

Study on perception of primary school principals towards their own management styles (Case study: Manisa Province)

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Abstract

The present study focuses on evaluation of perception of primary school principals in Manisa Province towards their own management styles by using screening model. The Data of the study was accessed by using stratified sampling method and the data collection was accomplished by applying “scale of management styles adopted by primary school principals”. Furthermore, the population of the study included all principals who served in primary schools based in provincial center, towns, counties and villages of Manisa Province during 2012-2013 academic years, among them 247 principals were selected as a sample. The result indicated that (a) Principals in Manisa Province overwhelmingly use autocratic management style, followed by protective and then by supportive management styles (b) All the management styles adopted by principals in Manisa Province differ significantly regarding gender variable (c) In Manisa Province, female principals exercise collaborative management more than male principals do and (d) In Manisa Province, male principals exercise more autocratic management and less protective management compared to female principals.

Key Words: *management style, management skills, principal, information society, change*

1. Introduction

Currently, information and globalization cause quick changes in all area of life specially work life and organizations [25], which in turn influence a wide range of important organizational structures including organizational culture and climate, dependency, leadership, superior-subordinate relations and team communication[30]. In the information society, along with the social structures, the social institutions also undergo

these rapid changes. One of the most important social institutions of information society is education [4] since “school” is at the center of all changes taking place in educational area [2]. Management styles adopted and exercised by principals who are the cultural architects of changes taking place in educational institutions, can be both a prohibitive force as well as a driving force for these changes. It is believed that a potentially change-causing management style adopted by a manager is highly influenced by his or her worldview.

Moreover, in the world where information can emerge as a basic power, the management style exercised in the schools can play a key role in achieving this power. Drucker argued that there are things that only have to be taught and are not learnable in any other way; whereas there are things that only have to be learned and are not teachable [18]. Development in modern education inevitably will be oriented by quality, productivity and happiness of human being. In information era, the effective use of information will change the individuals as well as their life style [31]. In this context, management style plays an important role in changing the life style of individuals.

A manager, by definition, is a person in an organization who organizes the workers, gives orders, directs activities, and provides coordination and control in order to fulfill the desirable goals of the organization [19]. Furthermore, management style forms the structure of authority in the organization. Structure of authority is developed in order

to align the activities of the managers with their goals [9]. When management styles are exercised in an information society where information is considered as the basic power, goals of the managers become readily achievable. Curiously, schools are the cultural environments where these goals are fulfilled.

School, is an institution inside the society where the concept of education has rolled into one with educational service, and it is a production-oriented organization and the most functional part of education system [1]. Moreover, the most typical qualifications required for a principal in order to optimally fulfill his/her management style include developing organizational structure, policy making, producing new values, managerial functions, educational programming, student services, budget and general services, personnel affairs, capabilities on management processes, decision making, programming, organizing, communication, practicing, coordination and evaluation [13].

In an organization, there is a relation between the managerial behaviors of the managers and the effective and productive activity of the personnel [12]. Management deals with human being, who is an extremely variable entity. Great number of organizations has been established in order to cater for limitless needs of human beings, while management has invariably become an indispensable factor for their optimal functioning [41]. Function of the management is to make efficient use of human and material resources in the way of scientific and social progress of the organization [40].

In addition, management of the organizations is not achieved by a single well-defined right way. Organizations try to align the capabilities and qualifications of the individuals with the goals of the organization [32]. This alignment is achieved through the compatibility of information, skills, and role behaviors of the personnel with the structures of working groups as well as organizational values [21]. Besides, the relation that managers develop among the personnel of the organization based on their management style plays a significant role in achieving balance among the personnel. For this reason Baron and Greenberg believed that managers need to have a good understanding about the operation of organizations [7]. Robbins and Coulter argued that the importance of

organizations for management and manager is not undermined by structural change [38].

