after a ministerial change. This leaves no one with historical knowledge of ministerial policies, and such a loss of experience should not happen. It's rare to find a senior official with even ten years of experience in the ministry."

Interviewee 8 also criticized the deputy minister system: "The division of labor, work definitions, and allocation of directorates are entirely at the minister's discretion. The deputy ministers fail to provide policy advice, and the abolition of undersecretaries has undermined the unity of ministries. The appointment of 4-5 deputy ministers has created chaos in public organizations. Those who were externally appointed, without any prior public sector experience, have severely damaged the existing institutional memory." Interviewee 8 emphasized, "Institutional memory among senior administrators ensures the continuity of public organizations and services. Without it, a public organization is bound to fail." She also recounted, "It was extremely difficult to work with the minister during the first term of the presidential system, as he lacked bureaucratic knowledge, which slowed down decision-making. Currently, I enjoy working with a minister who previously served as a deputy minister. With his experience in international, private, and public sectors, he understands my concerns, and I can grasp his demands. We speak the same language."

Additionally, Interviewee 9 stated, "Ministers and their deputies often do not know the history of a policy, the underlying legislation, or the ministry's capabilities, leading to contradictions between new policies and existing laws that fall under the jurisdiction of other public institutions." For Interviewees 5 and 9, undersecretaries were crucial for transmitting experience across the ministry, including to local branches. They argued that bureaucratic experience was more critical than it was often perceived. According to them, "Deputy ministers in the presidential system do not possess the same technical expertise as undersecretaries. This lack of knowledge affects the productivity of lower-level employees, who struggle to explain themselves or avoid taking responsibility for their work."

As highlighted by both the literature and interviewees, although deputy ministers are expected to support ministers and fulfill duties similar to those of undersecretaries

(Ateş & Soner, 2021, pp. 158-160; İstikbal Çetinkaya, 2023, pp. 84, 86), their inability to contribute due to their lack of bureaucratic expertise and experience has decreased the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations.

Interviewee 10 also referred to the abolition of undersecretaries as the most detrimental aspect of the presidential system. She noted that deputy ministers have not been able to fill the void left by the undersecretaries' removal. She argued, "Each deputy minister oversees four or five directorates, and there are now four deputy ministers per ministry. None of them possess the full knowledge or authority over policies that cut across the responsibilities of directorate generals overseen by other deputy ministers. The equal status of deputy ministers, combined with their lack of policy knowledge, results in many decisions being referred to the minister. This centralization increases the administrative burden on ministers, who already face numerous administrative issues. In many ministries, ministers have not delegated authority to their deputies and prefer to work independently." She added, "Ministries without internally appointed deputy ministers have failed to function effectively and efficiently."

Furthermore, Interviewee 10 asserted, "Ministers are supposed to be the only individuals in a ministry with comprehensive knowledge of policies. The office of private secretaries (*özel kalem*) has become increasingly influential in shaping ministers' decisions. However, private secretaries often lack bureaucratic knowledge or relevant education." She also highlighted that other non-authoritative individuals close to the minister or president have gained significant influence over decision-making processes.

The statements of Interviewee 10 demonstrate that non-political actors affiliated with ministers have gained prominence. However, these actors lack professionalism, and most are not civil servants. This shift diminishes the significance of bureaucracy and fosters favoritism.

Furthermore, interviewees emphasized the importance of incorporating bureaucratic professionalism as an appointment principle. They highlighted that the quality of

bureaucratic work depends on the bureaucratic knowledge and expertise of senior administrators. In other words, current appointment principles have led to a decrease in professionalism throughout the bureaucracy.

Interviewee 1 stated, "Experts in a ministry prepare legislation or other policies, and senior administrators review them. The quality of these outputs depends on the individuals' merit. By quality, I mean efficiency and effectiveness. I believe that only internal appointments can ensure this level of quality. Senior administrators also participate in job interviews, meaning their competence directly impacts the future capacity of public institutions."

Interviewee 2 added, "The success of an administrator is contingent on the achievements of those at lower levels. Good service cannot be delivered if those under the administrator lack merit. Even if a senior administrator works hard and does their best, they cannot succeed if lower-level staff fail to present qualified policies or legislation. It is the technical experience and expertise of lower-level staff that ultimately guarantee the success of senior administrators."

Emphasizing the role of bureaucratic professionalism in streamlining processes, Interviewee 3 remarked, "The preparation of secondary legislation is now more straightforward, thanks to the reduced hierarchy and the public-sector experience of some deputy ministers. However, this alone is not enough. Deputy ministers and senior administrators still require a qualified bureaucracy to support them."

Many interviewees noted the decline in bureaucratic professionalism, particularly among department heads, whose appointments are approved by the president. Interviewee 1 asserted, "Departments are the most critical units in ministries, serving as the hubs of bureaucratic professionalism. These units handle the bulk of ministerial work, so the quality of their leaders directly affects the ministry's overall performance. Although department heads are appointed internally, partisanship plays a significant role in the presidential system. The current appointment principles allow anyone with five years of bureaucratic experience to become a department head, regardless of their qualifications."

Interviewee 1 further argued, "The heads of departments should have experience working in the same department they will supervise."

Interviewee 2 added, "District governors also serve as heads of departments in the Ministry of Interior. This experience is an essential part of their training to qualify as governors. Departments are where one learns about the ministry. In the presidential system, anyone can be appointed as head of a department, which contradicts the merit and career principles outlined in the Public Personnel Law."

Interviewee 3 emphasized, "Departments are the brains of a ministry. They generate the actual outputs and services, so the heads of departments are critical to a ministry's functioning."

Similarly, Interviewee 4 highlighted the crucial role department heads play in executing ministerial work: "Department heads complete 90% of the work. Director generals or deputies oversee the process and resolve bottlenecks. For them, 70-80% of technical knowledge suffices, as they need administrative judgment and foresight gained from experience. They synthesize and refine the information provided by department heads. As long as the heads of departments are knowledgeable, the director general is in a secure position. In the presidential system, it is difficult to find capable department heads." Interviewee 4 also expressed concerns, stating, "I am unsure whether the post-15 July Coup Attempt dismissals caused mistrust and workforce losses or if the presidential system has eroded bureaucratic professionalism." He added, "Departments hold detailed knowledge of policies and legislation, so the merit of their heads is crucial."

Interviewee 5 concurred, stating, "Deputy director generals or director generals do not need to know how policies or legislation are developed. It is the responsibility of department heads to produce solutions or draft legislation and submit them to senior administrators. Department heads inform them, consult on critical points, and seek guidance. In the presidential system, when senior administrators lack merit, department heads do as well. Those without merit may not even know what to prioritize." Interviewee 6 reinforced this view, adding, "The backbone of Turkish

public administration and ministries is the department heads. They perform most of the work (*Kamuda işin mutfağı daire başkanlıklarıdır*)."

Interviewee 8 added, "The professionalism of departments and their heads ensures the quality of the work produced. In the presidential system, department heads should be appointed from within the same ministry where the candidate is already employed."

Interviewee 9 lamented, "The department heads, once the backbone of public organizations, are not as qualified as they were under the parliamentary system. They now pressure career experts without offering clear direction. Director generals and their deputies also lack technical knowledge. These days, it is almost impossible to find knowledgeable individuals. Following every ministerial change, department heads, director generals, and their deputies are dismissed, leading to a swift erosion of professionalism. This constant turnover has resulted in a loss of efficiency and effectiveness."

In summary, the interviewees' insights suggest that the current appointment practices in the presidential system have eroded bureaucratic professionalism, particularly among department heads. This decline in expertise has negatively impacted the efficiency, effectiveness, and institutional memory of public organizations.

The interviewees highlighted that the current appointment principles do not provide in-service training for senior administrators, particularly for those appointed externally. They pointed out that many deputy ministers are appointed from outside the bureaucracy and lack fundamental knowledge of bureaucratic procedures, such as official correspondence, protocol, and work regulations. This absence of procedural knowledge and bureaucratic culture diminishes effectiveness.

