The Effects of Pupil Control Ideology of Teachers on their Conflict Management Strategies

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Abstract: The aim of this study was to determine teachers' perspectives on conflict management strategies and further to determine the effects of pupil control ideologies on their conflict management strategies. 120 primary and secondary school teachers were administered a Likert type questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed through multiple regression analyses and the teachers' perspectives on conflict management strategies were determined. Moreover, the effects of pupil control ideology of teachers on their conflict management strategies were revealed. The results of this study suggested that teachers preferred integration reconciliation strategy in conflict resolution the most, and domination strategy the least. It was observed that, among the conflict management strategies, teachers' pupil control ideologies predicted domination strategy positively and integration-reconciliation negatively. Certain suggestions were made based on the findings of the study.

Keywords: *Pupil control ideology, teachers, conflict management strategies*

Introduction

The existence of an organization requires that there are more than two people. And, it is a natural fact that there conflicts at certain times in environments where people co-exist. As people generally work for their self-interest, it is probable that they have conflict of interest with the group or people they are in relation with. Because the human element is at the forefront in educational organizations, these places are among the ones where conflicts are observed more apparent (Sarpkaya, 2002). Teachers' student control ideologies could be seen as an important factor in conflict resolution.

There could be several reasons for the conflicts in organizations. Discrepancy between the needs and expectations of students, a negative classroom climate, and lack of teacher-student communication can lead to the formation of conflict (Celik, 2005).

It is impossible to prevent conflicts in any organisation (Sahin, 2006). Thus, the primary aim should be to direct conflict in a way to benefit the objectives of the organisation. In cases where this is not possible the conflicts should be managed so as not to damage the organisation.

Conflict and conflict management concepts have been described by many researchers in the field of management science literature. Before explaining what conflict management is and how it is described, it is necessary to explain what a conflict is. Robins and Judge describes conflict as "as a process that begins when one party perceives another party has or is about to negatively affect something the first party cares about" (2013; p. 446). Karip (2003) defines it as "a contention of interest, power and status".

Conflict is also described as an interactive process involving conflicts or inconsistencies in or between social existences such as individuals, groups and organizations (Rahim, 2002).

Conflicts naturally occur in organisations. For this very reason, administration of an organisation should have a tendency towards managing conflicts appropriately rather than trying to prevent them or ignoring them. Although there are a number of negative concepts used to in explanation of conflict (Inhibition, Inconsistency, Incongruence, Disagreement, Opposition, Resistance), there are certain management specialists who see conflicts as an opportunity to

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use (Ozdemir, 2012).

Conflict management was described by specialists as a process in which one of the parties of the disagreement or an outsider, in order to finalize a disagreement, does a series of actions in communication with the parties of the conflict (Karip, 2003).

Caglayan (2006) approached conflict management as a distinct concept from conflict resolution and stated the difference between the two as; "the term conflict resolution includes the reconciliation of the conflict, but conflict management term includes both the reconciliation and leading destructive conflicts towards constructive outcomes".

One of the most important tasks that an organisational manager has to do is to manage the conflicts in the organisation. Whether between individuals and groups or between organisations, leaders should go through certain phases of conflict management in order to finalise the conflict to the benefit or the group. The following phases should be carefully followed in conflict management are to detect conflicts, to investigate reasons, to determine alternative ways of conflict management, to apply the most appropriate alternative, and to follow the results and get feedback (Karcioglu et al., 2012; Kocel, 2010; Sahin, 2006).

The situations where there are too many conflicts and there are too few conflicts might damage the organisation, however it would be beneficial if there are moderate amount of conflicts (Durukan, 2004). Education managers, being aware of the fact that conflicts might bring about positive or negative results, should keep the conflicts at a reasonable level (Durukan, 2004).

