

# Investigation of Primary School Teachers' Conflict Resolution Skills in Terms of Different Variables<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

In this study, it is aimed to determine the level of conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers and whether they vary by different variables. The study was organised in accordance with the scanning model. The universe of the study consists of primary school teachers working at 14 primary schools, two from each of the seven geographical regions. The sample group consists of 191 primary school teachers that were randomly selected from schools that make up the universe.

The "Conflict Resolution Skills" scale that was developed by Rahim in order to determine conflict resolution skills and adapted into Turkish by Gümüşeli (2001) was used in this study.

As a result of this study, it was found out that the conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers are at the medium level. It is seen that primary school teachers generally prefer the Integrating Approach as a general way of conflict resolution. Upon examining the relations of teachers' conflict resolution skills with their demographic properties, a significant difference was found between the independent variables of age and duration of service and compromising approach. It was concluded that teachers between the ages of 34 and 39 tend to use the compromising approach more than teachers in other age groups, while teachers with a period of service of 21 and more tend to use the compromising approach more than teachers working at other durations of service. Conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers do not vary significantly by the variables of marital status, gender, educational status, geographical region and the province they work.

**Keywords:** conflict, conflict management, demographic properties

## 1. Introduction

"It is quite hard to make an extensive and general definition of conflict, which occurs at very different areas and levels. For, conflict is a concept that is not only investigated by management but also economy, sociology, anthropology, psychology and political sciences" (Korkmaz, 1994). The sciences in question were defined by their own fields. It is not possible to prevent conflict in organisations. Conflict means the clashes that result from the ethics, character, the family where the employees live and are raised, social environment, worldview, outlook on life, and many other psychological properties, no matter what the demographic properties of the employees working in the organisation are, such as their duty, education, age and gender (Öztekin, 2002). Conflict is a natural consequence of the interaction between individuals with different opinions. In this case, that individuals have different priorities or perceived in this way may render the formation of conflict indispensable (Thompson, 1998). In this sense, it can be said that conflict is one of the natural elements of the social environment.

Healey (1995) says that in conflicts disputants focus on limited choices and resources rather than other possibilities that may exist outside the boundaries. Therefore, a conflict is viewed usually as a negative experience.

A conflict arises from the disagreements between the people in which people see an obstacle or danger for achieving their needs, interests and concerns (Mayer, 1990). Conflicts occur naturally as people try to manage complex social circumstances in which people have personal stakes (Ury, 1988).

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<sup>1</sup>This study is a further developed form of the study presented in the 15th International Classroom Teacher Training Symposium held on 11-14 May 2016 as an oral declaration.

The skills to solve conflicts enable people to cooperate for restoring a fair balance for their needs. The shift from conflict to cooperation gives both parties more advantageous possibilities (Axelerood, 1984).

“Individuals spend their lives in competition. People experience certain problems in this process. These problems experienced by people are called conflicts. However, conflict with a different personal scope is explained as living in tension. Terms such as collapse, war, distemper, tension, disagreement and adverseness remind of the term of conflict” (Karip, 2010). In technical terms, they are qualified as situations in which individuals have difficulty or fail to make their preferences. If this scope is further expanded, it is qualified as a social society.

Conflict, which is colloquially named as disagreement, discrepancy, non-adaptation, generally results from certain differences between individuals and seriously damages the organisational structure. Starting from here, it is understood that conflict is “the clash between two or more organisation members or groups in the understanding of organisation both from the system and different values” (Akçakaya, 2003). Individuals, who try to fulfil their desires with the effect of multiple motives, may feel like they are unable to work it out of many options. Cüceloğlu (1991) explains this situation that is named as conflict as “it occurs when two or more motives that are incompatible affect the individual at the same time”.

It is necessary to know the source and reasons for the conflicts that occur within the organisation in order to effectively manage the conflict. When organisational conflicts are examined, it is seen that most of them occur due to communication. Furthermore, works that are not well-structured and that are routine may also lead to conflict. On the other hand, organisational conflict tends to increase as the participation in decision-making increases. However, these conflicts are softer. Conflict is also about personal properties. Highly authoritarian and dogmatic personalities and personalities with low self-respect are prone to conflict.