The modern management concept requires the efficient use of human resources in organizations. For this reason, qualified workforce, satisfaction of the workers from their working condition and fringe benefits, and their progress in their working skills have become the primary goals of the management [28]. The role that manager plays to fulfill these goals is to identify potentials of the workers and by giving the necessary commands and recommendations to orient them towards production process [8]. Interestingly, the communication language used by the manager during the orientation process proves to be very crucial. The manager should develop a constructive criticism based on creating a balance between compliments and criticism in his/her communication language.

The management style adopted by manager and his or her perspective on human being, form and characterize compliment and criticism within the organization [29]. In addition, managers who possess sufficient self-esteem and self-confidence are aware of the fact that they lose nothing by praising and giving credit to their personnel [22]. Frey and his associates [23] argued that the subordinates develop defensive mechanisms against the negative behaviors of managers towards them, in order to protect their prestige and values. According to Bartscher those undesirable managerial behaviors exercised by managers within their adopted management style that undermine the prestige and values of the workers include incomplete transfer of responsibilities, lack of tolerance, lack of confidence, lack of respect towards productivity and personality, underestimating capabilities, lack of empathy and lack of seriousness[8].

“Legal authority” is not all required for a manager to accomplish his or her management affairs successfully [36]., In order to accomplish his or her affairs at the highest level, a principal not only have to make use of the authority granted upon him/her through his/her legal status, but also use appropriate management behavioral capabilities based on his/her personal knowledge and vocational training [43]. Educational institutions are not by nature a place where only a single management style is

exercised, so they have to develop their own managerial behaviors.

Başaran classified the management styles into four categories including autocratic, protective, supportive and collaborative. In the management literature, authority forms the base of autocratic management style. Authority gives a more strict definition of borders of the behavior [10]. Cherrington believed this will lead to workers' less satisfaction [15].

Protective management style results in connection between the workers and the organization. Başaran argued that in organizations where protective management style is exercised, conflict seldom occurs among the workers owing to the good relation among them [11].

The supportive theory, as compared with autocratic and protective theories, is more based on leadership than on authority and economic sources [16]. The leaders engage with their followers in an open, friendly and approachable group climate and treat the workers equally with no discrimination [37].

Collaborative management is the advanced and extended form of the supportive approach [11]. This management style holds that subordinates will do their tasks more efficiently and feel happier with their works if they are treated well and no pressure or control is imposed on them [6].

Management is a versatile subject. There are varieties for models of school management and these models are in interaction with many fields [35]. Management style makes up the structure of authority of any organization. Structure of authority is developed in order to align the activities of managers with their goals. Table 1 in the appendix presents the comparison of theories on managerial behaviors.

Moreover, all the behaviors exhibited by managers make up the management style. Success of the school is directed influenced by perception of teachers towards management style and its effect on them [27]. In other words, management structure of school and characters of the principals are important variables in education [5]. Principals and management style adopted by them contribute to possible challenges faced by an education

organization and its failure to fulfill its goals. Besides, attitudes and values exhibited by principals have a significant effect on internal and external factors of the school. This follows that management style adopted by principals is considered as an important issue.

Behaviors exhibited by the employees in an education organization are closely related with the management style exercised in the institution. Legal authority and qualification is not all required for a manager to be successful in management affairs. Rather, management style that he or she uses is more important. Unfortunately, inappropriate management styles applied in our country impede the optimal realization of goals of individuals as well as institutions. Ironically, the current management structure of schools is more problem-creator than problem-solver. Therefore, it is important to use modern management styles as criteria during the development of a new structure.

This research aims to explore perceptions of primary school principals towards management styles. In the direction of this main purpose, the following questions are answered in the study.

- 1- What are the management styles used by the principals in the primary schools?
- 2- Do the management styles used by the principals significantly differ for variables such as gender, service time, education level and educational field?

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The population of the study included principals served in all 2195 primary schools based throughout Manisa Province, during 2012-13 academic years. Sampling in the research has been conducted by using stratified sampling method. Stratified sampling holds that features in the sampling determined based on a certain variable represents exactly features in the population. In this study, schools from which 247 principals were selected by sampling were classified based on the socio-economic levels of their surroundings area.

