

# ICLEL 2015

## *1<sup>ST</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LIFELONG LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP FOR ALL*

October 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>, 2015  
Palacky University &  
Moravian University College Olomouc  
Olomouc, Czech Republic



### PROCEEDINGS BOOK

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### COLLABORATION TEAM



ICLEL 2015  
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Sakarya University Faculty of Education

54300 Sakarya, TURKEY

## ***Editor's Preface***

*Dear ICLEL 2015 participants!*

*After the 1990's, the World has started to change fast because of technological improvements especially internet based. These improvements have changed not only most social systems including educational institutions but also social development and educational perspectives. One of the most striking perspectives related to education: Lifelong Learning.*



*We developed a partnership with Palacky University and Moravian University College Olomouc to create International Conference on Lifelong Education and Leadership for ALL (ICLEL). ICLEL 2015 conference had taken much interest from academicians and researchers. We would like to THANKS all the participants and all the supporter universities from Europe, supporters academic institutions and journals. Moreover, I would like to THANKS all the Keynote Speakers and the organization team as well.*

*Iclel Conferences is not only academic but also social and cultural activity. This richly detailed and considered examination of current thinking in lifelong learning brings together new writing from worldwide experts in the topic, from Czech Republic to the USA, England, China, Croatia, Latvia, Serbia, Slovenia, Taiwan and Turkey etc. to offer a broadranging picture of the position to date.*

*ICLEL 2016 Conference Proceeding Book provides a critical summary of current developments in understanding both lifelong learning and new leadership perspectives in education and in the societal context and leadership in education for all. Across the different contributions and sections of the Conference Proceeding Book covers a wide range of topics related to;*

- Learning is more than a cognitive activity in that it includes an affective dimension as well as contextual influences.*
- Lifelong learning has implications for the purpose and processes of learning managing systems in educational institutions.*
- There are subordinate discourses of lifelong learning that need to be aired and can enrich our understanding of what it means.*
- From a modern perspective, leaders should improve their skills and styles in a lifelong learning perspective to develop society and meet its necessities.*
- Lifelong learning has a vital affect on society so Lifelong learning can be seen as an antecedent of leadership*

*Lifelong Education is a rising value in the society, education and management systems in all sectors. It affects the way in which societies, educational institutions and leaders improve themselves. Therefore, lifelong education has started to be supported by both European Union and other nationalities in this competitive World.*

*We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the various processes involved in the making of this book.*

***Best Regards***

***Assoc. Prof. Dr. Osman TITREK***  
***Sakarya University- Turkey***  
***otitrek@hotmail.com***  
***Chair of ICLEL Conferences***



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# Investigation of the opinions of secondary education administrators regarding school council implementations<sup>1</sup>

Ertug Can<sup>\*1</sup>, Suleyman Aktas<sup>2</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*Kirklareli University, Faculty of Science and Letters, 39100, "Kirklareli", Turkey*

<sup>b</sup>*Ministry of Education, "Istanbul", Turkey*

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## ABSTRACT

Investigation on the viewpoints of secondary-education administrators about school council implementations. The aim of this study is to find out the school administrators appointed in secondary education institutions about school council implementations and to develop suggestions for the school, council to function more properly. The study was carried out with 234 administrators appointed in secondary and high schools in Bahcelievler District of Istanbul in 2014-2015 academic year. Quantitative and Qualitative research methods were used for this study. In order to collect the quantitative data, "School Council Implementation Scale Composed of 36 questions was developed and used. Quantitative data was analysed by using t-test and ANOVA techniques. Qualitative data, however, was evaluated by means of content analysis. At the end of the study, the points of "School Council Implementation Scale" were investigated and no significant difference was found among gender, appointment, seniority, administrator seniority and education levels. Most of the participants pointed out that they agreed the statement of "School Council and Administrator may learn new ideas from students." According to most of the participants, since the administrators, parents and students do not have sufficient information about the school council, problems may sometimes arise during the implementation. As there are sometimes problems during the process of school council implementations, it may be helpful if administrators, students and parents are informed, enabled to participate in decisions and be effective in the process of decision-making.

