

Organizational Values Needed for Diversity Management*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the organizational values that are needed to be shared for an effective staff diversity management in schools by analysing the views of school managers. A phenomenological research design was employed in the study. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 17 school managers chosen by purposeful sampling. In order to analyze the data, categorical and descriptive analysis techniques were used. The results of the study revealed that school managers emphasized 23 staff related and 27 organization related diversities that they believe to be shared by all members of the school for effective diversity management.

Key Words

Diversity Management, Staff Diversity, Organizational Values, School Managers, Educational Organizations.

Working coherence and harmony of the groups of people who have come together to achieve specific goals play a significant role on organizational outputs. While the people who come together to accomplish organizational goals such as performance, profitability, productivity, efficiency try to adopt their other colleagues and the organization, on the other hand they would like to live the differences they possess freely (gender, age, disability etc.) and they want others to respect these differences (Sürgevil & Budak, 2008).

Moreover current workers besides money, they request cars and personal choices and freedom (Balci, 2000). Consequently organizations are asked to

provide the individuals with different features such as demographic structure, culture, education, age, gender, experience, value judgement, perception with working together in harmony (McMahan, Bell, & Virick, 1998).

The workers who bring their demographic (race, nationality, ethnicity, gender, age and experience), socio-cultural (religion and philosophical belief, political view, the values which are possessed and internalized, educational level, economical situation) and individual characteristic differences (personality, physical and mental abilities, knowledge and skills) to the organization diversify the organization (Memduhoğlu, 2008).

When the differences of the workers are not managed efficiently, some problems can occur. Nowadays the approach of managing the differences based on coherence and consolidation policies is used instead of assimilation policy in solving the problems based on workers' differences in the organization (Gilbert, Stead, & Ivancevich, 1999; Maldonado, Dreachslin, Dansky, Souza, & Gatto, 2002; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992).

An organizational synergy is achieved when the organizational differences are managed in an effective

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way. Synergy means that the energy which is produced by organization system is bigger than the total energy which is produced by every sub system of the system. In this way synergy is not only the union of energies, it is a product of a system which produces more energy than the existing energy (Cüceloğlu, 1997). According to Covey, an organization which doesn't create synergy wastes the human resource as they don't use and develop the worker potential effectively. Consequently the directors should know to transform worker differences into synergy without wasting the human resource in the organization.

In administration units, the approach of managing the differences can be accepted as a new topic. It is an approach which bases on canalizing the differences into work through individual and organizational goals by accepting the individual differences the way they are and without discriminating any individual or group (Memduhoğlu, 2008).

In literature, the concept of management of differences has been introduced for the first time by Thomas. According to him, the management of differences is to create an environment where everyone can make a contribution from themselves and show their whole performance for the sake of organization's goals (Budak, 2008).

The understanding of management of differences requires individual or groups not to be discriminated in terms of socio cultural and economical features besides the demographic features like religion, language, race, gender, personality, physical and mental power, age, and experience. Consequently, the management of the differences approach is an approach where the organization's inside and outside social environment is taken into consideration. In this management approach, it is aimed that all the individuals are happy with their differences (Ricucci, 1997; Rynes & Rosen, 1995). With this management approach, the suitable environment to raise all the workers' capabilities to their highest pitch is provided and workers' capabilities are led in a way that would contribute to the purposes of the organization (Cox, 1994). Thereby an opportunity is born for both individual and organizational aims to be accomplished.

Balay and Sağlam (2004) have emphasized that the workers' differences are important in educational organizations and in order to achieve success, the educational organizations should manage differences effectively. To be successful at managing the differences, it is essential for the organizations to determine the necessities based on differences, to encourage the differences by rewards and incentives and to raise the awareness by educational

efforts. It is necessary to respect the differences of the individuals in the organization and to use these differences through achieving the organizational goals (Bursalıoğlu, 1994). Organizations are improving the satisfaction of their workers by directing the differences of them and trying to improve organizational performance by developing the communication and dialogue between the workers in the organization. Consequently, in order to survive the organizations need to give the necessary importance to workers' differences and direct the differences aimed at organizational goals (Adler, 2002; DiStefano & Maznevski, 2000; Elron, 1997; Hambrick, Davison, Snell, & Snow, 1998; Maldonado et al., 2002; Watson, Kumar, & Michaelsen, 1993).