The model used in this study was screening model. Screening models are research models that focus on

describing an old or present situation exactly the way it is. In this model subjects of the research, whether they are event, individual or object, are described within its conditions and exactly the way it is. No effort is taken to change and affect them. What is needed is there; the important thing is to determine them through a proper supervision [26].

As the data collection tool, “Scale for Management styles adopted by principals of schools of primary education” developed by Teyfur was used [40].

The scales were applied on principals of all primary schools in all over Manisa Province including its central city, towns, counties and villages. Scope of the research covered principals, chief deputy principals, and deputy principals. Scales were sent to as many as 315 principals, out of which 247 scales were subjected to statistical analysis.

Data from the study was subjected to statistical analysis by using SPSS 18.0 program package. For the first sub-problem, tables were formed featuring descriptive statistics, frequencies and arithmetic mean values and deviations. For the second sub-problem, t-test was applied to determine significant statistical difference, if any, between the perceptions of the principals with respect to gender; while one-way analysis of variance was accomplished with respect to service time, education level and educational field. One-way analysis of variance was followed by running Scheffe test in order to determine the origin of difference, if any, among them.

3. Results

Results from the study on perspectives of the principals on the management styles (as is presented in table 2 in appendix) show that the autocratic style had the highest value (29.73%), followed by protective (25.68%) and then by supportive (25%) management styles; whereas, the lowest value (19.59%) belonged collaborative style. This may be due to the fact that principals of schools in Manisa Province collaborate less with the teachers and they share less of their authority with others.

As it can be seen from Table 3 (presented in in appendix), all the styles being studied differed

significantly for the gender variable ($P < 0.05$). Furthermore, mean comparison showed that male principals behave more autocratic than females principals ($M = 4.22 - F = 3.98$); whereas female principals behave more protective ($M = 4.00 - F = 4.48$), more supportive ($M = 4.01 - F = 4.60$) and more collaborative ($M = 4.21 - F = 4.29$) than male principals. This indicates that female principals possess more democratic and participative management perception as compared with male principals.

According to the findings of study, service time variable has influenced the management style ($P < 0.05$). Results from Scheffe test accomplished to determine the origin of difference showed that principals with 1-5 years service time used autocratic style more than those with 16-20 years, followed by principals with 6-15 years service time. One reason for this may lie on the fact that, as beginners the newly employed principals feel either more excited or more anxious and as a result behave more autocratic. However, the reason behind the comparatively higher autocratic behavior of principals with more than 16 years service is that they tend to be interested on traditional managing style. Based on Table 4 (presented in appendix), principals with 1-5 and 16-20 years services adopt comparatively more protective style. The reason is that in their early years principals behave more emotionally, while in their late years their experience causes them to exhibit protective behavior.

In the research the effect of post-bachelor education of principals on their management styles was also studied. Based on Table 5 (presented in the appendix) post-bachelor education influences the management styles and all the management styles differed significantly for this variable ($P < 0.05$). Furthermore, results in Table 5 reveal that principals who hold post-bachelor degree adopt less autocratic ($X = 3.65$ (post-bachelor education) vs. 4.82 (bachelor degree)); more protective ($X = 4.70$ (post-bachelor education) vs. 3.88 (bachelor degree)); more supportive ($X = 3.90$ (post-bachelor education) vs. 3.22 (bachelor degree)); and more collaborative ($X = 4.22$ (post-bachelor education) vs. 4.02 (bachelor degree)) management styles. Probably, this is because the principals reflect their post-bachelor education in their management styles.