Keywords Democracy, administrator, participation.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

'Democracy Education and School Councils Project' started to be implemented with a protocol signed between the Ministry of Education and Turkish Grand National Assembly Chairmanship on 13th January, 2004. The project which was implemented in 300 pilot schools during the 2003-2004 academic year has been implemented around Turkey since the 2004-2005 academic year. School Councils Project aims to create a democracy culture at school and to organise the process based upon the corporation between schools, families, several non-governmental organisations and TGNA (Turkish Grand National Assembly) in order to develop this culture. As Ozturk and so on (2009) pointed out; young people are going to learn the difference between the republic and democracy that Ataturk entrusted to Turkish Youth and those other systems of government and they are going to learn democracy principles and the democracy itself by experiencing it.

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*Address for correspondence:*

*Ertug Can, <sup>a</sup>Kirklareli University, Faculty of Science and Letters, 39100, "Kirklareli", Turkey*

*E-mail: ertugcan@gmail.com*

Educational institutions not only provide in-class education but also enable individuals to learn democracy and express themselves by means of student councils or other groups at the same time. In this atmosphere, students get a chance to express themselves as strong participants. For example, schools in Russia teach students the importance of voting; however, they dampen students' enthusiasm about voting or taking place in other political actions at times. It is seen that in some countries such as Finland, Denmark and Slovenia students learn very little regarding voting but nonetheless they are relatively more inclined to voting (Turney-Purta, Barber, 2005; Turney-Purta, Barber, and so on, 2001).

13 children foundations and 4911 youth foundations are active in Turkey at the moment and there are also implementations such as children's rights committees, town councils, children councils and School Councils in order to enable children to participate in decision-making process and to gain respect to their opinions in every field they live (MFSP, 2012). Democratic lifestyle is the political form of life which gives the greatest freedom to most individuals, recognises and protects the biggest variety possible (Touraine, 2011). Democracy is a governing and living style. Although there are some mechanisms for children to be able to use their participating rights, it is not always possible for children to participate in decisions at school.

Turkey has not been able to produce a strategy to use youngsters' and children's participating rights until the very recent past. The first strategy document that put forward the necessity to put the child's participating right into practice is the Ministry of Education's 2013-2017 strategy and action plan that was published in December, 2013 (Beyazova and so on, 2015). According to literature investigations, school managements in secondary education institutions and secondary schools with a second-stage primary education in Turkey have not shown sufficient interest to school councils project; they have just carried out bureaucratic paperwork and left school councils unfunctional because of their stationery logic during the first implementation.

One of the most important reasons why national education has not been able to develop in Turkey for years is the centralised management perception. Against this situation that has become chronic by years, central management does not reflect the school workers' viewpoints to the decision-making process. It is crucial to develop an autonomous democratic educational institution that will enable the ones who work at schools to take place in decision-making and students to express themselves.

Gauchet, (2013) emphasizes the importance that all the rights of the individual in society should be protected and the society should provide the individual with the autonomy to use these rights. Grioux (2007) points out that education should be considered as a democratic force because higher education means more than a chance of investment or consumption of citizens; learning means more than preparing for a job and democracy means more than making a product choice.

Yilmaz, (2013) points out that the fact that educational organisations are set up, defined with legal documents and public schools are established, organised and run by the state in Turkish education system hinders school managers from getting into any organisational action. For this reason, the values of this manager perception that has formed in Turkey are passive, riskless, uncompetitive, fatalistic and unsure of those who are not within the immediate environment; work is considered as a compulsory task and no long-term planning can ever be made. Uygur (2013) points out those educators will not be able to solve the present problem with the equipment they have because the education they received hinders them from getting out of the status quo.

Can (2002) emphasizes the requirement that education managers who place the individual upon the center with a conscious of change and improvement should be expected first of all to make teachers and other workers like the education, enable them to work in a motivated mood, infuse the school values into them and prepare the conditions for the integration with the school.

In order to experience the democracy in society, democratic values should be adopted by all individuals. By this way, individuals who have a democratic consciousness can express themselves in life.

The aim of this research is to define the viewpoints of school managers appointed in secondary education institutions regarding School Council Implementations and develop suggestions for School Councils to function more properly.

## 2.METHOD

The research was carried out with 234 school managers appointed in secondary and high schools in Bahcelievler District of Istanbul during the 2014-2015 academic years. Quantitative and qualitative research methods were used throughout the research.