Another reason for conflict is that the needs, drives and wishes of individuals go against one another. Certain conflicts may result from personal perception differences, or individuals may perceive this differently. These different viewpoints and different perception may also lead to conflicts (Taştan and Öner, 2010). Furthermore, there are also opinions expressing that most of the conflicts observed in organisations result not from rational reasons but emotional reasons (Başaran, 2008). “Conflict management is important for organisations as a concept. For, the lack of conflict means a monotonous structure causing boredom. The existence of conflict is expressed as a neither good nor bad situation. The dissatisfaction and nonsatiation in an organisation are effective in changing the effectiveness of the organisation as they require readdressing existing practices. The terms of conflict management and conflict resolution are different. Conflict management has a broader meaning. In conflict resolution, the conflict in question is reconciled. However, in the management of the conflict, both the reconciliation and conflict are managed in a constructive way (Çağlayan, 2006).

“Elements such as the increase in dependence, the formation of team-based structures, increase in awareness and increase in environmental uncertainties lead to an increase in the level of conflict. Studies conducted show that managers spend an important portion of their time by dealing with conflicts. That there is an optimum degree of conflict about the fight against conflict is a considerable and institutional capacity dependent situation” (Callanan and Peri, 2006). In terms of management, conflicts are important with regard to decision-making processes and they contribute to making better decisions.

“The indicator of a powerful institution culture at an institution is that the employees are in good communication with colleagues and senior staff in addition to their thinking that they are a part of that institution. Thus, they can consider the institution’s interests like their interests and love and respect other colleagues like their family members. The management can achieve its objectives more quickly when there is a powerful corporate culture” (Özdemir, 2012).

As a result of the literature review made on the subject, the studies titled “Investigation of the sources of conflict that teachers experience with students in the school environment” carried out by Demir (2015), “Investigation of the development of conflict resolution skills in primary school fourth grade social sciences course” carried out by Gürdoğan Bayır (2015), “Investigation of conflict resolution approaches of high school students in terms of attachment styles and certain variables” carried out by Dede (2015), “Relationship between organisational conflict and job satisfaction relationship in pre-school teachers” carried out by Kalebaşı (2015), “Relationship between conflict management strategies of primary school managers and organisation climate by teacher perceptions: Izmir province example” carried out by Çatakdere (2014), “Relationship between conflict management styles and negotiation skills of school managers” carried out by Yılmaz (2014), “Investigation between conflict management styles of school managers and stress levels of teachers: Istanbul province Gaziosmanpaşa district example” carried out by Atay (2014), “Investigation of the leadership behaviours and conflict management forms of primary school managers” carried out by Uzun (2014), and “Investigation of manager conflict styles perceived by the teachers working at private education institutions” carried out Gümüş Özkubat (2013) were found. However, no study examining conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers was encountered. In this context, it is thought that this study carried out in order to determine the level of conflict

resolution skills of primary school teachers and whether they vary by different variables will contribute to the field.

This study aims to determine the level of conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers and whether they vary by different variables. The answers to the following questions were sought in line with this general aim.

1. What is the level of conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers?
2. Do the conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers vary by marital status, gender, and age?

## **2. Method**

### *2.1 Model of the Research*

The study was organised in accordance with the scanning model. Karasar (2002) defines survey models as research approaches that aim to describe the past or current situation as it is.

### *2.2 Population and Sample*

The population of the study consists of primary school teachers working at 14 primary schools, two from each of the seven geographical regions. The sample group consists of 191 primary school teachers that were randomly selected from schools that make up the population.

### *2.3 Data Collection Tools and Techniques*

The “*Conflict Resolution Skills*” scale that was developed by Rahim in order to determine conflict resolution skills and adapted into Turkish by Gümüşeli (2001) was used in this study. The reliability studies of the conflict resolution skills scale used within the scope of the study were previously conducted by Rahim, and the reliability of the scale (Cronbach’s Alpha values) was found to be 0.73. According to the criteria that are complied with in the assessment of the Alpha coefficient, these data show that the survey is reliable. That the questions that make up the scale are gathered under reconciling, integrating, avoiding, dominating and compromising factors as a result of the factor analysis applied to the scale by Rahim and Gümüşeli was stated by authors in their relevant studies.