The work power with diversity increases the organizational effectiveness. The morale and productivity of the workers whose differences are taken into consideration improve (Bassett-Jones, 2005; Bhadury, Mighty, & Damar, 2000; Dalyan, 2004; DiStefano & Maznevski, 2000; Foxman & Easterling, 1999; Mollica, 2003; Thomas & Ely, 1999; White, 1999).

When importance to workers' differences are given, trust which is the base of inventions, creativity and enterprising soul is developed (Covey, 1998; Bhadury et al., 2000; Foxman & Easterling, 1999; Mollica, 2003).

In the process of participation to decision and management, respect to differences is one of the basic keys of provide participation (Bhadury et al., 2000; Foxman & Easterling, 1999; Mollica, 2003). The workers who feel that they are given value help taking high quality decisions by displaying positive attitude during participation process.

It has been found out that with the management of differences has a positive relationship with the sensation of seeing one self capable enough, work satisfaction and organizational devotion (Kirby & Richard, 2000). Moreover the organizations who manage the differences better have a big advantage in attracting the talented workers to their organizations and making them stay in their organizations (Abbasi & Hollman, 1991; Bhadury et al., 2000; Foxman & Easterling, 1999; Mollica, 2003; White, 1999). While an increase in the ability of adapting innovations and organizational flexibility is observed, decreases in quitting, absence and cost of labor cases are observed (Bhadury et al.; Foxman & Easterling; Mollica).

In the organizations where differences are not managed effectively, communication, integration problems are faced, conflicts emerge in the organization (Adler, 2002; Asunakutlu & Safran, 2004; Dalyan, 2004; Earley & Gibson, 1998; Hambrick et al., 1998; Watson et al., 1993) and process of taking

organizational decisions gets longer and harder (Adler). The differences within the organization can cause misunderstandings, doubts, delays, low quality, low morale and loss of competitiveness (Bassett-Jones, 2005). In the studies carried out within different kinds of groups (DiStefano & Maznevski, 2000; Thomas & Ely, 1999; Watson et al., 1993), it has been determined that integration problem is faced. Thereby sometimes in the organizations with people from different cultures decompositions like "us" and "them" may occur (Salk, 1996).

As it is seen when the differences are managed effectively, they turn into advantages, when they aren't managed effectively they become disadvantages. In this context, the success of the educational organizations depends on realizing, understanding, and managing the differences of the workers. For effective management of the differences, some values have to be established.

In the management of differences, on one hand individuals and groups are allowed to preserve their differences, on the other hand to attain organizational goals, a common set of decisions should be made by the organization (Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 2000 cited in Memduhoglu, 2008). It is stated that one of the most significant reasons of the conflicts within the organizations is differences in value (Turgut, 1998). The effect of organizational culture which supports organizational aims is great on achieving organizational goals. Consequently, an organizational culture which includes common values provides an opportunity to workers to work in teams. The managers enable their workers to work in harmony by affecting them with organization culture and common values (Eren Gümüştekin & Emet, 2007). Consequently, the managers who will manage the differences have to create common values.

Values are described as the shared values which are internalized by the workers or group norms (Czinkota, Ronkainen, & Moffett, 2009). In other words, values are the common thoughts, aims, basic ethical principals or beliefs which are seen necessary by most of the members of a social group or society to provide their own existence, union, mechanism and permanence (Kızılcelik & Erjem, 1994). Organizational values are described as criteria which the members of the organizations use in evaluating and judging various situations, actions, applications, objects and individuals in a good or bad way. Values show the solution forms which are accepted as reasonable appropriate in the solution of organizational problems (Şişman, 2002).