In order to collect the quantitative data, 'School Council Implementation Scale' that was composed of 36 questions was developed and applied. Quantitative data were analysed by using t test and ANOVA techniques. During the qualitative part of the research, the participants were asked 2 open-ended questions and the obtained content was evaluated by means of content analysis.

General Scanning model was used for the quantitative part of the research. According to Karasar (1984), scanning method is the research approach model which does not describe a situation as it is but aims to define it. The complexity of the research problem requires to go beyond the answer that will be given with only numbers as far as quantitative meaning is concerned or words as far as qualitative meaning is concerned (Cresswell, Clark, 2014). According to Cresswell (2014), mixed method involves collecting data with a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches during several phases of the researches and also philosophical hypothesis that guide the analysis process. Mixed method is the use of quantitative and qualitative data together and enables the research problem to be understood much better than any other method that is used all by itself.

The reason why both quantitative and qualitative data are collected will enable the problem to be understood in a much better way. Quantitative and qualitative data can be collected in a sequential or synchronical way or in both ways in a nested pattern. In this pattern, a data type is embedded in another data type (Cresswell, Clark, 2014).

Validity and reliability studies were carried out while 'School Council Implementation Scale' was being developed. Validity states how well a measurement tool (or test) measures an aspect that it claims to measure without mixing it with other aspects. In order to provide a measurement tool with validity, a) content (scope validity), b) implementation (criteria validity), c) form validity techniques can be used (Cronbach, 1960; Aiken, 1979; Karasar, 1986; Tekin, 1987).

In order to determine if the items in the 'School Council Implementation Scale' were appropriate for the aim of the implementation or not, item analysis process was applied. In order to determine if the whole scale was significant or not, Item Total (Rit) and Item Remainder (Rir) techniques were used. 36 items out of 38 in the scale were tested. According to item analysis results, 36 items that take place in the whole scale (on condition that they were over 0.40 in the item total) were found significant at a level of 0.01. In this context, the scale which had firstly been prepared as 38 items was reduced to 36 items.

Divided test analysis and invariance against time methods were used in order to carry out the reliability analysis of 'School Council Implementation Scale'. Reliability is the state that the results of a measurement tool show a similar consistency among independent measurements provided that the same process was followed (Aiken, 1979; Karasar, 1986).

'School Council Implementation Scale' was applied to the same two groups for two months during the determination of invariance against time. When the data of the both groups were investigated, it was seen that there was a significant and high relationship between them ( $r=0,81$ ;

$p < 0,01$ ). Moreover, at the end of the t test that was applied, no difference was found between the two implementations ( $t=1,06$ ). In this context, when the obtained data was investigated, it was concluded that 'School Council Implementation Scale' was unvariable, ie. constant against time. Inner reliability index values of the 'School Council Implementation Scale' were calculated by means of divided test technique. Various techniques such as Spearman Brown; Horst; Rulon; Cronbach a can be used in order to calculate the inner consistency index (Cronbach, 1960; Aiken, 1979). The Cronbach a value of the 'School Council Implementation Scale' was found 0,86.

For the qualitative part of the research, however, the viewpoints of the participants were collected by means of the two open-ended questions that took place in the last part of the 'School Council Implementation Scale'. The obtained data were coded by being divided into lower themes and evaluated by means of content analysis.

The obtained data were organised according to their similarities and differences; the statements that remain aside the field or that are too trivial were sorted out by presuming that they had made a contribution. A head piece was determined according to the theme features and the viewpoints were collected under this theme. Great care was taken for the themes that were formed from the collected data to mean the same, to be expressive and to form an entirety within themselves.

A pilot implementation was carried out for developing the open-ended questions and expert opinion was taken. The school managers who answered the open-ended questions were coded as K1, K2,...

The open-ended questions that take place in the scale form and were asked to the school managers are as follows:

1. What can be done in order to form democratic school cultures at schools?
2. What can be done for the School Councils to be more effective at schools?