In the reconciliation approach where it is possible to partially give up and partially gain, the parties neither fully protect their positions nor fully lose them. The parties try to make an acceptable decision (no winner-no loser) by making concessions (Edmonson, Combs & Haris, 2008; Ghaffar, 2010; Rahim, Antonioni & Psenicka, 2001).

In the integration approach, the parties participate in the solution in cooperation, and they do not experience the worry of the fact that they will be eventually neglected. The parties show an effort to mutually maximise their benefit (Zikmann, 1992). In this approach, the level that the individual heads for both one’s own and the other party’s interests and needs is high (Rahim, Antonioni & Psenicka, 2001).

In the avoidance approach, the conflict situation is ignored and neglected. Rahim, Antonioni & Psenicka (2001) state that the interests and needs of conflicting parties are ignored, and there is a consequence in which both parties lose (lose-lose) in the avoiding style. Ignoring the conflict may lead to hidden hostility and insecurity by causing an increase in the tension of the organisation.

The dominating approach is a conflict resolution strategy, in which one of the conflicting parties wins and the other loses (win-lose) (Rahim, Antonioni & Psenicka, 2001). In the dominating strategy, while it seems like a party wins in a short time and the problem is solved, the sense of losing and “unfinished works” in losing party/parties may affect personal and corporate dynamics in the long term.

The concession strategy is the opposite of dominating, and it means that one of the parties loses as a result of making concessions on its needs and consequently ensures that the other party wins (lose-win) (Rahim, Antonioni & Psenicka, 2001). Making concession may cause that conflict results in an unwanted manner and the components create an incorrect solution. Nevertheless, many managers state that making a concession is the most suitable method for the parties (Zikmann, 1992).

The survey is prepared in 5-item Likert scale, and it includes the expressions, D1: “Totally disagree”, D2: “Disagree.”, D3: “Neither agree nor disagree.”, D4: “Agree”, and D5: “Totally agree.” While the answer “*Totally Disagree*” is represented with the number (1), the answer “*Totally Agree*” is represented with the number five (5). The following assessment table is found when we proceed in the light of the formula  $(n-1/n)$  that will form the scale that represents this range equally.

Table 1. Scale Arithmetic Mean Distribution

Totally Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Totally Agree
Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
$1 \leq \bar{x} < 1,80$	$1,81 \leq \bar{x} < 2,60$	$2,61 \leq \bar{x} < 3,40$	$3,41 \leq \bar{x} < 4,20$	$4,21 \leq \bar{x} < 5$

With the help of this rating, it is assessed that the mean of the answers given will help reveal the stress-coping levels of the participants of the survey. The teachers who were believed to represent the universe and made up the sample were chosen randomly for the research, and the scales were implemented. It was tried to ensure that the scales were replied sincerely considering the principle of voluntariness. It was also aimed to ensure the trust of the teachers by declaring that the results would not be given to anyone in line with the principle of privacy that the scale results would be used for the research.

At the stage of the data analysis; frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation data were used by the state of need in the analysis of the data using the statistics software, while ANOVA test and independent t tests were used in order to reveal the difference and significant relation between the factors and personal traits. When the reliability values formed in accordance with the answers given to the scale that had been applied were examined before including the findings found as a result of the analyses, the alpha value of the Conflict Resolution Skills scale was found as 0,818.

### 3. Findings

The tables showing the ANOVA test and independent sample t-test results together with the factor based frequency distribution, arithmetic mean and standard deviations of conflict resolution scale applied within the scope of the study are as follows.

Table 2. Conflict Resolution Levels of the Students

Row No	Factor Code	Factor (Approach)	Number of Questions	Participants (n)	$\bar{x}$
1	DA	Dominating approach	5	191	2,81
2	AA	Avodiance aproach	6	191	3,36
3	CA	Concession approach	5	191	3,15
4	IA	Integration approach	6	191	<b>4,02</b>
5	RA	Reconciliation approach	6	191	3,73
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>28</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>3,41</b>

Table 2 contains the distribution formed in line with the results given by primary school teachers in the sample group to conflict resolution skills. The scale consists of five factors in total being dominating, avoiding, making a concession, integrating and reconciliation. When the scale was assessed as a whole, it was determined that the conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers are at intermediate level ( $\bar{x}=3,41$ ). Upon examining the frequency distributions, it is seen that primary school teachers generally prefer the Integrating Approach as a way of conflict resolution (with  $\bar{x}=4,02$ ).