M.A.Rahim (1983) and M.A.Rahim & Bonama (1979) investigated conflict management and designed five different strategies (see Figure 1). These strategies could be used not only for conflict management in individuals but also for conflict management in workers of an organisation. The following figure gives a visual description of these strategies.
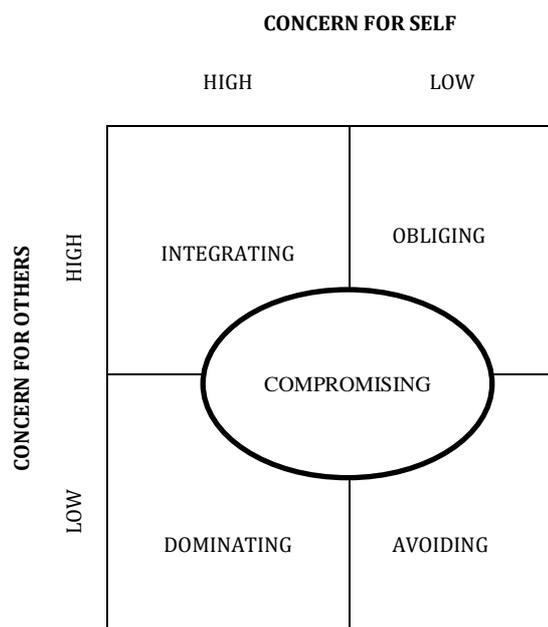

Figure 1: Rahim & Bonama's Model of Conflict Management Strategies (Rahim, 2002)

Integrating: It is a process in which people with concern for self and concern for the other in a conflict situation come together with the other party and try to find a solution that satisfies the interest of both parties (Sari, 2005).

Integration, which was approached as Collaborating in Thomas-Kilmann's (2010) work, is a strategy that includes both a high level of cooperation and assertiveness and a high level of satisfaction for both parties (Ozdemir, 2012).

Integration is a conflict handling strategy resulting from high concerns of conflicting parties for self and for the other and from their attentive approach (Friedman, 2000).

Compromising: In this conflict management strategy, the conflicting parties have intermediate level of concern for the other party. As a result, they try to reach a mutually acceptable solution by compromising certain things. They give up certain things to get others (Rahim, 2001).

Compromising is a mutually acceptable solution whereby both parties only get some of the things they want (Sarpkaya, 2002).

Dominating: This strategy is known to have a win–lose orientation and the individual aims to reach a solution for his/her interest by using his/her power and authority etc. on the other party (Ozdemir, 2007). A person that is trying to solve the conflict by dominating shows high concern for self and low concern for others. This dominating person wins in the conflict but the other party loses (Sirin, Yetim, 2009).

In dominating, the one party somehow forces his/her own solution. If the conflict happens in organisation members with superior-subordinate relationship, the superiors might command the subordinates to obey his/her commands (Karakus, Cankaya, 2009).

Obliging: In this strategy, one party in a conflict is with low concern for self and high concern for others and s/he chooses to resolve conflicts to in a way to satisfy the concern of the other party (Sari, 2005).

In obliging strategy, one of the parties accepts the loss by giving up his/her requests and the other party wins (a lose–win situation) (Rahim, 2001; Inandi, 2013).

Avoiding: It is explained as avoiding or neglecting the problem by one of the parties in the conflict, and also the individual fails to satisfy his/her own concern as well as the concern of the other party (Polat and Arslan, 2004).

Akgun (2009) defines avoidance as a situation in which both of the parties do not care for their own concern and the concern of the other party, and avoiding the conflict as well as ignoring it. Avoiding individuals are generally observed to have attitudes such as "stepping aside, indifference or unwillingness to hear anything negative" (Akgun, 2009).

Pupil Control Ideology: The origins of pupil control ideology studies go back to 1967 (Willover, Eidell & Hoy). Willover, Eidell & Hoy put forward the concept of pupil control ideology after observing students' interactions with their teachers, teachers' interactions with each other and administrators' relations with teachers and students for a long time at observable places (canteen, staff room) (Turan and Altug, 2008).

Willover et al. in their studies explained pupil control ideology with two concepts. These are "supervisory pupil control ideology" and "humanistic pupil control ideology" (Yilmaz, 2007).

In supervisory pupil control ideology, an understanding prevails in which students are under extreme pressure and they are not given opportunities for self-control (Bayram and Aypay, 2012). Students are asked to obey orders and do nothing else. Students are never trusted.

Supervisory pupil control ideology is generally employed in schools with traditional approach and military schools. The view of the students in such schools is that students are irresponsible, undisciplined, and they should be externally-controlled (Bas and Beyhan, 2013; Hoy, 2001).