### **3. FINDINGS**

#### ***Quantitative Research Findings***

17,9% of the participants are female and 82,1% of them are male. 35,5% of the participants work as school managers, 9,8% as assistant principals and 54,7% as deputy managers. When the professional seniority of the participants was investigated, 5,1% have 1-5 years, 11,5% have 6-10 years, 22,6% have 11-15 years, 24,8% have 16-20 years and 35,9% have 21 years of work experience. When the administrative seniority of the participants was investigated, however, 43,6% have 1-5 years, 18,8% have 6-10 years, 12,4% have 11-15 years, 10,3% have 16-20 years and 15% have 21 and over 21 years of work seniority. 2,4% of the participants have associate degree, 71,4% have bachelor's degree and 25,2% have post graduate degree.

A great majority of the participants (173 people) think that School Councils Project forms a settled democracy culture. School managers think that school councils should be supported with democratic attitudes and developed in order to create a democratic school culture. According to the research facts, a great majority of the school managers (175 people) pointed out that certain problems arose during the implementation as the managers, parents and students did not have sufficient information about the school council.

Almost all the school managers (201 people) think that a regulation on education is required in order to inform the school managers, teachers, parents and students for the school councils to function effectively. School managers pointed out that shareholders did not have sufficient information about school councils. School managers expressed that students should be supported to receive democracy education by making legal regulations. They emphasized the importance of the requirement that implementations such as reducing the load of students' lessons, regulating the

work hours of school managers, providing physical opportunities and giving economical support should be defined and provided with legal insurance.

According to the research findings, school managers pointed out that School Councils were important for creating a democracy culture and gaining democratic values, and they supported school council implementations.

A great majority of the participants (192 people) pointed out that school council election process was carried out successfully (obeying the rules of introducing the candidates and prohibitions regarding propaganda). A great majority of the school managers (216 people) think that managers or teachers did not apply pressure on the students during the School Council elections.

A great majority of school managers (201 people) think that school councils provide the individual with the value of respect and tolerance towards differences. Moreover, school managers (208 people) think that school councils contribute to gaining democratic consciousness.

A great majority of the participants (214 people) believe that managers can gain new ideas from students through school councils. According to a majority of school managers (201 people) school councils increase the harmony and success at school by making it easy for the students to obey the school rules. A great majority of school managers (195 people) believe that a reconciliation culture may be developed through school councils.

According to the majority of the school managers, school councils help increase the academic success of the students as they function as a tool for them to recognise their self-esteem. 212 of the school managers supported the statement of 'Students should be given more responsibilities for the school councils to be more successful'. The statement of 'The efficiency of the school councils should be increased by means of various social and cultural activities' was also accepted greatly by the school managers (212 people). Moreover, a great majority of the same managers (198 people) think that school councils should have a budget. However, it is seen that the majority of the same school managers (204 people) opposed to the idea that if the school councils' authorisations are increased, the institutional establishment at school will develop.

According to the research facts, while school managers are describing themselves, most of them (137 people) do not think they are authoritative, however, they admit that they have a bureaucratic nature (139 people).

### ***Qualitative Research Findings***

According to the content analysis results of the qualitative research findings, the viewpoints of school managers regarding forming a democratic school culture at school were investigated in six sub-categories. The viewpoints of some participants (6 people) who pointed out that school councils which will make a significant contribution to democratic school culture should be supported and developed are as follows:

Students might be made more active in management. Their demands might be taken on the point of decision-making (K12).

The election process should be more democratic while forming the school council and participating in management should be activated (K20).

All the students of the school should participate in the election and the candidates should be allowed to introduce themselves sufficiently (K90).

The viewpoints of some participants (8 people) who pointed out that school councils should be established on a healthy basis, shareholders should be trained well and education studies should be increased (8 people), are as follows:

Teachers, parents and students should be made conscious about school councils. A suitable lesson hour should be spared for the implementations (K19).

Students should be enabled to join the management on points that interest them, take place in non-governmental institutions and public services fields (K177, K209).

The viewpoints of some of the participants (5 people) who pointed out that school managers should give a right of speech and an opportunity to shareholders, are as follows:

School culture might be developed in a tolerant atmosphere by protecting every individual's right with the corporation of parents, school and teachers (K13).

Students and parents should be given surveys while making decisions on some subjects and decisions should be made in accordance with the survey results (K66).

The viewpoints of some of the participants (4 people) who support the requirement that school councils should be supported with financial opportunities, are as follows:

A school culture should be formed by, first of all, lowering the school sizes and class sizes and then the authority should be supplied.