Interviewee 1 claimed, "Bureaucracy has its own operational rules. Those appointed externally are unfamiliar with these, which slows down organizational activities. Moreover, public organizations operate with distinct interpersonal relations, ethics, and values. To communicate effectively within the public sector, senior administrators need to be aware of these dynamics."

For Interviewee 2, there should be induction or orientation training for senior officials, especially external appointees. He noted, "Public bureaucracy and personnel are continuously evolving, so training should be provided regularly. Perhaps creating a Senior Executive Service, similar to the U.S., with presidential prerogative for external appointments, might better serve Turkish public administration."

Interviewee 3 added, "Bureaucracy has its own terminology, much like its own language. Senior officials will be more effective if they understand this language."

Interviewee 4 suggested that in certain cases, individuals with private-sector experience may be suitable for senior public sector positions, particularly in institutions that operate like private entities. However, she stressed the importance of induction training for externally appointed senior officials, focusing on administrative practices, essential legislation, and official correspondence. She explained, "Those appointed from the private sector often assume public organizations operate like businesses and expect immediate compliance with their orders. However, public organizations are bound by procurement rules, even for basic purchases. Externally appointed officials often behave like business leaders, unaware of the rules they must follow, which can lead to serious issues. Training is essential before they assume office."

Interviewee 5 echoed this sentiment, noting, "Externally appointed senior administrators often focus solely on profits. However, they must understand that public organizations sometimes prioritize other values. For example, a deputy minister once proposed closing unprofitable agricultural cooperatives. She did not realize that these cooperatives supported farmers in remote areas who rely on them for access to agricultural products. Induction training is necessary to inform them that profit is not the sole concern of public organizations."

Interviewee 6 shared his experience, stating, "In the private sector, it was easy to ask employees to work long hours because working hours were flexible. In the ministry, I know it is difficult to make civil servants work after 18:00. A senior administrator

unfamiliar with this will be frustrated when employees leave at the end of their shift, regardless of the remaining workload."

Interviewee 8 emphasized the role of the Institute of Public Administration for Turkey and the Middle East (TODAİE), which was abolished under the presidential system. TODAİE previously offered induction courses for professionals, such as doctors and rectors, who were unfamiliar with administrative affairs before assuming senior positions. Interviewee 8 argued, "Reintroducing such courses for externally appointed senior officials would be beneficial."

The interviewees' call for a central institution like TODAİE to provide induction training to all senior officials, especially those appointed externally, aligns with findings in the literature. Albayrak (2020) notes that no central institution has replaced TODAİE for the training of senior administrators (p. 132). While TODAİE was criticized for not offering efficient training (Sobacı & Köseoğlu, 2018, p. 37), its absence has created a void in senior-level training (Albayrak, 2020, p. 132).

Overall, the interviewees expressed dissatisfaction with the current appointment procedures and principles for senior administrators. They pointed to the negative effects of centralization, the decline in professionalism at senior and lower levels of bureaucracy, and the erosion of public service quality due to increased partisanship. In other words, they highlighted the consequences of distancing bureaucracy, with its experience and expertise, from political decision-making. While centralization has expedited the appointment process, the interviewees argued that the lack of a consultative mechanism and the high number of senior administrative positions make it difficult to appoint qualified administrators. The political affiliation of the president and the opaque appointment process steer nominations toward individuals aligned with the president's political party, thereby increasing partisanship. Moreover, the appointment process does not adequately consider bureaucratic professionalism.

Although the interviewees recognized the value of external appointments, they emphasized the need to prioritize bureaucratic professionalism in appointment

decisions. Senior administrators are key political actors who contribute to decision-making, and their absence leads to operational failures that have significant repercussions, particularly in the market. Citing the abolition of undersecretaries as an example, the interviewees highlighted how bureaucratic professionalism contributes to efficiency and effectiveness. They argued that senior officials with statutory job security and bureaucratic expertise facilitate communication within the bureaucracy. The presidential system, however, has elevated non-political actors, such as cabinet heads, who are often not civil servants, to positions of influence over ministers.

The interviewees also pointed out that the lack of bureaucratic professionalism at higher levels has trickled down to lower levels, leading to a decline in work quality. This erosion of professionalism is particularly evident at the department head level, which forms the backbone of Turkish public administration. The appointment of department heads, approved by the president, and the political party affiliation of the president, combined with vague appointment criteria, have increased partisanship and undermined professionalism.

Notably, the interviewees did not discuss the consequences of dismissal or the end of terms for appointed officials, which also affects the integrity of the bureaucracy. According to Decree No. 3 and DHFL No. 375, dismissed officials or those whose terms end have the right to return to their previous positions if they were experts or they are reassigned to administrative expert or researcher roles. Except for the right to return to their previous positions, these provisions essentially turn civil service into a spoils system, with researchers enjoying the rights of civil servants without contributing meaningfully to public service.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Like all states, Turkey has also been subject to a shift to neo-liberalism. Such a shift required reforms in public administration to initiate NPM-type reform. Initially, the institutional organizational framework was established through legislation. Public administration reforms from the 1980s till the transition to the presidential system addressed the establishment of this framework. However, the bureaucracy, particularly the senior administrators, remained intact despite the emphasis of NPM on managers and complaints from the resistance of bureaucracy, coined as a bureaucratic oligarchy.

The transition to the presidential system has been the latest shift to comply with neoliberalism and NPM. The managerial approach is closely linked to the executive, prioritizing efficiency and effectiveness, with a bureaucracy focused solely on policy implementation, thus separating politics from public administration (Rosenbloom, 1983, p. 224). In contrast, the political approach in parliamentary systems emphasizes responsiveness and accountability, with a more robust bureaucracy accountable to the legislative branch. While parliamentary systems allow for greater political involvement, presidential systems prioritize economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in promoting market interests. As a result, senior administrators in parliamentary systems are more likely to consider political factors than those in presidential systems.

The bureaucracy, particularly the senior administrators, has been the focus this time. Appointment procedures and principles gave the president wide authority to determine these procedures and principles. She is authorized to appoint anybody from the bureaucracy or outside the bureaucracy, anybody with 5 years of

professional experience and a university degree, without the involvement of any actor in the appointment process.

The literature has provided us with various insights about the effects of presidential appointment authority on public organizations and bureaucracy. Öztürk and Kırışık (2020) contend that these reforms will dismantle the traditional bureaucratic administration, particularly the strong state tradition that persisted from the Ottoman Empire through the Republic of Turkey. The streamlined process for appointing technocrats is expected to improve efficiency and effectiveness within public organizations (Kutlu, 2021). Under this new system, individuals who do not demonstrate efficient and effective performance will no longer be guaranteed government positions (Öztürk & Kırışık, 2020). The revised rules for appointing senior public officials are viewed as reducing the bureaucracy's influence, which had previously allowed it to impose its policies on elected officials. Sobacı and Köseoğlu (2018) argue that the president will prioritize merit in appointments, aiming to balance loyalty with qualifications. In this context, it is important to recognize the alignment of New Public Management (NPM) principles—specifically the emphasis managerialism, efficiency, effectiveness, and economy (3Es)—with efforts to eliminate bureaucratic oligarchy and subordinate public administration to political authority.

On the other hand, that public employment under the new governance system remains a partisan tool, favoring loyalists over merit-based appointments Adar and Seufert (2021, p. 35). Concerns have also emerged regarding the president's exclusive authority in hiring decisions, with customized criteria undermining merit (Gözler, 2019). Albayrak (2020) further notes the absence of safeguards for merit, arguing that the appointment process lacks differentiation between roles such as minister, deputy minister, and director-general, all of whom derive their authority from the president. This uniformity, he argues, diminishes efficiency and effectiveness. Under the parliamentary system, senior administrators were generally more responsive to diverse interests due to government accountability to the parliament (Albayrak, 2020; Rosenbloom, 1983).