Contrary to supervisory ideology, humanistic pupil control ideology allows students to control themselves (Hoy, Miskel, 2010). Teachers with humanistic pupil control ideology have relationships with their students based on mutual respect; and they try to create a friendly behaviour. Teachers are not the authority over students, they are rather viewed as friends trying to show the students how to control themselves (Bayram, Aypay, 2012).

Table 1: A Comparison of Supervisory and Humanistic Pupil Control Ideologies (Turan & Altug, 2008)

SUPERVISORY PUPIL CONTROL IDEOLOGY	HUMANISTIC PUPIL CONTROL IDEOLOGY
1. Student behaviour is controlled.	1. Self-discipline and control is essential.
2. Priority is to maintain the order and stability.	2. Learning and behaviour are assessed in psychological context.
3. Students are beings that need to be controlled.	3. Interpersonal relations are cordial and friendly.
4. Poor behaviour is assessed according to the normative moral principles.	4. It is important that students decide in their sole discretion.
5. The teacher perceives poor behaviour as a personal insult.	5. The teacher does not perceive poor behaviour as a personal insult.
6. Communication is one-way and from top to bottom.	6. Communication is two-way and from bottom to top.
7. It is essential not to rely on the students.	7. Trust, respect and tolerance are at the forefront.

There are basic differences between pupil control ideologies. Supervisory pupil control ideology is based on strict control and insecurity, on the other hand humanistic pupil control ideology is based on trust to student and respect. It is thought that teachers with these two distinct ideologies approach and resolve conflicts in their classroom differently. In other words, it is thought that conflict management strategies of teachers with supervisory pupil control ideology and those of teachers with humanistic pupil control ideology might be different as well. For this reason, teachers' pupil control ideologies and conflict management strategies should be determined, and the relationship between the two should be investigated.

The purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to find out which conflict management strategies the Primary and Secondary school teachers at Gaziantep Province Sahinbey Town Directorate of National Education Ministry use when they have conflicts with their students. Further, it was aimed to investigate the relationship between the conflict management strategy used and teachers' pupil control ideology.

Methodology

As the main purpose of this study was to determine conflict management strategies of the teachers, and to find out the effect of selected conflict management strategy on teachers' pupil control ideology research design of the study was structured as causal-comparative research model. Causal-comparative research model investigates probable causes of an existing situation in a cause-effect context (Buyukozturk, 2008; Fraenkel and Norman, 2008).

The findings obtained by survey model cannot be seen as a cause-and-effect relationship in the real sense; however it is possible to interpret the relationship found out from the data collected through survey model as cause-effect relationship because of the technical and economic challenges in research process (Karasar, 1998).

Some demographic data about the participants such as gender, age and teaching experience are given in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Distribution of Participants'' Demographic Variables

		n	%
Gender	Male	70	58,8
	Female	49	41,2
Teaching Experience	1-3 years	31	26,1
	4-9 years	31	26,1
	10-15 years	35	29,4
	Above 15 years	22	18,5
Age	29 and below	43	36,1
	30-37 years	41	34,5
	38 and above	35	29,4
	Total	119	100,0

As could be observed in Table 2 above, there is a balanced distribution of teaching experience and gender in participants. The balanced distribution of teaching experience, especially, provided us with a better assessment. Because of this, a probable difference between the teachers with higher teaching experience in years and those with lower teaching experience in years.

Data Collection Tools

Two different data collection tools were used to collect required data in this study. The data was collected through a single form including "Personal Information Section", "Conflict Management Strategy Scale", and "Pupil Control Ideology Scale".

Conflict Management Strategy Scale was developed by Ozgan (2006). The reliability score in Ozgan (2006) was 0,769. In our study, we found a similar figure, 0,763.