Projects should be developed, financial resources for these projects should be spared, the teachers and students who carry out the projects should be rewarded (K75).

The viewpoints of some of the participants (4 people) who support the requirement that a new syllabus and a new school management perception should be developed for the school councils to be more efficient, are as follows:

K169- Schools should be independent, the planning of the schools should be made independently according to the environment and conditions.

K175- The head of the school council might join the management and teachers's assembly with the title of observer. He/she might take over some of the authorisations of the authorities of the discipline committee and the honour (rewarding) committee.

K204- Education; rather than teaching, should be given importance.

When the answers of the participants who answered the question of "What should be done for the school councils to be more effective?" were investigated, the following suggestions came out:

Study fields and implementation samples should be developed for the school councils (10 people), legal regulations should be made for the school councils (7 people), school managers should support the studies by corporating with shareholders (6 people), trainings should be held for managers, teachers, students and parents (4 people).

#### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The contribution of science to human life cannot be denied. The most basic way for science to develop is education. The public fields where scientific thinking style should be represented in the best way are democratic implementations in educational institutions.

If higher education bears an anxiety of challenge in the new millenium, universities and colleges should protect this inheritance and define themselves as the fields of critical learning and actively participating in civilian life (Giroux, 2007).

According to the research findings, it can be said that democracy is a result based upon education when the relation between democracy and education is looked upon in the education and teaching activities at schools, with the effect of in-class arguments and student councils, students' critical thinking skills should be developed and they should be enabled to gain the values, attitudes and behaviours that democratic life requires (Sisman, 2010).

According to Whitty, Wisby (2007)'s research findings, there are school councils in the schools in England and Wales, and the teachers and students consider the school council implementations positively. According to Dogan (2008)'s research findings, the managers and teachers appointed in the town of Ankara have positive attitudes towards Democracy Education and School Councils Project; yet they pointed out that various problems were experienced during the implementation of the Project and they stated that the Project should be developed.

It is seen that a great majority of the participants agree with the statement of ‘School Councils Project should form a settled democracy culture’. Democracy is considered to be the most appropriate government style for human nature. The basic reason for this is that it is the type of government where man’s basic rights such as equality and freedom that he has by birth are applied in the best way. The implementation of such a government style depends on forming democracy culture.

The fact that democracy culture becomes real through School Councils Project is considered as a positive result.

According to Metin (2006)’s research findings, School Councils Project makes positive contributions in respect to form a democratic atmosphere between school managers, teachers and students, and helps especially the students to develop proper attitudes to the values of democracy. In the research findings of Yilmaz and Yildirim (2009), according to the viewpoints of teachers and students in the research facts, School Councils Project is fairly effective in forming the democracy culture and enabling individuals to gain the basic values of democracy. Sayin (2010)’s research findings also confirm that School Councils Project makes significant contributions to forming school culture. According to Celiktas (2013)’s research findings, students think that Democracy Education and School Councils Project contributes to the skills of discussion and bringing in reconciliation culture by forming a settled culture at school. This result bears a parallelism with the manager viewpoints that came out during the research.

The fact that ‘Democracy Education and School Councils Project’ (DVIHE) which is supported technically by European Council and financially by European Union was put into practice by the Ministry of Education’s Board of Education and Discipline in 2011 can be seen as a significant development.

According to the research findings, a great majority of the participants pointed out that they ‘mostly’ approve of the statement of ‘Problems arise during the implementation as the managers, parents and students do not have sufficient information about the School Council’. If the school councils are functional, it will contribute greatly to the development of democracy within school and in society. The fact that participation is provided in every aspect in democratic system and that the drawbacks arising in implementation are defined and that problems are solved contributes greatly to the development of democratic implementations in society. According to Dolaman (2015)’s research findings, while parents participate actively in school management process; they are limited by school managers; on the situations where they can participate in management process, however, they seem in a passive situation and they do not have administrative consciousness on the point of contribution to the school, and the reason for this situation is such factors as environmental effects, social construction, culture, education and economical state.