Table 3. ANOVA Test Results Showing the Difference between the Marital Status and Conflict Resolution Skills of the Teachers

Factors		K.T.	S.D.	K.O.	F	P
<b>Dominating approach</b>	Intergroup	,071	1	,071	,201	,655
	Intragroup	66,444	189	,352		
	<b>Total</b>	66,515	190			
<b>Avoidance approach</b>	Intergroup	,000	1	,000	,001	,982
	Intragroup	74,089	189	,392		
	<b>Total</b>	74,089	190			
<b>Concession approach</b>	Intergroup	,053	1	,053	,211	,646
	Intragroup	47,243	189	,250		
	<b>Total</b>	47,296	190			
<b>Integration approach</b>	Intergroup	,201	1	,201	,913	,340
	Intragroup	41,554	189	,220		
	<b>Total</b>	41,755	190			
<b>Reconciliation approach</b>	Intergroup	,010	1	,010	,053	,819
	Intragroup	36,674	189	,194		
	<b>Toplam</b>	36,685	190			

In Table 3, whether there is a difference between the marital status and conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers in the sample group was shown with the ANOVA test. Upon examining the results, it is seen that the

approaches in the scale do not vary significantly by the marital status of primary school teachers.

Table 4. ANOVA Test Results Showing the Difference between the Gender and Conflict Resolution Skills of the Teachers

Factors		K.T.	S.D.	K.O.	F	P
<b>Dominating approach</b>	Intergroup	,014	1	,014	,040	,841
	Intragroup	66,501	189	,352		
	<b>Total</b>	66,515	190			
<b>Avoidance approach</b>	Intergroup	,148	1	,148	,379	,539
	Intragroup	73,941	189	,391		
	<b>Total</b>	74,089	190			
<b>Concession approach</b>	Intergroup	,093	1	,093	,374	,542
	Intragroup	47,203	189	,250		
	<b>Total</b>	47,296	190			
<b>Integration approach</b>	Intergroup	,002	1	,002	,011	,918
	Intragroup	41,753	189	,221		
	<b>Total</b>	41,755	190			
<b>Reconciliation approach</b>	Intergroup	,344	1	,344	1,791	,182
	Intragroup	36,340	189	,192		
	<b>Total</b>	36,685	190			

In Table 4, whether there is a difference between the gender of primary school teachers in the sample group and their conflict resolution skills was revealed with the ANOVA test. Upon examining the results, it is seen that the approaches in the scale do not vary significantly by the gender of primary school teachers.

Table 5. ANOVA Test Results Showing the Difference between the Age Groups and Conflict Resolution Skills of the Teachers

Factors		K.T.	S.D.	K.O.	F	P
<b>Dominating approach</b>	Intergroup	,720	4	,180	,509	,729
	Intragroup	65,795	186	,354		
	<b>Total</b>	66,515	190			
<b>Avoidance approach</b>	Intergroup	1,342	4	,336	,858	,490
	Intragroup	72,747	186	,391		
	<b>Total</b>	74,089	190			
<b>Concession approach</b>	Intergroup	3,687	4	,922	3,931	<b>,004</b>
	Intragroup	43,609	186	,234		
	<b>Total</b>	47,296	190			
<b>Integration approach</b>	Intergroup	2,085	4	,521	2,444	,052
	Intragroup	39,670	186	,213		
	<b>Total</b>	41,755	190			
<b>Reconciliation approach</b>	Intergroup	1,202	4	,301	1,576	,183
	Intragroup	35,482	186	,191		
	<b>Total</b>	36,685	190			

In Table 5, whether there is a difference between the age groups of the primary school teachers in the sample group was shown with the ANOVA test. Upon examining the results, it is seen that the approaches apart from the concession approach do not vary significantly by age groups. As P value is  $0,004 < 0,05$  in the concession approach, a significant difference is found between the age groups of primary school teachers and making concession approach.