Values become reference and criteria to wishes,

preferences, desired or non desired situations by describing what the individuals see as important (Erdem, 2003; Şişman, 2002). While individual values guide to the individual's aims and actions, organizational values guide to organizational aims, policies and strategies. Moreover an organization's basic aims, ideals, standarts are reflected by values (Wiener, 1988). The truths which occur as a consequence of human, environment and interaction of these two and accepted by organization members compose the source of the organizational values. Values show what is important in an organization (Sabuncuoğlu & Tüz, 2001).

In an organization where there are workers with different characteristics in order to make the organization culture to be internalized by the members, the organization should contain some high values which can be accepted by all workers. Organizational culture should have a structure where common values weight more than having values where a specific culture is dominant (Sarayönlü, 2003). Consequently, since 1990's an understanding of turning the disadvantages in the organization into advantages by uniting the work power with different cultural features around common values has emerged (Düren, 2007). Consequently, values are important in terms of both understanding and managing human behaviours. Directors of the organizations need to analyze the organizational values to manage the differences. In this context it is important for school directors to know what the necessary values are for management of differences in terms of forming, improving and managing the organizational values at school. Accordingly, in this study answers for two basic questions will be searched.

1. According to principals what are the most common staff differences related to staff at schools?
2. According to the principals what are the organizational values which are thought to be accepted and shared by school staff to manage staff differences at school effectively?

Method

Research Model

This study has been conducted with qualitative research approach.

Participants

In qualitative research, it is tried to obtain rich in-

formation from a limited number of individuals. In these situations, oriented exemplification is used. In this research, criteria exemplification method, which is one of the oriented exemplification methods, has been used. In the selection of principals working in different levels of schools in the town of Kocaeli in city of Izmit, the basic criteria have been set as that the principals have been appointed permanently and they have been working as principals for at least 2 years. As per these basic criteria, meetings have been conducted with 17 principals out of 57 working during 2011-2012 academic years who have accepted to meet face to face according to voluntariness basis. 3 out of 17 principals who have accepted to participate in the research work in independent kindergartens, 9 of them work in primary schools and 5 of them work in secondary schools. 14 of the principals with whom a meeting has been conducted are male and the 3 of them are female. Their age average is 38.

Data Collection Instrument

In the collection of research data, semi-structured interview technique was used. In semi-structured interview, by determining the questions in advance, the data were aimed to be collected with these questions. In order to determine the necessary values to apply management of differences and the understanding of this management on the participants, the researcher prepared two semi-structured interview questions.

In order to provide internal validity of the questions which would be directed to the principals, two experts' views were taken into account. Moreover, a meeting was made with two principals about the comprehensibility of the questions. In the light of these views, the questions were formed. The research data were collected in the time and place that the principals chose. The meetings were recorded with voice recorder device by getting necessary permission from the principals.

Data Analysis

Meeting voice recordings were transcribed into written form and then they were examined. During the process of data analysis, the answers of the participants were coded as per research aims and then frequency of the answers were found. In the analysis of data categorical analysis which is one of the content analysis has been used. Categorical analysis generally divides a specific message into units

firstly and then groups these units into categories as per formerly determined criteria (Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001). In the determination of code and categories, besides the related literature, the concepts which occurred in the findings have been effective too. For the reliability of the research, the formula of reliability = consensus / consensus + dissidence x 100 has been applied on the codings which have been made by two experts one of which is a researcher and the other is outside the research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The harmony between the two researcher was calculated as 79%.

Results

The question "what are the most common staff differences related to staff at the schools where you work as the principal?" has been asked and the principals have emphasized 23 staff differences related to the answer of this question. The emphasized differences from the most common to the least common are as follows: Branch (f=16), attitude (f=15), experience (f=15), age (f=15) ideological and political tendency (f=14), personality (f=14), membership of union (f=14), culture (f=13), interest/hobby (f=13), gender (f=12), professional proficiency (f=11), priority (f=10), marital status (f=10), attitude and predisposition towards technology (f=9), career perspective (f=9), appearance, clothing (f=8), title (f=7), having/not having kids (f=7), socio-economic level (f=6), religion- sect (f=6), educational level (f=5), race (f=4), being / not being disabled (f=2).