However, the practitioners' considerations, i.e., the senior administrators, have yet to be studied. This study linked theory with practice and analyzed the presidential system through senior administrators' eyes. The findings of the interviews revealed points already brought up in the literature and presented some unmentioned issues. They also revealed the consequences of appointment procedures and principles. When these two categories of findings are re-considered, the findings indicated that the appointment principles and procedure in the presidential system have limited politics in public organizations, thus creating a senior officialdom based on the seniors' overall coherence with the interests of the president herself and her political party, with repercussions for bureaucracy and the market. This section will compare the findings with the literature and evaluate the appointment principles and procedures.

Table 6. Below summarizes the findings mentioned in the literature.

Politics-administration separation is underlined
Decrease in importance and value of bureaucratic knowledge and expertise
The unsuitability of the loose appointment criteria with proper functioning of bureaucracy- (undersecretary-ineffectiveness of deputy ministers)
Party member/leadership of the president leading to partisanship
Need for training for the externally appointed

To begin with, the interview findings confirmed that the politics and public administration separation is underlined. It was not a coincidence that the quest for the presidential system accompanied the neo-liberal transition in the 1980s in Turkey (Yılmaz, 2018). The bureaucratic transformation has aimed at abolishing its tutelage, diminishing the bureaucracy's influence, and confining it to technical competence. This endeavor entails profoundly restructuring the bureaucratic framework to cultivate an efficient, productive, and rational milieu senior officials oversee. Propounded justifications for the transition to the presidential system, the inertia, rigidity, and ideological difference of bureaucracy from the government coined as a bureaucratic oligarchy (Yılmaz Uçar, 2023; Akça, 2014; Demirelli, 2023b) and the need for efficiency, effectiveness, and economy. Öztürk and Kırışık (2020) assert

that the implementation of the presidential system will disrupt the longstanding bureaucratic oligarchy originating from the Ottoman Empire and persisting into the Republic of Turkey. The newly introduced regulations governing appointing senior public officials mitigate the influence of bureaucracy, which historically imposed its policies upon the elected, thereby constraining it within its innate boundaries.

The interviewees point out that the presidential system further limited the essence of politics by linking the senior officials with public service contractually, temporarily, and contingently. It has been a novelty for Turkish public administration in that public service was a vocation governed by principles of career and continuity of public services in the parliamentary system (Karasu, 2001). In other words, the senior administrators were permanent participants in public service. As the interviewees point out, public service as a vocation ensured autonomy from the politicians in the parliamentary system. However, the interviewees signified that in the presidential system, senior officials' exclusive responsibility towards the president for a certain period, the end of which denotes the end of public service and under undefined financial and performance terms different from career bureaucrats, has put its remark on restricting politics to implementing the president's choices and eliminating senior officials all together from the political sphere. Senior administrators prioritize serving short-term government interests over protecting civil service values, as Theakston argued (1999, as cited in Halligan, 2012).

The findings demonstrate that senior officialdom's contractual, temporal, and contingent nature has commodified public service. Therefore, politics is further detracted from public organizations. However, the interviews demonstrate that avoiding politics falls short of delivering its pledge. Turkish society, which was further de-politicized by commodifying public service provision and restricting politics in the presidential system, has not received the benefits yet.

This appointment procedure, which gives extraordinary power to the president to determine the scope of senior officials' appointments, both to appoint and set the conditions for appointment (İriş, 2021; Venice Commission, 2017) under contractual terms (Albayrak, 2000), provides leverage to penetrate public organizations. To

abolish politics, this group is formed outside traditional Turkish public bureaucracy (Demirelli, 2023a), characterized by career and continuity of public services (Karasu, 2001). In this frame, Decree No. 3 put all the political decision-making positions under the will and guidance of a single person (Güzelsarı, 2019). Since no other actor to allow for negotiation, advice, or consultation is involved in appointing and dismissing senior officials other than the president (Albayrak, 2020), the interviewees asserted that cronyism, nepotism, and partisanship dominate the appointment process more than ideological proximity as Adar and Seufert (2021) argued.

The interviewees admitted that although ideological proximity was among the criteria for appointing a senior administrator in the parliamentary system, the senior administrators were internally appointed or included in the permanent public service. They stated that the career principle secured the bureaucracy's supremacy in decision-making, and the system was more open to diversity; the likelihood of partisanship within a public organization was less pronounced. In other words, the senior officials and bureaucracy were more protected from the dangers of partisan politics in the parliamentary system

Besides, the empirical analysis points out that, contrary to expectations, the informal groups/cliques within senior ranks, which were accused of bureaucratic inertia (Öztürk & Kırışik,2020), have yet to be eliminated. Interviewees mentioned that groupings identify themselves by their proximity to the president's political party, her personality, and religious sects. Partisanship in the senior ranks is at odds with NPM (Nyland, 2020; Harvey, 2005).

Therefore, the interviewees held that senior officials ignore other views, ideas, or proposals and position themselves solely with the president. Politics grows further limited in public organizations and equated with the president's political party. Senior officials present themselves as partisan figures (Demirelli, 2023a), while political civil servants may exceed their official mandates to maintain their positions (Adar & Seufert, 2021). Such an upshot may translate into a loss in efficiency, effectiveness, public trust, and bureaucracy's capacity.

The interviewees point to the looseness of appointment criteria that disregards professionalism. Even though this looseness provides the president with high flexibility, 5-year working experience, and a university degree are too general to ensure sufficient professional experience. Thus, the bureaucracy's engagement in politics is restricted. Moreover, the opportunity for external appointments further limits the contribution of the bureaucracy to politics. The interviewees highlighted this limitation when they referred to the effects of removing undersecretaries, who represent the bureaucracy within the decision-making process. Their absence meant the extinction of one of the actors of the political sphere from politics. Undersecretaries had experience resolving conflicts, the parties' stakes to a policy, policies' plausible impacts on society, and the organization's capabilities, and were between the minister and the bureaucracy (Dik, 2023; Demirelli, 2023a). In other words, they were acquainted with the bureaucratic way of engaging in politics. Their knowledge of the status quo, that is, the equilibrium reached at the end of a political process, provided advisory services to the politicians. In a sense, they represented an agent of politics within an organization with the capacity to link bureaucratic politics with politicians.

Furthermore, the interviewee's reference to the loss of institutional memory after abolishing undersecretaries also meant the loss of knowledge of bureaucratic politics. By replacing undersecretaries with deputy ministers appointed by the president to assist (Ateş & Soner, 2021; İstikbal Çetinkaya, 2023), not to advise or negotiate with the ministers, one of the leading 'political' actors within an organization has been removed. The interviewees held that the lack of coordination among deputy ministries and knowledge of political decision-making processes incapacitating their interaction with the permanent bureaucracy does not allow for politics. Şahin & Erdoğan (2021) and Bölükbaşı (2021) argued that the ministers in the presidential system are the undersecretaries, and deputy ministers are undersecretaries in the parliamentary system. Nonetheless, the interviewees' statements do not validate this argument. Thus, Üstüner's (2023) likening the ministers to secretaries and the emphasis on their administrative functions rather than the political ones seem valid (Coşkun & Pank Yıldırım, 2021; Dik, 2023; Ateş&Soner, 2021; Kutlu, 2021; Aydın, 2023; Ateş & Soner, 2022; İriş, 2021). The interviewees' complaints about the

absence of undersecretaries in the presidential system refer to their criticism of the absence of politics. Their linking of the success, namely efficiency, and effectiveness, of public organizations to the existence of career senior bureaucrats also reveals the significance of bureaucratic professionalism. Their emphasis on induction/in-service training for the externally appointed also demonstrates the significance of bureaucratic knowledge in public organizations.