Table 6. Results of Descriptive Statistics of the Answers Given by Teachers to Making Concession Approach by Age Groups

	Age Group	N	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	S.E.	95% Confidence Interval for the Average		Min	Max
						Lower Level	Upper Level		
<b>Concession</b>	22-27	55	3,1200	,43136	,05816	3,0034	3,2366	2,00	4,20
	28-33	71	3,0169	,43654	,05181	2,9136	3,1202	1,20	4,00
	<b>34-39</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>3,3714</b>	<b>,58530</b>	<b>,09031</b>	<b>3,1890</b>	<b>3,5538</b>	<b>2,20</b>	<b>4,40</b>
	40-45	9	3,1778	,36667	,12222	2,8959	3,4596	2,60	3,60
	46 ve üzeri	14	3,3000	,62634	,16740	2,9384	3,6616	2,60	4,60
	<b>Toplam</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>3,1529</b>	<b>,49892</b>	<b>,03610</b>	<b>3,0817</b>	<b>3,2241</b>	<b>1,20</b>	<b>4,60</b>

Upon examining the ANOVA test statistical distribution shown in Figure 6, it is seen that primary school teachers working at the age interval between 34 and 39 prefer making concession approach more than other age groups.

Table 7. ANOVA Test Results Showing the Difference between the Education Status and Conflict Resolution Skills of the Teachers

Factors		K.T.	S.D.	K.O.	F	P
<b>Dominating approach</b>	Intergroup	,118	1	,118	,336	,563
	Intragroup	66,397	189	,351		
	<b>Total</b>	66,515	190			
<b>Avoidance approach</b>	Intergroup	,507	1	,507	1,303	,255
	Intragroup	73,582	189	,389		
	<b>Total</b>	74,089	190			
<b>Concession approach</b>	Intergroup	,036	1	,036	,144	,705
	Intragroup	47,260	189	,250		
	<b>Total</b>	47,296	190			
<b>Integration approach</b>	Intergroup	,316	1	,316	1,443	,231
	Intragroup	41,439	189	,219		
	<b>Total</b>	41,755	190			
<b>Reconciliation approach</b>	Intergroup	,019	1	,019	,099	,753
	Intragroup	36,665	189	,194		
	<b>Total</b>	36,685	190			

In Table 7, whether there is a difference between the education status and conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers in the sample group was revealed using the ANOVA test. Upon examining the results, it is seen that the approaches in the scale do not show a significant difference by the education status of primary school teachers.

Table 8. ANOVA Test Results Showing the Difference between the Years of Service and Conflict Resolution Skills of the Teachers

Factors		K.T.	S.D.	K.O.	F	P
<b>Dominating approach</b>	Intergroup	1,530	4	,383	1,095	,360
	Intragroup	64,985	186	,349		
	<b>Total</b>	66,515	190			
<b>Avoidance approach</b>	Intergroup	4,504	4	1,126	3,010	,062
	Intragroup	69,585	186	,374		
	<b>Total</b>	74,089	190			
<b>Concession approach</b>	Intergroup	3,402	4	,850	3,604	<b>,007</b>
	Intragroup	43,894	186	,236		
	<b>Total</b>	47,296	190			
<b>Integration approach</b>	Intergroup	1,164	4	,291	1,333	,259
	Intragroup	40,591	186	,218		
	<b>Total</b>	41,755	190			
<b>Reconciliation approach</b>	Intergroup	1,242	4	,311	1,630	,168
	Intragroup	35,442	186	,191		
	<b>Total</b>	36,685	190			

In Table 8, whether there is a difference between the years of service and conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers in the sample group was shown with the ANOVA test. Upon examining the results, it is seen that the approaches other than making concession approach do not exhibit significant difference by the years of service. However, there is a significant difference between the years of service of primary school teachers and making concession approach as P value is  $0,007 < 0,05$  in making concession approach.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics Results of the Answers Given by Teachers to Making Concession Approach by Their Years of Service

	Period of Service	N	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	S.E.	95% Confidence Interval for the Average		Min	Max
						Lower Limit	Upper Limit		
<b>Concession</b>	0-5	81	3,3519	,54327	,06036	3,2317	3,4720	2,00	4,33
	6-10	52	3,2308	,64857	,08994	3,0502	3,4113	1,67	4,00
	11-15	34	3,4608	,70000	,12005	3,2165	3,7050	1,67	4,83
	16-20	19	3,4035	,57819	,13265	3,1248	3,6822	2,67	4,67
	<b>21 ve üzeri</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4,1667</b>	<b>,76376</b>	<b>,34157</b>	<b>3,2183</b>	<b>5,1150</b>	<b>3,50</b>	<b>5,00</b>
	<b>Toplam</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>3,3647</b>	<b>,62445</b>	<b>,04518</b>	<b>3,2756</b>	<b>3,4539</b>	<b>1,67</b>	<b>5,00</b>

Upon examining the statistical distribution of the ANOVA test shown in Table-9, it is seen that primary school teachers with the service of 21 years and above prefer making concession approach more than those with other years of service.