The principals have emphasized 27 organizational values which should be shared by the whole school staff according to them in order to manage the staff differences effectively within the answers of the question "what are the organizational values which should be shared by the staff to manage the staff differences at schools?" The organizational values which are pointed out by the principals are mentioned below as per frequency density starting from the most to the least:

Openness to Innovation / Self Improvement

In the Dictionary of Turkish Language Institution (Türk Dil Kurumu [TDK], 2011) openness to innovation is described as defence of replacement of old, harmful and inadequate things with the new, useful and adequate ones. 16 of the principals have pointed out that in order to manage the staff differences, openness to innovation/self improvement value should be adapted by the school staff and it

should be shared by everyone at school.

Democratic Attitude

In the organizational level, democracy means participation of the workers in the use of organizational willpower (Harrison & Freeman, 2004). Democratic attitudes are seen as crucial in terms of showing respect to others' feelings and thoughts (Hançer & Tanrıverdi, 2003). In the meetings, 15 principals have emphasized that the workers need to have democratic attitude to manage the differences at school without doing any harm.

Being Fair

In the Dictionary of Turkish Language Institute (TDK, 2011) justice is described as guarantee of use of the rights provided by laws by everyone, convenience to rights and laws in the behaviours, protection of the rights or giving everyone what is appropriate for them and what they deserve. 14 of the principals have emphasized that the workers need to share being fair value to manage the differences effectively.

Respect to the Differences

In the Dictionary of Turkish Language Institute (TDK, 2011) respect is described as the feeling of tribute, honour which causes to behave someone or somebody in a careful, meticulous moderate way due to its value, superiority, senility, utility and divinity. Most of the principals (f=14) think that in order to manage the differences effectively, it is essential to share the respect to differences value at school.

Giving Value to the Human

Value is described as the abstract measurement to determine the importance of one thing, the equivalent of something, worth (TDK, 2011). In order to benefit from the differences, all with differences should be seen as valuable. 13 of the principals have emphasized that value should be given to the human so that differences can grow and they can be benefited.

Empathy / Understanding

Walking in someone else's shoes and seeing the events with their point of view, understanding, feeling their feelings and thoughts accurately and transferring this situation to them is called empathy (Dökmen, 1988). Mutual understanding efforts make the expression and understanding of differ-

ences easier. Consequently 13 of the principals think that empathy / understanding should be given value in terms of management of differences effectively.

Indulgence

Indulgence is described as welcoming everything with understanding and state of condoning as much as possible, allowance, tolerance (TDK, 2011). In other terms, indulgence is to show unrequited allowance in order to understand all kinds of feelings, thoughts and behaviours of humans (Büyükkaragöz & Kesici, 1998). 13 of the principals have expressed indulgence value in terms of effective management of differences.

Honesty

Honesty expresses believing somebody's words which contain prospective intentions (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985) integrity of one's personality and behaviours (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). 12 principals have emphasized honesty as a shared value to benefit from the differences effectively at schools.

Equality

Equality is expressed as not making any discrimination among people in terms of social and political rights no matter how their physical, spiritual differences are (TDK, 2011). Possessing opportunity equality causes positive reflections in the society. Existence of pluralist and democratic life in the organizations, display of the effects of the individuals is a desired situation (Tanör, 1994). 12 principals have pointed out that if equality is accepted as a value, the differences will be expressed more easily.