The interviewees confirmed that the absence of undersecretaries in the presidential system expedited the decision-making by eliminating the number of actors in the decision-making, thus, political consultation, which neoliberalism and NPM chastise (Harvey, 2005; Davies, 2014). They also substantiated that the ministers, deputy ministers, general directors, and deputies are all appointed (Albayrak, 2020; Demirelli, 2023a) to realize presidential orders. In other words, since the seniors, as agents carrying out their employer's decisions, are not in a position to negotiate the policies, restricting politics expedites decision-making. Thus, the interviewees implied that the NPM requirement for the autonomy of the senior managers (Shepherd, 2018) and centralization as a check on managers' autonomy (Urio, 2012) appears to be unimplemented in Turkey.

Moreover, according to the interviewees, the party member/leadership of the president further reduces politics to partisanship, which is evident in the appointments and performance evaluations of the senior officials, as claimed by the Venice Commission (2017).

For the interviewees, in parliamentary and presidential systems, it should be the government's right to select the people to work with, and this selection naturally involves ideological proximity to the candidates. However, interviewees' emphasis on the president's partisanship and looseness of appointment criteria cast doubts on seeking a balance between merit and ideological proximity. The seniors become partisan figures to get appointed. Consequently, according to the interviewees, the senior officials' partisan attitudes precede concerns for efficiency and effectiveness. Politics, in the way appreciated by the president and her political party, shape the views of the senior officials whose careers, either in bureaucracy or politics, depend on the president.

The interviews also brought up some issues not analysed in the literature. According to the interviewees, the oft-complained bureaucratic oligarchy and double executive have not been impediments for public organizations. They also highlighted that disregard for bureaucratic professionalism for the senior appointments has decreased professionalism in the rest of the bureaucracy. The interviewees underlined that the presidential system has been recently adopted, and the first and second terms of the presidential system might have differences. Some referred to a preference for bureaucratic experience and expertise for senior appointments.

The analysis of the interviews concluded that the appointment principles and procedures have made the senior administrators in the parliamentary system less open to politics in the presidential system than they were in the parliamentary system. The empirical analysis demonstrated that despite their ideological colors, senior administrators were more autonomous in their decisions, thanks to the career principle of Turkish public bureaucracy. Conversely, according to the empirical analysis, the presidential appointment powers have effectively equated the entire political sphere with the president and her political party.

Variations among interviewees' accounts enable comparisons. While most of the interviewees argued that the absence of performance or evaluation criteria that the senior officials know beforehand makes them more vulnerable to the party member/leader president, Interviewee 10, who is head of a state economic enterprise, related that she signed a letter of the pledge and promised to ensure the stability of price and supply in the market. This might result from the easiness of measuring the presidential performance criteria or the significance of the price stability for the president. Other interviewees worked for institutions that were not market agents. Therefore, it might not be possible to measure their performance. Nevertheless, within this thesis's limitations, whenever a senior's performance is measurable and the sector of the institution that the senior leads is a market actor, the president sets pre-determined performance criteria beforehand.

To sum up, the literature review and the empirical analysis indicate that the appointment procedure and principles limit politics further. They make the seniors

dependent upon the president for their public service and enumeration. Even though the quest for 3Es and the association of presidential systems with managerial values (Rosembloom, 1983p. 224), further separating politics and administration, may indicate the will to insert managerialism into Turkish public administration, the interviewees suggested that the appointment principles and procedures fail to establish efficient and effective public organizations. Partisanship has been dominant in appointments. However, state-party unification has not materialized. The interviewees did not mention that the senior administrators were members of the president's political party or selected from her political party's ranks.

Based on this finding, the limitation of politics and the creation of senior officialdom based on the seniors' overall coherence with the president's interests and her political party have repercussions for bureaucracy and the market. For bureaucracy, the appointment procedures and principles reduced its autonomy and disrupted its integrity. Concerning the market, they strengthened the president's and her political party's influence in the market, i.e. personal and partisan interference with the market.

New appointment procedures and principles have crippled the bureaucracy's autonomy, especially during the first term, since partisanship at all hierarchical levels at the expense of professionalism has increased. Such autonomy was warranted by the Constitution and career and merit principles of Public Personnel Law no. 657. Even though state-party unification has not been the case, partisan considerations of the seniors reflect on the recruitments, appointments, and assignments. Thus, the distance between the bureaucracy and the government that enabled autonomy has been lost. The public officials have overtly identified themselves with the president. Identification tacitly with the president's political party may be limited since public officials are prohibited from engaging in party politics. such an identification mean loss of autonomy at all levels of bureaucracy.

Such a loss of autonomy has also affected the peace of public employees. Those civil servants with ideological differences from the president have been alienated in the workplace. Those who act against the presidential preferences have been punished

with alienation, disciplinary proceedings, or mobbing. Hence, the bureaucracy has prioritized the president and her party's interests rather than the public welfare and the rule of law. Since the career and merit principles are invalid for senior appointments, the bureaucracy will overtly grow to be partisan to get appointed or some favors.

The appointment procedures and principles also affect the integrity of senior administrative bureaucracy. Senior administrators in the bureaucracy can have professional experiences in the public and/or private sectors. They can have different work ethics and principles and be accustomed to different work procedures. Thus, the group of senior administrators has various categories: those from the private sector and those from the public sector. Those appointed from the public sector are further divided: those appointed from the bureaucracy of public organizations and those appointed outside the bureaucracy of public organizations. Considering the lack of induction training for senior officials, there will not be uniformity in senior public administration and its culture. However, interaction among public policies requires collaboration among senior administrators or different public administrators. The uniformity of senior administrators, thanks to the similarity in professional background, familiarity with similar working procedures, and socialization in the same administrative culture, facilitates the interagency cooperation of senior administrators. On the contrary, a lack of uniformity impedes speaking the same language and can hinder such collaboration.

Concerning the market, rather than prioritizing economics over politics, presidential partisan considerations prevalent for appointment procedures and principles allow the president to influence the market. The Turkish state has initiated NPM-type initiatives such as outsourcing, privatization, and public-private partnerships. Such initiatives and state subsidies support the market actors. These actors, as parties to NPM-type initiatives and the financial, infrastructural, or other state resources, engage in contractual relations supervised by the senior administrators on behalf of the state. The president or her political party affects these contractual relations through their power over the senior administrators. In other words, the president prioritizes her personal or political party's interests by capturing the seniors in charge

of these practices. Thus, the president can influence the market through the seniors. The appointment principles and procedures also affect the market by allowing seniors to perpetuate their work in the market during public office. The appointment principles and procedures do not demand that senior administrators refrain from working in a similar sector during or after their tenure or be dismissed. These seniors become highly advantageous in accessing public resources. They may build networks and access disclosed information, projects, or programs during their office. They may utilize their network and information to the detriment of market competition. Since the president appoints the senior administrators, she will favor those senior administrators working for a market actor close to herself or her political party to the detriment of the market.

As the interviewees underlined, the PGS has been recently adopted, and the first and second terms of the PGS might have differences. Hence, future studies may focus on the differences between these terms, senior officials' profiles, and their effects on public organizations. The impacts of the future amendments to the PGS (if introduced) on seniors will be examined. Examining the externally appointed may also be possible to see if they could introduce managerial values within a public organization or a general directorate. Further studies will also concentrate on the interactions between senior officials and the TGNA and the distinctions between the parliamentary and presidential systems, as perceived by parliamentarians and different political parties. How civil servants regard the selection of senior officials in the parliamentary and presidential systems, whether the difference in the appointment procedure has changed their views, and how they do their jobs may also be analyzed. Furthermore, the literature on senior administrators from the parliamentary system emphasizes the significance of their training, and the interviewees underscore the necessity of induction or in-service training for senior officials. Therefore, one can also examine the necessity and content of such training in the presidential system.