Regarding the effect of educational field of the principals on their management styles, the results indicated that principals from other educational fields use autocratic and protective management styles more than principals educated in classroom teaching field. Results from Table 5 reveal that principals from other educational fields use more autocratic ($X= 4.54$ (other educational fields) vs. 4.20 (classroom teaching field)); less protective ($X= 4.12$ (other educational fields) vs. 4.16 (classroom teaching field)); less supportive ($X= 4.30$ (other educational fields) vs. 4.42 (classroom teaching field)); and less collaborative ($X= 4.22$ (other educational fields) vs. 4.66 (classroom teaching field)). Probably, this is because principals educated in classroom teaching field had different training than principals from other educational field (presented in table 6 in appendix).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

1. Based on the subjective results on the perception of principals towards the management styles, principals use autocratic style more than other management styles, followed by protective style; whereas collaborative style is used less than any other ones. This is not consistent with findings of Özcan [33]. In his research, Özcan found that principals used mostly protective management style. Similarly, results from this research is not consistent with the study conducted by Cesur which revealed that principals used only protective management style in their schools [14]. Demirci found that regarding the teachers and principals, collaborative management style was used moderately in primary schools. This result bears a little consistency with that of this research [17].
2. Mean comparison on the management styles being studied, revealed that male principals behaved more autocratic than female principals in their management; while female principals behaved more protective and supportive as compared to male principals. This result is in line with the findings of Urlu [42]. Findings of Urlu showed that management perception of female principals is more democratic and humane than that of male principals. Moreover, results from study conducted by Özbaş on 284 principals in 92 primary schools and on 384 parents (of the students) confirm results of this study [34]. According to female parents, with female principals the efficacy of management on school-family relations increases; while they interact more with parents over “acknowledgement and participation in management”.
3. The results of the present study revealed that principals with their service time being 1-5 years and 16-20 years exhibit more protective style than other groups. This is in consistent with the study of Firat who argued that management styles did not differ significantly in terms of the service time of the principals [22].
4. Evaluation on data related to effect of service time on supportive management style revealed that principals with 1-15 years service exhibited more supportive style than other service time groups.
5. According to the results of the study, education levels of the principals fully influence their management styles. Principals with post-bachelor education use less autocratic, more protective, more supportive and more collaborative management styles. Ergin in his study on the effect of autocratic management style on performance of the teachers concluded that intimate relation between the principals and teachers with post-bachelor education leads to decreased performance of the teachers. This is consistent with the results from this research [20].
6. Considering the effect of educational field on management style, principals from other educational field use autocratic management style more than principals educated in classroom teaching. In contrast, principals educated in classroom teaching used more protective, more supportive and more collaborative management style as compared with principals from other education fields. These results are not consistent with those of study conducted by Teyfur. In his study, he argued that principals from classroom teaching field use more autocratic and supportive styles as compared with principals from other educational fields [40]. Results of the present study are not in line with those of study conducted by Arlı [3]. He found that there is no

relation between the management styles of the principals and their educational field such as mathematical, phrasal, applied sciences or classroom teaching. Similarly, results from the study are not in consistent with findings reported by Urlu [42]. According to him, management perceptions of principals didn't differ significantly for variable such as educational field.

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Appendix

Table 1. Comparison of theories on managerial behaviors

Management style	Autocratic	Protective	Supportive	Collaborative
Base	Sovereignty	Economic sources	Leadership	Interaction
Management orientation	Authority	Material prizes	Support	Team work
Personnel orientation	Obedience	Security	Performance	Responsibility
Psychological result	Personal dependency	Organizational dependency	Participation	Self-control self-management
Needs being met	Physiological needs	Security needs	High-level needs	Self-actualization
Performative result	Lowest level	Passive cooperation	Awakened motivation	Some vocational enthusiasm
Moral criterion	Flexibility	Satisfaction	Motivation	For task and team

Table 2. Management styles adopted by the principals

Management Style	Total	%
Authoritarian	880	29,73
Protector	760	25,68
Supporter	740	25,00
Collaborator	580	19,59