Table 10. ANOVA Test Results Showing the Difference between the Geographical Regions where Teachers Work and Their Conflict Resolution Skills

Factors		K.T.	S.D.	K.O.	F	P
<b>Dominating approach</b>	Intergroup	1,382	6	,230	,651	,689
	Intragroup	65,133	184	,354		
	<b>Total</b>	66,515	190			
<b>Avoidance approach</b>	Intergroup	4,436	6	,739	1,953	,075
	Intragroup	69,653	184	,379		
	<b>Total</b>	74,089	190			
<b>Concession approach</b>	Intergroup	2,485	6	,414	1,700	,123
	Intragroup	44,811	184	,244		
	<b>Total</b>	47,296	190			
<b>Integration approach</b>	Intergroup	1,616	6	,269	1,235	,290
	Intragroup	40,139	184	,218		
	<b>Total</b>	41,755	190			
<b>Reconciliation approach</b>	Intergroup	1,687	6	,281	1,478	,188
	Intragroup	34,998	184	,190		
	<b>Total</b>	36,685	190			

In Table 10, whether there is a difference between the geographical regions and conflict resolution skills of the primary school teachers in the sample group is shown with the ANOVA test. Upon examining the results, it is seen that the approaches in the scale do not exhibit significant difference by the geographical regions where primary school teachers work.

Table 11. ANOVA Test Results Showing the Difference between the Provinces where Teachers Work and Their Conflict Resolution Skills

Factors		K.T.	S.D.	K.O.	F	P
<b>Dominating approach</b>	Intergroup	4,481	13	,345	,984	,469
	Intragroup	62,034	177	,350		
	<b>Total</b>	66,515	190			
<b>Avoidance approach</b>	Intergroup	6,213	13	,478	1,246	,250
	Intragroup	67,877	177	,383		
	<b>Total</b>	74,089	190			
<b>Concession approach</b>	Intergroup	2,636	13	,203	,804	,656
	Intragroup	44,660	177	,252		
	<b>Total</b>	47,296	190			
<b>Integration approach</b>	Intergroup	2,479	13	,191	,859	,597
	Intragroup	39,276	177	,222		
	<b>Total</b>	41,755	190			
<b>Reconciliation approach</b>	Intergroup	3,236	13	,249	1,317	,206
	Intragroup	33,449	177	,189		
	<b>Total</b>	36,685	190			

In Table 11, whether there is a difference between the provinces where primary school teachers work in sample group and their conflict resolution skills is shown with the ANOVA test. Upon examining the results, it is seen that the approaches in the scale do not show a significant difference by the provinces where primary school teachers work.

#### 4. Consequence, Discussion and Suggestions

In the light of the data and findings obtained from the studies made on the subject; the analysis results concerning the research were addressed at different dimensions and presented below.

It was determined that the conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers are at the medium level. It is seen that primary school teachers generally prefer the Integrating Approach as a conflict resolution style.

Upon examining the relationship between the conflict resolution skills and demographic properties of primary school teachers, a significant difference was found between the independent variables of age and years of service and making concession approach. It was concluded that teachers at the age interval between 34 and 39 tend to use making concession approach more than teachers at other age groups, and teachers with 21 and more years of service tend to use it more than teachers working at other years of service.

Conflict resolution skills of primary school teachers do not show a significant difference by the variables of marital status, gender, education status, and the geographical region and province where they work.

When the literature review was performed on the subject of the study, various studies that address the relationship between the conflict resolution methods that constitute the basis of the research and demographic variables together were found.

The studies that are similar to and different from the results of this study are as follows:

Gökalp (2013), who examined stress-coping and conflict resolution methods, it was observed that there is a weak positive relationship between the reconciliation approach and seeking social support approach, avoiding approach and desperation and submissive approach, and reconciliation approach and seeking social support and optimistic approach.