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Legislation

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

PARLAMENTER SİSTEMDE VE CUMHURBAŞKANLIĞI HÜKÜMET SİSTEMİNDE ÜST KADEME KAMU YÖNETİCİLERİNİN ATANMALARI VE SİYASET

Türkiye'nin Temmuz 2018'de Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi'ne (CHS) geçmesiyle birlikte bürokratik oligarşi ve vesayet, bürokrasinin günün dinamizmine ayak uyduramaması, kamu yönetiminin dönüşümünün gerekçeleri arasında gösterilmekteydi. Topluma elitist bir algıyla dayatılan modernitenin artık Türkiye'ye hizmet etmediği ve kalkınmayı engellediği savunuldu. Cumhurbaşkanı da Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sisteminin gerekçesi olarak hem bu oligarşik yapıya mücadele etmeyi hem de kamu yönetiminde verimlilik, etkinlikte arttırmayı gösterdi. Ancak, hükümet neden başka bir çözüm önermeyerek Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi'ne geçişi uygun gördü? Bürokratik oligarşiye karşı mücadele, 20 yıllık Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi iktidarından sonra Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi'nin ilk günlerinde üst düzey kamu görevlilerinin atama usullerinin derhal değiştirilmesinin tek nedeni miydi? Gezi Parkı protestoları da de siyasi gündeme damgasını vurmuş ve hükümetin taleplerine daha saygılı olan kişilerin atanmasını gerektirmiş olabilir. FTÖ/PDY terör örgütü ile mücadele, atama usullerinin değişmesinde rol oynamış olabilir, çünkü böyle bir mücadele hükümete sadık üst düzey yöneticiler gerektirmektedir. Ancak olağanüstü hal nedeniyle hükümet, terör örgütü üyelerini görevden almak ve yerlerine sadık yetkililer getirmek için mükemmel bir konumdaydı. Bu eleştirel düşünce çizgisi, bizi üst düzey yetkililerin neden CHS'nin odağı olduğunu sorgulamaya yönlendirip bu tezin araştırma sorusu ortaya çıkmaktadır: "*CHS'nin üst düzey kamu yöneticilerinin cumhurbaşkanı tarafından atanmasını, Türkiye'nin ekonomi politikası ve diğer anayasa değişiklikleri*

göz önünde bulundurularak nasıl açıklanabilir ve bunun doğrudan etkisi ne olmuştur?" Araştırma sorusuna cevap vermek için, üst düzey yetkililerin tanımıyla başlamak anlamlıdır. Literatür taramasında ilk ilginç nokta, üst düzey kamu yöneticileri/görevlileri/hizmetlileri için net bir tanımın bulunmaması; sadece işlevlerinin açıklanmış olmasıdır. Bu kişilerin kurumların en üst düzey karar vericileri olarak betimlenmeleri, hangi kademeye kadarki yöneticilerin üst düzey kamu yöneticisi olarak değerlendirilebileceğini belirlemekte yetersiz kalmaktadır. Ayrıca fonksiyonel tanımların zaman içinde değiştiği ve farklı değerler içerdiği anlaşılmaktadır. Bu bağlamda öncelikle üst düzey kamu yöneticisi kavramının nasıl ortaya çıktığı ele alınmıştır. Zira sorgulama nesnesinin tanımlanmadan, bu nesnenin epistemolojisi ve ontolojisi ele alınamayacaktır.

Bu sorgulama bizi, toplumsal çatışmaların siyasal süreçlerin ve kamu yönetiminin temeli olması nedeniyle toplumsal çatışmaların nasıl ele alındığını anlamak için en temel ve temel soru olan "Siyaset nedir?" sorusuna yönelmektedir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma siyasetin tanımı üzerine bir değerlendirme ile başlamaktadır. Alan yazında farklı bakış açıları çerçevesinde farklı tanımlar yapılmaktadır; ortak iyi kavramı üzerindeki çatışmalarla karakterize edilen siyaset, güç veya süreç için bir mücadele olabilir. Çalışmanın bir sonraki sorusu, siyasetin neden ekonomiden ayrı olduğuyla ilgilidir, ki bu da toplumdaki kaynakların ve ürünlerin (yeniden) dağılımına yönelik çözümleri belirlemeye çalıştığı için politik olmalıdır (Warren, 1999). Bu çalışmada, Heywood' (2013) yaptığı siyaset tanımı çerçevesindeki değerlendirmelere yer vermektedir. Heywood'a (2013, 32s.) göre;

"Siyaset, insanların içinde yaşadıkları genel kuralları koydukları, korudukları ve değiştirdikleri faaliyetlerdir. Bu nedenle, bir yandan çeşitlilik ve çatışmanın varlığıyla, diğer yandan işbirliği yapma ve kolektif hareket etme isteğiyle ayrılmaz bir şekilde bağlantılı, esasen sosyal bir faaliyetlerdir. Siyaset, başarıdan ziyade bir çatışma çözümü arayışı olarak görülmelidir çünkü tüm çatışmalar çözülmez veya çözülemez."

Çalışma, devletin içinden çıktığı siyaset ve ekonomi arasındaki ilişkiyi anladıktan sonra, üst düzey yetkililerin içinde bulunduğu kamu yönetiminin siyasi bağlamını ortaya koymaktadır. Siyaset ve ekonomi ayrılığı çerçevesinde ortaya çıkan yapay siyaset ve kamu yönetimi ayırımında, bu iki kurumun birbiriyle ilişki kurması

kaçınılmaz olduğundan üst kademe kamu yöneticileri siyaset ve kamu yönetici arasında aracı konumundadır. Neoliberalizm ve kamu yönetimi işletmeciliği ile de kamu örgütlerinin piyasa değerlerine göre şekillendirilip siyasetten uzaklaştırılmasında üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin daha etkili olmalarını öngörmektedir.

Bu çerçevede çalışma, devletin güçlerini, aktörlerini ve işlevlerini analiz eden liberal ve eleştirel devlet teorileri olmak üzere iki rakip teori ile ilerlemektedir. Liberal teoriler, devleti, kamu yönetimini veya üst düzey kamu görevlilerini açıklamak için yetersizdir, çünkü bu kavramları herhangi bir geçmişi olmayan rasyonel yapılar olarak oldukları gibi kabul ederler. Liberal teoriler, ekonomi ve normatif boyutları (Jahn, 2013) ve siyaseti etkileyen tarihsel ve toplumsal dinamikleri dikkate almadan, siyasete ev sahipliği yapan kurumlara odaklanır. Bu nedenle, sadece mevcut durumu analiz edebilmekte, ancak bu durumun çıkış nedenlerini açıklayamamaktadır. Bu çerçevede, üst düzey kamu yöneticilerinin diğer aktörlerle ilişkileri daha fazla sorgulamadan oldukları şekilde ele almaktadır. Üst kademe yöneticilerinin işlevleri açıklanmış olsa da, bu yöneticilerinin meydana getirdikleri sistemin sonuçları göz ardı edilir. Bu nedenle, bu teoriler, CHS ile üst düzey kamu yöneticilerinin atanmasındaki değişimin yansımalarına tatmin edici cevaplar vermekten uzaktır.

Bu sınırlılıklar, arayışı eleştirel devlet teorilerine yöneltmiştir. Bu teoriler, sosyal, tarihsel ve ekonomik değişimleri, belirli bir toplumda ve zamanda yaygın olan üretim tarzındaki değişikliklere uygun olarak siyasi alanda, yani devlette değişime yol açtığını düşünür. Üst düzey kamu yönetimi kavramı, aslında kapitalizmin getirdiği ekonomik-siyasal alanların ayrışmasının bir sonucu olan siyaset ve kamu yönetimi ayrımının yapılamaması nedeniyle ortaya çıkmıştır. Siyasal alanla özdeşleşen devlet, bu ayrışmadan ortaya çıkmıştır ve genel olarak toplumsal düzeni sağlamak ve piyasa ekonomisinin işleyişini kolaylaştırmakla görevlidir. Eleştirel teoriler, kapitalizmin siyasi alanı nasıl birbirlerinin müdahalesi yasak olan bileşenlere böldüğünü gösterir. Sosyal politikaların yapılmasının sorumluluğunu devletin omuzlarına yükleyerek toplumu depolitize eden kapitalizm, politikaların yapımını ve uygulanmasından sorumlu yapıları da böler ve uygulamanın, yani kamu bürokrasisinin politikacılara tam itaat etmesini ister. Kapitalizmin mevcut evresinde, yani neoliberalizmde

devletin ekonomik alandan görelî özerkliği kontrol altına alınmış, siyasal alanın bir öznesi olarak kamu yönetimi yeni kamu işletmeciliği ilkelerine maruz kalmıştır. Bu çerçevede, eleştirel devlet teorileri, neoliberalizm ve yeni kamu işletmeciliğine atıfta bulunarak üst düzey yetkililerin atamalarında değişiklik yapılmasının nedenlerini daha iyi açıklamaktadır.