Pupil Control Ideology Scale (PCI) was constructed by Willower, Eidel and Hoy (1967), and adapted into Turkish by Yilmaz (2007). The reliability coefficient of this scale was found to be 0,794

Findings

The teachers' responses to the Conflict Management Strategy Scale and Pupil Control Ideology Scale were analysed carefully; and the mean scores, standard errors and standard deviations are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean Scores, Standard Errors and Standard Deviations of Conflict Management and its sub-scales, and Pupil Control Ideology Scale

Sub-scales	M	SE	SD
Integrating-Compromising	4,20	,04	,49
Dominating	2,63	,08	,87
Obliging	3,69	,05	,63
Avoidance	2,61	,08	,88
Conflict Management General	3,40	,04	,44
Pupil Control Ideology	2,41	,07	,79

As is easily seen in the above table, the mean score of Integrating-Compromising sub-scale was 4.2, which was in "always" option band. This mean score illustrated that the teachers in this study were mostly integrating and compromising in conflict management. They stated that they always used integrating-compromising strategy in conflict management in their classrooms. If we have a close look, we see that standard error and standard deviation figures were below 0,5.

The mean scores of dominating, avoidance and pupil control ideology scales were below 3, which is considered low. This also demonstrated that the teachers preferred dominating, avoidance pupil control ideology less as a conflict management strategy. They partially agreed with dominating, pupil control ideology and avoidance situations. The mean scores were between 2,41 and 2,63. The standard error and standard deviation of these scales were found relatively high (0,7 – 0,8).

Teachers had an intermediate level view between "partially agree" and "agree" in obliging and conflict management general scales. The means scores were between 3,4 and 3,6 from these scales.

This part presents the findings and results of the hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis for the effect of the scores of teachers' pupil control ideology on the scores of conflict management strategy sub-scales.

Table 4: The Results of the Hierarchical Multiple Linear Regression Analysis to Determine Which of the Conflict Management Strategy Sub-Scales the Teachers' Pupil Control Ideology Affected and at Which Level the Effect was

	Independent Variables	B	SE	β	t	p
1. Step Enter Method	(Constant)	3,40	0,62		5,47	0,00
	Education (dummy)	0,02	0,18	0,01	0,12	0,91
	Gender (dummy)	-0,20	0,15	-0,12	-1,32	0,19
	Teaching experience	0,00	0,02	-0,01	-0,05	0,96
	Age	-0,03	0,02	-0,25	-1,09	0,28
2. Step Stepwise Method	(Constant)	3,61	0,74		4,90	0,00
	Education (dummy)	-0,06	0,16	-0,03	-0,39	0,70
	Gender (dummy)	-0,21	0,13	-0,13	-1,56	0,12
	Teaching experience	0,01	0,02	0,13	0,64	0,53
	Age	-0,03	0,02	-0,30	-1,43	0,16
	Dominating	0,41	0,07	0,45	5,50	0,00***
	Integrating Compromising	-0,30	0,13	-0,19	-2,35	0,02*

Dependent Variable: Pupil Control Ideology
ΔR^2=0,305*; *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

As could be seen in Table 4, teachers' pupil control ideology had a statistically significant effect on "Dominating" sub-scale of conflict management strategies (β=0,45). This situation proved that the teachers who do not trust students and believe that they should be under strict control tried to resolve conflicts in their classrooms by using the dominating strategy.

Moreover, teachers' pupil control ideology had a statistically significant negative effect on "Integrating - Compromising" sub-scale of conflict management strategies (β= -0,19). The interpretation for this situation could be: Integrating - Compromising is a strategy based on the belief that students are able to control themselves and they should be trusted.

Pupil control ideology is, on the other hand, promotes the idea that students are not to be trusted and they should be under constant surveillance. As these two views are fundamentally opposite of each other, it is natural that these two variables have a significant negative correlation.

Based on this model, teachers' pupil control ideology accounted for %30.5 of "Dominating" and "Integrating - Compromising" sub-scales of conflict management (ΔR^2=.305, p<.05).

Result, Discussion and Recommendations

As a result of this research, integrating – compromising was proved to be the most commonly employed conflict management strategy in classrooms. The mean score of Integrating-Compromising sub-scale was 4.2, which was in "always" option band. This high mean score suggests that these teachers are highly integrating and compromising. They stated that they used integrating and compromising strategy in conflict management in their classrooms.