N=247

Table 3. effect of sex on management style

Management Style	Sex	N	X	S.S.	S.h.o.	F	t	Sig
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Authoritarian	Female	82	3,98	0,39	0,04	17,40	-5,10	,00
	Male	165	4,22	0,54	0,03			
Protector	Female	82	4,48	0,48	0,05	44,62	4,09	,00
	Male	165	4,00	0,32	0,02			
Supporter	Female	82	4,60	0,52	0,06	2,22	5,22	,00
	Male	165	4,01	0,62	0,05			
Collaborator	Female	82	4,29	0,41	0,05	41,50	4,36	,00
	Male	165	4,21	0,52	0,04			

Sd.247

Table 4.Effect of service time on management style

Management Style	variance source	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig	Scheffe		
						Tenure	N	Subset for alpha 1 2
Authoritarian	Between Groups	12,42	4,726	15,74	0,00	11-15 yıl	70	4,28
	Within Groups	91,48	0,292			6-10 yıl	110	4,43
	Total	103,9				1-5 yıl	50	4,70
						16-20 yıl	17	4,48
Protector	Gr. Arası	1,52	0,488	4,02	0,00	16-20 yıl	50	4,23
	Gr. İçi	38,01	0,11			6-10 yıl	130	4,15
	Total	39,53				11-15 yıl	40	4,13
						1-5 yıl	27	4,19
Supporter	Gr. Arası	11,44	4,146	11,88	0,00	16-20 yıl	32	2,43
	Gr. İçi	109,20	0,327			11-15 yıl	60	3,10
	Total	120,64				1-5 yıl	50	2,98
						6-10 yıl	105	3,02
Collaborator	Gr. Arası	6,88	2,344	7,30	0,00	16-20 yıl	25	3,28
	Gr. İçi	102,13	0,319			11-15 yıl	68	3,53
	Total	109,01				6-10 yıl	104	3,76
						1-5 yıl	50	4,00

Sd=247

Table 5.Effect of education level on management style

Management Style	Education Status	N	X	S.s.	S.h.o.	F	t	Sig
Authoritarian	B.S	209	4,82	0,42	0,03	14,82	15,62	,00
	M.S	38	3,65	0,39	0,04			
Protector	B.S	209	3,88	0,00	0,00	2334,00	-22,21	,00
	M.S	38	4,70	0,45	0,05			
Supporter	B.S	209	3,22	0,53	0,04	49	-7,01	,00
	M.S	38	3,90	0,54	0,05			
Collaborator	B.S	209	4,02	0,52	0,03	18,75	-7,42	,00
	M.S	38	4,22	0,73	0,07			

Sd=247

Table 6.Effect of educational field on management style

Management Style	Field	N	X	S.s.	S.h.o.	F	t	Sig																																						
Authoritarian	Primary School Teacher	205	4,20	0,53	0,04	4,546	2,03	,03																																						
	Other Field	42	4,54	0,61	0,04				Protector	Primary School Teacher	205	4,16	0,37	0,03	4,991	1,09	,23	Other Field	42	4,12	0,32	0,03	Supporter	Primary School Teacher	205	4,42	0,54	0,04	4,663	2,02	,12	Other Field	42	4,30	0,60	0,05	Collaborator	Primary School Teacher	205	4,66	0,55	0,05	,0335	2,04	,28	Other Field
Protector	Primary School Teacher	205	4,16	0,37	0,03	4,991	1,09	,23																																						
	Other Field	42	4,12	0,32	0,03				Supporter	Primary School Teacher	205	4,42	0,54	0,04	4,663	2,02	,12	Other Field	42	4,30	0,60	0,05	Collaborator	Primary School Teacher	205	4,66	0,55	0,05	,0335	2,04	,28	Other Field	42	4,22	0,46	0,04										
Supporter	Primary School Teacher	205	4,42	0,54	0,04	4,663	2,02	,12																																						
	Other Field	42	4,30	0,60	0,05				Collaborator	Primary School Teacher	205	4,66	0,55	0,05	,0335	2,04	,28	Other Field	42	4,22	0,46	0,04																								
Collaborator	Primary School Teacher	205	4,66	0,55	0,05	,0335	2,04	,28																																						
	Other Field	42	4,22	0,46	0,04																																									