Devlet erkleri arasındaki güç dağılımının nasıl olacağını belirleyen hükümet sistemleri, kimin çıkarlarına ve değerlerine öncelik verileceğini belirlediğinden, üst düzey kamu yöneticileri üzerindeki etkileri göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. Parlamenter sistemde, üst düzey kamu yöneticileri toplumdaki farklı çıkarlara daha saygılıyken, başkanlık sistemlerinde kamu yöneticileri farklılıkları görmezden gelme şansına sahip olurlar. Bu nedenle, parlamenter sistemler sosyal düzenin sağlanmasında etkiliyken, başkanlık sistemleri işletmecilik değerleriyle eşleştirilmiş bir hüküm sistemi olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Rosenbloom, 1983). Ayrıca, başkanlık sistemleri, merkezileşme, siyasi çatışmaları göz ardı etme ve yönetsel değerleri tercih etme sayesinde yeni kamu işletmeciliğinin yaygınlaşmasını kolaylaştırır. Yürütmenin başı olarak siyasi atamaları yapma yetkisinin başkana ait olmasının olağan olduğuna yapılan vurgu da neoliberalizmin ve yeni kamu işletmeciliğindeki işletmecilik ruhuna uygun düşmektedir. Bu çalışma aynı zamanda hükümet sistemlerinin yeni kamu işletmeciliği ile ilişkisini ve üst düzey kamu yöneticileri üzerindeki yansımalarını da ele almaktadır.

Teorik bir çerçeve oluşturulduktan sonra çalışma dikkatini Türkiye'ye çevirmektedir. Türkiye, neoliberalizmin ve yeni kamu işletmeciliğinin birçok özelliğini bünyesinde barındırırken, kamu bürokrasisini dönüştürecek kamu kuruluşlarındaki işletmecilik bileşeni eksiktir. İlginçtir ki, hükümet siteminde değişim arayışı, Türkiye'de neoliberal dönüşümün başladığı ve ekonomi politikaları, laiklik vurgusu ve etno-milliyetçi temelleri içeren Kemalist modernleşme (Kasaba, 1997) eleştirinin başladığı 1980'lerde neoliberalizme geçişle birlikte hızlanmıştır. Başkanlık sistemi benzeri bir sisteme geçiş için cevaplar bulunmasında bu durum bir ipucu olabilir. Bu nedenle, üst düzey kamu yöneticilerinin atama usullerindeki değişiklikleri neoliberalizm ve yeni kamu işletmeciliği göz önünde bulundurarak yorumlamak mantıklıdır. Neoliberal otoriterlik, bürokratik oligarşiye karşı mücadele (Türkiye'nin

elitist merkez ve çevre arasındaki bölünmesinin bir yansıması), çift başlı yürütme vb. kavramlar, uluslararası bağlamla birlikte tüm tarihsel sosyal ve ekonomik gelişmeleri dikkate almamaktadır. Çalışmada, CHS'ye geçişin nedenlerini anlamak için, 2011'den itibaren Türkiye'de hakim olan ekonomi politiğinin kısa bir açıklaması sunulmaktadır. Açıklamalardan, başkanlık sistemi çağrılarının neoliberalizmin ilgili olduğu sonucu elde edilmektedir. Bilindiği gibi, özelleştirme, kamu-özel ortaklıkları, bağımsız düzenleyici kurumlar ve kamu kurumlarında sözleşmeli personel istihdamı neoliberalizme elverişli yeni kamu işletmeciliği uygulamalarıdır ve Türkiye'de de bu uygulamalar gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bununla birlikte, neoliberalizm güçlü bir yürütmeyi zorunlu kılmaktadır. Türkiye'de iç dinamikler bu gerekliliğe katkıda bulunmuş veya yürütmenin güçlendirilmesini meşrulaştırmak için bir bahane olarak sunulmuş olabilir. CHS, neoliberalleşmenin ve yeni kamu işletmeciliğinin yaygınlaşmasının yeni bir aşamasıdır. Bu aşama, bir bürokratin, özel sektördeki bir çalışanın sahip olduğu değerler ve iş yapma biçimine uygun olarak dönüştürülmesini, yasalara ve geçmiş uygulamalara bağlılığın daha az vurgulanmasını ve statükonun değişmesini gerektirir. Üst düzey kamu yöneticileri, Türk kamu kurumları içinde bu dönüşümün sağlanmasında çok önemli bir rol oynamaktadır.

Bu çerçevede, üst düzey kamu görevlilerinin atanma usul ve esaslarında meydana gelen değişiklik, merkezi idarenin ve personelinin dönüşümünün bir aşamasıdır. Bu çalışma, etkilerini daha iyi ortaya koyabilmek için yasal değişiklikleri parlamenter sistemle karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemektedir. Çalışmada 3 sayılı Kamu Kurum ve Kuruluşlarında Üst Düzey Kamu Yöneticisinin Atanması ve Atama Usulleri Hakkında Cumhurbaşkanlığı Kararnamesi'nin 1 ve 2 sayılı Cetvellerinde belirtilen üst düzey kamu görevlileri incelenmiştir. Anayasa Mahkemesi, Kararname'nin Kararname'nin 2 sayılı Cetvelinde yer alanların atanmasını onaylama yetkisini iptal etmiş olsa da, Kararname'nin Resmi Gazete'de yayımlanmasından dokuz ay sonra yürürlüğe gireceği ve bu sürenin bu çalışmanın yazıldığı zamanda Kararname yürürlükte olduğu için bu çalışmada 2 sayılı Cetvel kapsamındaki atamalara da yer verilmiştir. Kararnamenin ikinci ve üçüncü bölümlerinde Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri, Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı ve Sahil Güvenlik Komutanlığı'ndaki üst kademelere kamu yöneticilerinin de Cumhurbaşkanı tarafından atanacakları düzenlenmiş olsa da askeri kurumlara yapılan bu atamalar bu çalışmada incelenmemiştir. Anılan askeri

kurumlar doğrudan kamu hizmeti vermemektedir ve bu kurumların üst düzey yöneticilerinin atama usullerinin 3 No'lu Kararname'de yer alması neoliberalizm ve yeni kamu işletmeciliğiyle doğrudan ilgili değildir.

Parlamentar sistemde ve CHS'de yaygın olan atama usulleri incelendiğinde, 1982 Anayasası'nda yapılan değişikliklerle ayrı bir üst düzey kamu yöneticileri grubu oluşturulduğu ve Anayasa'ya eklendiği görülmüştür. Yürütme organının güçlendirilmesine paralel olarak, farklı siyasi aktörlerin müdahaleleri önlenerek üst düzey kamu görevlileri güçlendirilmiştir. Başka anlatımla, üst düzey kamu görevlilerinin manevra alanı, neoliberalleşmenin ve yeni kamu işletmeciliğinin hızlanmasına katkı sağlayacak şekilde genişlemiştir. Anayasa değişikliklerinin Türk kamu yönetimi üzerinde yaptığı en büyük etki de cumhurbaşkanına tanınan üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin atanması olmuştur. TBMM'nin üst düzey kamu görevlileri üzerindeki baskısını zayıflatan bilgi edinme ve denetim yollarının etkisinin azalması, cumhurbaşkanının yürütmeye ilgili konularda kararname çıkarma yetkisi, bütçe sürecinde yürütmenin etkin hale gelmesi, meclise bağlı Kamu Denetçiliği Kurumu, Sayıştay gibi organların denetiminin zayıflaması, üst kademe kamu yöneticileri grubu çalışmalarında doğrudan ve sadece Cumhurbaşkanı'nın yönlendirmesine tabi olmalarına katkı sağlamıştır. Cumhurbaşkanı'nın yargı organına yaptığı atamalar, hakim ve savcılarının idari işler üzerindeki etkisini sınırlamaktadır. Parlamentonun yürütme organı üzerindeki etkisinin ve yasama kapasitesinin güçlendirildiği iddia edilse de, parlamentodaki çoğunluk partisinin lideri de olması beklenecek cumhurbaşkanının partisiyle ilişkisi, TBMM'nin üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin diğer toplumsal talepleri, hukukun üstünlüğünü veya statükoyu dikkate almaya sevk etmesindeki rolü hakkında soru işaretlerine neden olmaktadır.