Accuracy

In the Dictionary of Turkish Language Institute (TDK, 2011), accuracy is described as candidness, to reflect something just the way it is, not hiding the truth and not appearing differently than the way you are or trying not to show yourself differently. The fact that the workers express the truths and thoughts related to them without behaving according to others, fear, hesitating will present different options in problem solving and decisions at schools. 12 principals think that it is essential to share accuracy value to benefit from the power of differences.

Disinterestedness

Disinterestedness can be described as not having formerly obtained positive or negative judgement based on specific conditions, events and images related to someone or something, not being prejudiced (TDK, 2011). 12 principals have emphasized that school workers should try to understand the others without being prejudiced to benefit from the differences.

Trust / Reliability

While trust is related to one's psychological state which covers the intention of remaining vulnerable by having positive expectations in terms of others' attitude, behaviour and intentions (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). Reliability is described as predictability which means to know what to expect from others and behaviour consistency (Hosmer, 1995; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Most of the principals (f=11) think that for effective management of the differences, trust should be an important value in school atmosphere. Moreover in the expression differences among workers, reliability is seen as a significant value.

Responsibility

Responsibility is described as someone's undertaking of their own behaviours or the consequences of any event which falls within their own jurisdiction (TDK, 2011). 11 principals emphasize the possession of the responsibility by the workers to manage the differences effectively.

Kindness

Kindness is described as behaving others in a respectful and graceful way, being polite (TDK, 2011). 11 of the principals have pointed out that when the workers accept kindness as a value and behave accordingly, effective management will become easier without the differences become conflicts.

Creativity / Productivity

Creativity contains collection, change of existing thoughts and creating new thoughts by synthesizing these. Creativity contains tendencies such as adopting variance and innovation, being able to test the thoughts and possibilities, organizations' looking the events occurring around it with a different

perspective, improvement of the current situation (Gürol, 2006). 10 principals have expressed that differences can be given value only in a school where creativity / productivity value is adopted.

Team Spirit / Integration

A team is a human group consisting of individuals who come together to accomplish common goal, determine a common understanding through the task they are responsible of and possess complementary characteristics (Straub, 2002). The school workers need to unite with team spirit in terms of working together so that the differences are directed to the school aims by being accepted as natural. 10 of the principals have made expressions which support this.

Openness to Criticism

Openness to criticism in terms of organizational level means that the workers are open to giving explanations related to the operations they carry out, criticism and discussions (Findikli, 1996). According to principals (f=9) openness to criticism should be accepted as an important value among the workers so that the differences can be managed effectively.

Openness

Openness means clarity, serenity, apparateness, uncovered and smoothness, not being closed, being comprehensible (Findikli, 1996). Openness is the sharing of the possessed information in a clear and honest way without diversion or hiding (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2001). In another description openness is individual's leaving themselves vulnerable to the others in the process of information share (Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2001). 9 principals have given importance to openness in both expression of the differences and effective management.

Patience

Patience is described as virtue of waiting in silence for the sad events such as pain, poverty, injustice etc to pass or waiting for something which will occur or come without hurrying (TDK, 2011). 8 principals have emphasized that if the patience value is shared, the management of the differences will get easier.

Courage / Challenge

Courage is described as the trust and dash which

a person finds within themselves when they begin with a dangerous or hard task (TDK, 2011). 8 principals have expressed that courage value should be shared among school workers so that the differences can occur.

Participation

Participation is described as the individual's undertaking a task in a process or situation voluntarily and actively (Sencer, 1981). Principals (f=7) have emphasized that participation of the workers in all kinds of tasks for participation sensitivity will be important in management of the differences effectively.

Variety / Polyphony

In great Turkish dictionary, variety is described as state of having lots of kinds, spectrum, fan (TDK, 2011). Principals (f=7) have expressed that provide that the variety/polyphony is accepted as an important value, the differences can be explained without causing any damage.

Charity / Sharing

Charity is named as behaving in an interested way, showing devotion, and also as philanthropy is described as being interested in the other person's happiness sincerely (Rempel et al., 1985). According to principals (f=7) cooperation of the individuals and groups by adopting the understanding of helping each other not only makes their exhibition of their differences easier but also the efficient solution of the problems caused by differences.