In order for the society to really benefit from young people’s contribution; all young people should be presented with the required tools and opportunities that will enable them to use their participation rights. Especially, the participation of the young people who are financially limited can be considered as an indicator of healthy democracies and societies (Croft, 2008). Ozcan (2010)’s research findings show that teachers’ eagerness to join in education and teaching process is high whereas their eagerness to join in the decisions regarding the school management is low; students, however, are eager to join in administrative decisions about themselves and to use their rights.

According to the research findings, half of the school managers approve of the statement of ‘Trainings should be held in order to inform the school managers, teachers, parents and students for the School Councils to work efficiently’. It is crucial that the implementation process is known by school managers, teachers, parents and students for the School Councils Project to function healthily.

There might be an uncertainty that stems from the prejudices about the school councils. In the research carried out by Guclu (2015), it is seen that school managers remain limited with the

subjects only about the school while they are informing the ones around them about the order-making laws and the scope and method of this informing remains limited with the parent and the inner school. What is expected from educational administrators is, however, to inform the relevant people about any rule or implementation that regulate the school and the function of its environment. According to Uyanik Ceylan (2009)'s research findings, students do not have sufficient information about school councils.

According to Metin (2006)'s research findings, participants think that no sufficient information is given regarding the school councils. According to Sayin (2010)'s research findings, also, it is seen that school managers and teachers are not given sufficient training about school councils and cannot reach sufficient information resources. These facts also support the research results.

According to Dolaman (2015)'s research findings, although school managers have positive attitudes, it is seen that they do not allow parents much to join the school management in practice, and school managers should make the parents conscious and give them more opportunities to join the management. Sayin (2010)'s research findings also support the conclusion that the sufficient budget and physical conditions for school councils are not supplied and significant effort is required on this subject.

According to the research findings, school managers pointed out that they 'totally' and 'mostly' approve of the statement of 'School Council provides democracy consciousnesses. Democracy recognises each individual as a value and works for the development of this value. Democracy should be handled as not only a type of government but also a lifestyle. In this context, the fact that School Council Implementations bring in a democracy consciousness at school and in the whole society is considered very important. According to Genc and Guner (2012)'s research findings, Democracy Education and School Councils Project was evaluated positively by school managers, teachers and students and it was stated that it should continue. According to Guven, Cam and Sever (2013)'s research findings, managers and teachers pointed out that Democracy Education and School Councils Project is successful at forming school atmosphere, defining democratic values and implementing them.

According to Lunenburg and Ornstein (2013), schools might contribute to the qualitative development by respecting students' differences, bringing in strong values, meeting the expectations and presenting different education approaches.

According to the majority of the school managers that took place in the research, school councils help increase the success and harmony within the school by making it easy for the students to obey the school rules. It has been seen throughout history that some of the laws which had been made throughout nondemocratic ways were more liberal than those made throughout democratic ways. However, the reason why these laws are not perpetual stems from the method they had been made by. It is thought that the students who make their own laws themselves are more compatible. One of the most negative results of not obeying school rules might come out as an increase in violence at school. Dolaman (2015)' research facts reveal that parents' participation in school management process is crucial for the school-student-parent corporation to be more proper and parents contribute to the school's success by joining in the school management process with their positive attitudes.

According to Kemahlioglu and Keyman (2013)'s research findings, participants marked the democracy scoring in Turkey as 5.03 out of 10. This result indicates that Turkey is at a point between democracy and authoritarian system. Moreover, the fact that the higher the participants' education levels are, the lower are the democracy points shows that democratic rules and implementations in Turkey should increase and on this point school council implementations are crucial.

According to the research findings, the participants pointed out that they generally approve of the statement of 'Expressing different ideas thanks to the school councils might increase attendance to the lesson'. Moreover, according to the school managers who participated in the research, school



council implementations contribute greatly to the development of reconciliation culture in society. According to Alptekin (2014)'s research findings, teachers support students' participation in management and at the same time, they pointed out that there is a need for managers who have perceived the idea that democracy is not 'idleness or disorder' during the process of forming democratic culture.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It can be beneficial if seminars about school councils are held for teachers, managers and parents; the participation in school councils is increased in order to form democracy culture and the concept of democracy is treated functionally in some lessons. It is necessary to make the school councils efficient during the school management's decision-making process. Attaching importance to democracy education at schools might also be beneficial.

### NOTE

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