CHS'de üst düzey kamu görevlileri ile kamu hizmeti arasındaki ilişki geçicidir. Bu geçici ilişki dışarıdan atamalarda sözleşmeye sağlanır ya da bürokrasi içinden atananların ise atanmayla birlikte kariyer ilkesiyle bağı kesilir. Böylece kamu hizmeti bir meslek değil, arazi bir iş haline gelmiştir. Kamu hizmetini bir meslek olarak görmeyen bu geçicilik, üst düzey kamu görevlisinin konumunun ve kamu hizmetinin metalaştırıldığına işaret eder; üst düzey kamu görevliliği kadro ve pozisyonları, özel sektörde işçi emeğinin metalaştırılması gibi piyasa kurallarına tabidir. Yeni kamu

iřletmecilięi ile metalařtırılmasına bařlanan kamu hizmetleri, kamu ynetiminin ve onun merkezi konularının metalařtırılması ile karřı karřıyadır.

Ancak atamadan sorumlu tek makamın cumhurbaşkanı olması, atama kriterlerindeki gevřeklik (niversite mezunu ve beř yıllık iř tecrbesi), performans deęerlendirme ve TBMM gibi bařka bir organın onayı veya rızası gibi objektif bir hesap verebilirlik mekanizmasının bulunmaması, Cumhurbaşkanı'nın st dzey kamu grevlilerini herhangi bir gerekeyle grevden alma ayrıcalığı bu takdir yetkisine iliřkin řpheleri artırmaktadır. Trkiye gibi gl parti disiplini ve derin sosyal ve siyasi blnmelerin olduęu bir lkede, cumhurbaşkanının parti yesi/liderliği ile birleřtięinde, st dzey kamu yneticilerini atama konusundaki geniř takdir yetkisi partizanlığa, kayırmacılıęa veya adam kayırmacılıęa dnşebilmektedir.

Buna ek olarak, yeni kamu iřletmecilięi prensiplerine uygun olarak, CHS, brokrasinin st dzeylerdeki daimi temsilci pozisyonunu, yani msteřarları ortadan kaldırarak, brokrasinin kamu kurumlarındaki karar alma dzeyindeki rolne son vermiřtir. Bu kiřilerin siyasi karar alma mekanizmalarının bir parası olmaları, mevcut iktidar blokları, toplumsal dzenin korunmasını saęlayacak mevzuat ve uzun yılların deneyim ve uzmanlığı sonucu oluřan brokratik norm ve usuller hakkında bilgi sahibi olmaları, kamu kuruluřlarının rgtlenme ve koordinasyonundaki rolleri, yerlerine çoęunlukla brokratik bilgi ve uzmanlıktan yoksun bakan yardımcılarının atanması, bakan yardımcılarının grev alanlarının kısıtlı olması nedeniyle kamu kurumlarında tam koordinasyonu saęlayamamıř, saęlayamamakta, bakanın iř ykn azaltan msteřarların eksiklięini giderememektedir. Bylece kamu kurumlarında verimlilik ve etkinlik artmak yerine azalmaktadır.

Bu gerekelerle, bu alıřma, st dzey yetkililerin atama prosedrlerindeki deęiřiklięin, neoliberalizm ve yeni kamu iřletmecilięine iřaret ettięi gibi, Trk kamu brokrasisi iinde ayrı bir grup oluřturduęunu ve kamu hizmeti sunumunu iřletmecilik ilkesi gereęi metalařtırdığını varsaymaktadır. Anayasa deęiřikliklerinden bazıları, st kamu yneticilerinin iřletmecilik deęerlerini yaymasını kolaylařtırmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, cumhurbaşkanının siyasi parti yelięi, amacı bu deęerlerin yaygınlařtırılması olup olmadığı konusunda řphe uyandırmaktadır.

Üst düzey kamu görevlilerindeki bürokratik deneyim ve uzmanlığa sahip olmamaları da hedeflenen sonuçların elde edilmesine yardımcı olmamaktadır.

Çalışmada alan yazıda yapılan açıklamaların pratikle örtüşüp örtüşmediği veya alan yazınca fark edilmemiş hususların bulunup bulunmadığı değerlendirmek üzere nitel araştırma yöntemi benimsenmiştir. Literatürdeki bulguları uygulama ile karşılaştırmak için farklı kamu kuruluşlarından on üst düzey yetkiliyle açık uçlu soruların sorulduğu mülakatlar yapılmıştır. Parlamenter sistemle karşılaştırmaya imkân vermek için, görüşülen kişiler parlamenter sistemde üst düzey kamu yöneticiliği yapmış ve CHS sırasında üst düzey görevlerde bulunmuş veya halihazırda bulunmakta olanlar arasından seçilmiştir. Başka bir deyişle, görüşülen kişiler 3 No'lu Kararname'nin I sayılı Cetvelindeki kadro ve pozisyonlarında bulunmuş veya bulunmakta olan kişilerdir. Açık uçlu sorular, CHS'nin üst düzey kamu görevlileri üzerindeki etkileri hakkında görüşleri de içermektedir. Bu görüşmelerde görüşülen kişilere, siyaset ve kamu yönetimi ilişkilerinde yaşanan değişimler, karşılaştıkları zorluklar, CHS'nin sunduğu bu yeni atama usulünün hızlı karar alma, koordinasyon ve bürokrasinin teknik bilgisinden yararlanmaya katkı sağlayıp sağlamadığı konusundaki görüşleri sorulmuştur. Mülakatlarda, bürokrasinin yetersiz olarak görülemeyeceği, siyasi olarak atananlar için bürokrasi bilgi ve tecrübesinin doğru kararlar almak için istisari işlevi haiz olduğu ve kurumsal başarı için bürokrasinin elzemliği belirtilmiştir. Ayrıca, CHS ile atama işlemleri dahil tüm karar alma süreçlerinde hız kazanıldığı, ancak bakanlıklarda parlamenter sistemdeki müsteşarlık makamının kaldırılmasıyla idari işlem ve eylemlerin kalitesinde, etkinlik ve verimliliğinde düşme yaşandığı da mülakatlarda belirtilen ortak bir noktadır. Karar alma sürecindeki aktörlerin azalması işlemlerin ivedilikle tamamlanması kolaylaştırmaktadır. Ancak, bu hız, siyasi kararlar alan kamu kurumlarının özel sektörden farklı olarak pek çok unsuru bir arada düşünmesi gerekliliğini göz ardı ettiğinden, etkinlik ve verimlik artışına dönmemektedir. Dolayısıyla, üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin bürokratik bilgi ve tecrübeye sahip olması kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarının etkin ve verimli çalışmasına katkı sağlamaktadır. Dışarıdan atanlara görevlerine başlamalarından bürokrasinin usul ve esasları hakkında bir eğitim verilmemesi gerektiği de katılımcılar tarafından önerilmektedir. Alan yazıda belirtilenlerden farklı olarak cumhurbaşkanının üst kademe kamu yöneticisi