Freedom / Independence

Freedom is described as the state of thinking or behaving without depending on any restriction or force, not being subject to any condition, deciding freely or independant from any kinds of external domain according to their own will and thoughts (TDK, 2011.) Principals (f=7) think that at schools where freedom / independence is adopted, differences may occur more comfortably.

Optimism

Optimism is generally expressed as attitude or characteristic which evaluates every thought and task as good or as a world view which sees everything from its good part and expects a good exit in every

situation (TDK, 2011). 6 of the principals have stated that when an optimistic attitude is followed, the differences at school can be both expressed and managed more easily.

Universality

Universality which we can describe as the approach of taking all people into consideration in solving problems is a significant value in terms of behaving the differences in a tolerant and respectful way. 5 of the principals have used expressions which show the importance of universality in terms of management of differences.

Friendship / Amity

In the dictionary of Turkish Language Institute while friendship is described as being befitting to a friend, being pals, amity is described as being close friends, or behaving in an amicable way (TDK, 2011). Principals (f=4) have pointed out that school staff should adopt friendship / amity value to manage the differences without any problems at schools.

Conclusion

In the research which was conducted through qualitative research method with semi-structured interview with 17 principals, the principals have emphasized 23 staff differences. According to principals the most common differences which are faced at schools are branch, attitude, experience, age, ideology-political tendency, personality, associated union, culture, interest / hobby and gender differences. In the direction of the aforementioned, it may be stated that the principals are aware of staff differences.

The principals have emphasized 27 organizational values which should be shared by all school workers for an efficient management of differences. The values which are repeated often by the principals are openness to innovation/self improvement, democratic attitude, being fair, respect to the differences, giving value to the human, empathy, indulgence, fair play/equality, disinterestedness, trust- reliability, responsibility, kindness, creativity- productivity, team spirit/integration, openness to criticism, frankness, patience, courage/challenge, participation, polyphony/variety, philanthropy/sharing, freedom/independence, optimism, universality, friendship/amity. These specified organizational values are in line with other research studies focusing on determining organizational values (Dönmez &

Cömert, 2007; Nartgun Sezgin, 2006; Sağnak, 2005; Turan & Aktan, 2008; Yılmaz, 2007). However, what makes the findings of the present research original is its explanation of which values must be present for managing differences in an organization.

The shared common values connects organizations members, composes the basic source of organizational integration, sustainability and stability (Şişman, 2002). In the organization as long as there are no superior aim shared by all workers, a common vision and system of shared values, staff differences may create negative consequences instead synergy (Covey, 1998). Values such as diligence, success, responsibility, equality, independence, trust, devotion, autonomy, ambition, accuracy, courage, respect, self confidence, indulgence, philanthropy, honesty, love, obedience are the values which have places in organizational life too. Absence of values like these or the dominance of the different values which are not desired in the organization causes conflicts (Şişman). Moreover democratic attitude, opportunity and facility equality, freedom are not transferred to life as a general life style within the framework of order and laws, justice feelings of the individual or the society can be damaged (Büyükkaragöz, Yılmaz, & Kesici, 1996).

While in the organizations where workers' differences are not taken into consideration, the negative consequences which result from differences can keep the workers away from each other, in the organizations where these differences are paid attention and managed in a conscious way, the workers can be got closer to each other by creating some common values and preserving peculiar differences (Öncer, 2004). In the meetings carried out with the principals, that there are a lot staff differences at schools was determined. The essentiality of managing these differences effectively are emphasized by many researchers. It is essential to establish some values in the organization so that the differences contribute to the organizational goals instead of harming them. In this context, it is required that first of all the managers should protect the values emphasized in the research and then put efforts on establishing them in the organization. The research which was conducted in the qualitative model describes the situation which is required. A similar research can be designed in the quantitative model to seek to what extent staff differences and organizational values exist at schools.

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