The mean scores of dominating and avoidance sub-scales were below 3. This result puts forward that that the teachers in general preferred dominating and avoidance less as a conflict management strategy in their classrooms. As the frequency of conflict management, the teachers partially agreed with dominating and avoidance situations. The mean scores were between 2,41 and 2,63. The standard error and standard deviation of these scales were also found relatively high.

Teachers had an intermediate level view between "partially agree" and "agree" in obliging and conflict management general scales. In other words, teachers used obliging and conflict management general total more than dominating and avoidance but less than integrating – compromising as conflict management strategy in their classrooms. The means scores of these strategies were between 3,4 and 3,6 from these scales.

The mean score of teachers' pupil control ideology were 2.41. This mean score is in the partially agree band. Teachers partly agreed to controlling students with rigorous monitoring. This result could be seen as an indication of the fact that the traditional school structure has not been abandoned yet. The trust that students can self-control themselves and develop in accordance with objectives of educational system was in partially agree band.

Karatas (2007) conducted a study about "Internal conflict management styles of Primary school teachers", and the results about teachers' mean scores on conflict management sub-scales are similar to the ones in our study. The sub-scales with highest mean scores in Karatas also got the highest mean scores in this study. In the same sense, the sub-scales with the lowest means in Karatas also got the lowest scores in this study.

Gunbayi (2006) researched about "An Investigation into Primary School Classroom and Subject-Matter Teachers' Views of Conflict Management Styles and Their Comparison". The results in Gunbayi are also similar to the findings of this study. The teachers in that study provided their views on integrating as "very high", compromising as "medium", dominating as "low", avoidance "high" and compromising as "high".

In this study, teachers' pupil control ideology was found to effect "dominating" sub-scale of conflict management strategy at a statistically significant level. A teacher with negative beliefs about trust to students and students' ability to self-control does not trust his/her students in resolving conflicts in the classroom. In order to resolve conflicts in accordance with his/her truths and under his/her supervision, the teacher tries to dominate the students. Therefore, this finding is quite consistent in this sense.

In Karakus (2009), the relationship between school administrators' personality characteristics and their conflict management strategies was investigated. The results suggested that "among the personality characteristics of school administrators, only openness to change predicted dominating conflict management strategy negatively and significantly". The most striking point here is that this relationship between dominating and openness to change is negative and significant. In other words, people who are open to changes do not resolve their conflicts by using the dominating strategy. In our study, it was shown that people with the idea that students are not to be trusted and they should be under constant surveillance tended to resolve their conflicts by using the dominance strategy.

Another finding of this study is that teachers' pupil control ideology was found to effect "integrating – compromising" conflict management strategy negatively and statistically significantly. This situation could be interpreted as integrating – compromising strategy is a strategy trusting students and believing that they can self-control themselves. On the other hand, pupil control ideology is a strategy not trusting students and believing that they should be under constant surveillance. As these two strategies are the exact opposites of each other, it is quite natural to have a negative significant relationship between them. In a study by Yilmaz (2009), it was found that there is a significant negative

relationship between pupil control ideology and classroom management with no interference to students. Based on the findings of our study, we can list the following recommendations.

Recommendations for practitioners in the field;

In this study, we identified a direct relationship between pupil control ideology and conflict management strategies. As a result of this, we suggest that teachers should reconsider their pupil control ideologies when resolving conflicts in their classrooms.

Moreover, the findings of this study revealed the mean scores of teachers' conflict management strategies. Teachers, individually, evaluate their conflict management strategies that they used in conflicts in their classrooms and must pay special attention for not being marginal in this sense.

By benefiting from the findings of this study, teachers should determine their own pupil control ideologies. Instead of seeing themselves as the owner of the classroom by having a supervisory pupil control ideology, they should adopt the humanistic pupil control ideology and see their students as individuals with equal rights. As a result, they can resolve conflicts in a more compromising and integrating way.

Recommendations for researchers;

A direct and positive relationship between pupil control ideology and conflict management strategies was found in this study. However, no significant direct relationship was noted between other conflict management strategies. Other variables should be researched in relation with other strategies.

Teachers' conflict resolution strategies are not only affected by teachers' pupil control ideologies. Research on other factors should be performed.

It is also possible to investigate the effect of teachers' pupil control ideologies on their conflict management strategies by replicating this study with a different population and sample.

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