Karcioğlu et al. (2011) determined that both the managers and their subordinates prefer the integrating approach as the conflict resolution approach. This determination is in parallel with our study, and it is found that managers and teachers mostly consult the integrating approach within the scope of this study.

In the study that examines the management style of interpersonal conflicts between school managers and teachers, Atakan (2014) detected that managers use the integrating approach most and dominating approach least in the cases of conflict; and showed that the situation of using the avoiding approach when compared to the gender variable, and men prefer the avoiding approach more than women, however, other approaches are independent of the gender variable.

Koçak (2012) observed that teachers prefer the integrating and adaptation approaches more in the conflicts between the managers and teachers, while teachers prefer avoiding and dominating approaches more in the conflict atmospheres between each other. Nevertheless, the reconciliation method is generally used at a high level in all conflict situations and brings about a high level of the solution.

In the study on determining whether the conflict resolution styles of teachers working at vocational high schools in the school environment vary by demographic properties, Özer (2014) determined that teachers use the integrating style at the first place, reconciliation at the second place, submission at the third place, avoiding at the fourth place, and dominating at the last place.

According to the result of the study conducted by Tan (2016), the most frequently used style by school managers while managing and resolving the conflict is the integrating style. The integrating style is followed by reconciliation, making a concession, avoiding and dominating styles. The preferences of school managers by management styles do not vary significantly by demographic variables.

As a result of the study carried out by Batmaz (2015), it was determined that the managers of sports high schools effectively use their behaviour styles during the conflict and have high skills of using resolution strategies against conflicts. However, it was determined that as the professional and managerial experience of managers decreases, their skills of using behaviour styles and solution strategies against conflicts also decrease.

The result of the study conducted by Şahin (2016) shows that managers use the problem-solving strategy most and reconciliation strategy least in the process of conflict management. It is seen that the opinions on the use of humour in the process of conflict are generally positive. It was seen that there is generally a significant relationship between the humour climate of primary education institutions, humour styles of the managers and conflict management strategies. It was found that humour styles of the managers are an important predictor of the humour climate of the schools and conflict management strategies of the managers.

As a result of the study conducted by Aydın (2015), it was seen that the differences in perceiving the behaviours are considered as the most significant reason for conflict, while the size of the organisation was considered as the least significant reason for conflict according to the opinions of teachers and managers. Reconciliation was indicated as the most used conflict resolution, and the change of place of the parties of the conflict was expressed as the least used conflict resolution. There is no significant difference between the reason and resolution scores of the conflicts that occur at school by the gender, marital status, subject matter and years of working at the school of the teachers and managers working at the primary school. There is a significant difference between the reason of conflict scores at school by the age, school type and experience of the teachers and managers working at the primary school, and the resolution of conflict scores at school by the type of duty.

As a result of the study conducted by Çakı (2015), it was found that "Communication" is the primary reason for conflict between educators, and this is followed by the problems under the sub-titles "the way of doing something", "management and privilege", "attitude". While the "cooperation" style is used most in the management styles of the educators, this style was followed by "reconciliation", "avoiding", "submission" and "dominating" styles.

As a result of the study conducted by Karataş (2015), it was found that there are significant differences between the attitudes of school managers towards conflict by gender, however, there is no significant difference between conflict management strategies used by school managers by gender. On the other hand, it was found that social and organisational stereotypes are effective on the approaches of school managers towards conflicts by gender.

The following suggestions are mentioned in line with the findings of the research:



Knowing the path to follow in order to eliminate the negative aspects of the conflict that dominate in addition to its positive effects is important for teachers, who are important elements of education institutions. In this framework, holding awareness-raising training and seminars by the directorates of national education will be a significant step in increasing situational awareness.

As is also shown by research results, it should be noted that the way to get maximum yield from integrating and reconciling approaches among conflict resolution methods is communication, and any kind of social communication should be increased in education institutions, and it should also be noted that paving the way for socialisation to the extent that bureaucratic arrangements allow will enable the creation of more serene environments. Open door policies adopted by managers are quite important as they will allow teachers to contact their managers in the slightest confusion.

In this study, classroom teachers were investigated as the sample group. Similar studies may be applied to a different sample group. They can be applied by extending the sample group. The conflict resolution skills of preservice teachers and teachers may be compared by different variables.

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