atamalarını tek başına yapmadığı katılımlarca belirtilmiştir. Cumhurbaşkanı, kendisinin kritik gördüğü kadro ve pozisyonlara yapacağı atamaları resen yapmakta iken, diğer atamalarda bakanların birlikte çalışacakları kişileri belirleyebilmeleri konusunda takdir yetkisi tanımaktadır. Katılımcılar ayrıca 3 sayılı Kararname'nin 2 sayılı Cetvelindeki daire başkanlarının Türk kamu yönetiminin temel taşı ve bir kurumda yapılan teknik işlerin mutfağı olduğunu belirterek atanmalarında aranacak kriterlerin oldukça geniş ve yeterli kamu tecrübesini sağlamaktan uzak olması nedeniyle bu seviyelerdeki iş ve işlemlerinin kalitesinde de bir düşme olduğu katılımcılarca gözlemlenmiştir. Bunlarla birlikte, yeni kamu işletmeciliği kamusal değerlerin kamu yönetiminde yerini bireysel değerlere bırakacağını değerlendirmesi, mülakat katılımcılarının belirttiği üzere Türk kamu yönetiminde kamu çalışanlarının kendilerini cumhurbaşkanının siyasi partisiyle özdeşleştirmeleri yoluyla gerçekleşmektedir. Ayrıca, CHS'de üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin karar alma konusunda inisiyatif kullanmayıp bu sorumluluğu bir üst makama havale etmeleri, tüm kararların merkeze aktarılmasına ve merkezin doğru ve hızlı karar verme sürecinin olumsuz etkilenmesine neden olmuştur. Görevden alınan kamu yöneticilerinin kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarındaki araştırmacı kadro ve pozisyonlarına atanmaları, yeni kamu işletmeciliğinin kamu harcamalarının azaltılması ilkesine uymamaktadır. Görevden alınanların uzman kadro ve pozisyonlarına atanabilmeleri de kamu yönetiminin kariyer ve liyakat ilkeleriyle uyumsuzdur.

CHS, cumhurbaşkanının atama yetkisi yoluyla kamu hizmeti sunumunu metalaştırıp bürokrasiyi Heywood'un (2013) tanımladığı şekildeki siyasetten uzaklaştırarak siyasetin özünü daha da sınırladı. Türkiye'de parlamenter sistemde de siyaset sınırlandırılmış, her kapitalist devlette olduğu gibi siyaset tartışmasız bir şekilde piyasaya karşı sorumluydu. Liberal demokrasinin ilkelerine tabi olarak, toplumsal düzeni önceliyor gibi görünen parlamenter sistem, siyasi alanda vatandaşlık temelinde bir eşitliği vurgularken, ekonomik alanda eşitsizliğin kural olduğu bir sistemdi. Liberal demokratik kurumlarına siyasi katılım da belirli şartlara tabiydi. Bununla birlikte, TBMM'nin, kamu yönetiminin ve hükümetin birbirleriyle daha iç içe olmaları ve yargının bir bağımsız hakem olarak hareket etmeye daha uygun olarak üst düzey yöneticileri hukukun üstünlüğü ile kuşatabilmesi nedeniyle, siyasi alan, piyasaya elverişli biçimde bile siyaset için CHS'den daha elverişliydi.

Parlamentar sistemde kamu hizmetinin kariyer ve kamu hizmetlerinin sürekliliği ilkelerinin geçerli olduğu bir meslek olması Türk kamu yönetiminin temeli idi. Parlamentar sistemde, kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarının üst kademelerindeki yöneticiler, her ne kadar nihayetinde hükümet politikalarını uygulanmakta görevli olsalar da politikacılardan daha özerkti. Bürokrasi, siyasi alanda bir aktör olarak siyasete dahi olma gücüne sahipti. Diğer yandan, CHS’de siyasetin kapitalist üretim biçimindeki sınırlılığı parlamentar sisteme göre daha fazladır. Üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin kamu hizmetiyle olan bağının sözleşmeli, geçici ve koşullu hale getirilmesiyle bu kısıtlılık güçlendirilmektedir. Üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin cumhurbaşkanına karşı münhasıran sorumlu olmaları, bu sorumluluğun bir süre sonra sona ermesi ve kariyer bürokratlarından farklı mali ve performans koşulları altında istihdam edilmeleri, siyasetin cumhurbaşkanının tercihlerini uygulamakla sınırlandırılması ve üst düzey yetkililerin siyasi alandan tamamen uzaklaştırılması kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarında siyasetin iyice daraltılmasına sebep olmaktadır.

Bu çalışma, genel olarak CHS’ye ve özel olarak üst kademe kamu yöneticilerine bütüncül bir bakış açısıyla bakılmasına katkı sağlamaktadır. Çalışma, kamu yönetimi ve bürokrasiyi, siyaset ve ekonomi arasındaki ayrışma ve etkileşimin mantıksal uzantıları olarak ele alarak, üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin cumhurbaşkanı tarafından atanmasını başkanlık sisteminin doğrudan bir sonucu olarak ele almaktan kaçınmaktadır. Cumhurbaşkanının üst kademe kamu yöneticilerini tek başına atama ayrıcalığının ne anlama geldiğini, parlamentar sistemden CHS’ye geçiş nedenlerini ve sonuçlarını nasıl tamamladığını açıklamaktadır. Çalışmada ayrıca CHS’nin özelliklerinin ve cumhurbaşkanının atama yetkisinin Türk kamu yönetimi üzerindeki yansımaları da ele alınmaktadır. Çalışma, sistemin mevcut işleyişindeki eksiklikleri ortaya koyarak üst kademe kamu yöneticileri atamaları için yeni bir düzenleme yapılmasında yardımcı olabilir. Bu çalışma, üst düzey yetkililerin kamu kuruluşları üzerindeki etkilerinin gelecekteki analizleri için referans materyali olarak hizmet etmeyi ve atama usullerinde değişiklik yapılması durumunda karşılaştırmalara olanak sağlamayı da hedefler. Çalışmadaki ampirik analiz, değişimin nesnelere nasıl deneyimlendiğini anlamak için değerlidir.

Mülakat katılımcılarının belirttiği gibi, CHS yakın zamanda kabul edilmiştir. Seçim dönemleriyle birbirinden ayrılan birinci ve ikinci dönemleri arasında kamu yönetimi

uygulamaları açısından farklılıklar gösterebilir. Bu nedenle, gelecekteki çalışmalar bu dönemler arasındaki farklılara, üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin profillerine ve kamu kuruluşları üzerindeki etkilerine odaklanabilir. CHS’de değişiklik yapılması halinde bu değişikliklerin nedenleri ve üst düzey yetkililer için yansımalarının incelenmesi de mümkündür. Ayrıca, bir kamu kurumu veya genel müdürlük içindeki üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin etkilerinin, yeni kamu işletmeciliğinin kurumlara taşınmasında etkili olup olmadıklarının ve özel sektörden yapılan atamalarla verimliliği ve etkinliğin artırılıp artırılmadığının incelenmesi de mümkün olabilir. Daha sonraki çalışmalarda ayrıca, üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin TBMM ile ilişkileri ve milletvekilleri veya farklı siyasi partiler için üst kademe kamu yöneticileriyle ilişkilerinde parlamenter sistemde ve CHS’de arasında farklılık olup olmadığı, varsa sonuçlarının neler olduğunu ele almak da mümkün olabilir. Kamu görevlilerinin parlamenter sistemde CHS’de üst kademe kamu yöneticilerinin seçimine nasıl baktıkları ve atama usullerindeki farklılığın görüşlerini ve görevlerini yapma biçimlerini değiştirip değiştirmediği de analiz edilebilir. Ayrıca, parlamenter sistem döneminde geçerli olan üst kademe kamu yöneticileriyle ilgili literatür, eğitimlerinin önemine işaret ettiğinden ve çalışma kapsamında görüşülen kişiler de özellikle özel sektörden atanan üst kademe kamu yöneticileri için göreve başlama/hizmet içi eğitim gerekliliğini vurguladıklarından, CHS’de bu tür bir eğitimin gerekliliği ve içeriği de incelenebilir.

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