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Diversity in high schools and diversity management: A qualitative study

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The purpose of the present study is to present the diversities in high schools and opinions of teachers about management of these diversities. The sample of the study is from nine teachers working at the official high schools in the center of Denizli in Turkey. In this qualitative study, the data are collected with a semi-structured interview form and analyzed with content analysis. According to the results of the study, the diversities teachers encounter the most in their schools are branch and political view diversities. Teachers stated that the diversities can affect the students positively, create variety and abundance when managed well; but they may cause groupings and effect students negatively when they are not managed well. Most of the teachers mentioned positive manners of principals towards diversities.

Key words: Diversity, teacher, diversity management, high school.

INTRODUCTION

Due to the rapid changes in globalization, there is a fast paced change in demographic, economic, social, and technological structures. Naturally, this change also affects organizations. In order for organizations consisting of many diverse individuals and groups to be able to adapt and be effective, they need to make a good use of and manage these diversities. It is especially important for managers to evaluate the differences between the employees and use it for the benefit of the organization.

The organizations evaluating the diversities, giving chances to the members with differences to reach their potential will also provide individual benefits to employees. The policies and practices in the organizations that manage diversities well establish mutual openness and fairness, showing respect and courtesy, effective commu-

nication, and cooperation between coworkers. People will experience less conflict and stress, and engage in more teamwork in such an organization. Thus, they will be able to reach their goals easier and faster (Barutcugil, 2011). The ability of organizations to attract, retain, and motivate diverse employees creates a competitive advantage for organizations in terms of finance and providing qualified human resources. Besides that, organizations benefiting from positive sides of diversities also gain advantage in creativity, problem solving, and adaptation to changes (Cox and Blake, 1991).

In the current study, diversity means the ways people are different from each other (Pollar and Gonzalez, 1994, p. 4). According to the Turkish Language Association, diversity is defined as "state of being different, difference,

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alterity". In directorial terms, diversity can be defined as collective mixture of similarities and differences being used in the actualization of organizational objectives (Hubbard, 2004a, p. 27).

Diversity has been classified into different dimensions by many scholars in the literature. In the categorization of the types of diversity, two approaches have been adopted which are bi-categorical and multi-categorical. Bi-categorical diversity approaches examine diversities as primary and secondary, observable and non-observable, shallow and profound, highly related to work and lowly related to work. Multi-categorical diversity approaches, on the other hand, examine diversities by classifying them into different groups (Surgevil, 2010).

Managing diversities examined in different dimensions is an approach that concerns creating an organizational culture that approves managing the similarities and differences between the people contributing to the organization, and integrating the problems of human resources management and the problems of the organization (Kramer, 1997, p. 86). In that sense, it is a strategic organizational approach for the improvement of diversities of the employees, development of organizational culture, and empowerment of the employees (Arredondo, 1996, p.17). This approach is based on planning, organizing, directing, and supporting the diversities in the organization in a way that contributes significantly to the organizational performance (Hubbard, 2004a, p. 27).

Diversity management highlights senior management approving of the diversities by creating an atmosphere that everyone feels valuable and accepted. At the same time, it is also a process that directs everyone in the organization to be more sensitive and attentive to others' differences and needs (Robbins and Judge, 2013, p. 55). In diversity management, it is assumed that the groups will preserve their identities and affect the organization (Schermerhorn et al., 2002, p. 16).

Previous studies show that different work groups have a potential to achieve a higher level of performance than homogeneous groups. Groups consisting of differences bring diverse information, abilities, skills, and viewpoints with them. Researches indicate that diverse groups come up with more ideas and solutions than homogeneous groups (Hubbard, 2004b, p. 16). Having diversity in an organization does not necessarily mean positive outcomes. But the important thing is accepting, internalizing, and considering diversities so as to create a common organizational culture. In that manner, an organization which accepts and welcomes diversity will have qualities of openness, understanding, honesty, security, learning, responsibility, improved communication networks, and avoiding extrajudicial execution (Speechley and Wheatley, 2001; cited in Oncer, 2004).

According to Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM), effective management of diversities establishes an organizational culture and environment that all the employees do their best for the organization; allows the organization to benefit from the similarities

and differences of labor force to gain a strategic advantage. It also improves the skills of individuals with different backgrounds to work together efficiently (Luthans, 2011, p. 34). According to the report "The Costs and Benefits of Diversity" published by European Commission (2003), organizations with efficient diversity policies have important advantages such as strengthening the cultural values in the organization, increasing the reputation of the organization, attracting talented people to the organization and keeping them in the organization, rising the motivation and productivity of the employees, improving the innovativeness and creativity among the employees, and improving the quality of service and customer satisfaction.

In terms of both its historical background and very broad borders, diversity management is a topic that needs theoretical enrichment and systematization. This is why further researches are needed in this topic. It is predicted that awareness of businesses will increase and practitioners' interest will be aroused towards the topic with these researches (Surgevil, 2010, p. 3). This is also in effect for educational and school organizations. When the literature is examined, it is among the facts of this research that in Turkey, especially in the area of education, there are scarce amount of studies in that topic (Balay and Saglam, 2004; Memduhoglu, 2007; Cetin, 2009; Balyer and Gunduz, 2010; Memduhoglu, 2011; Karademir et al., 2012; Polat, 2012; Gules, 2012; Cako, 2012; Boydak et al., 2013; Ergul and Kurtulmus, 2014; Memduhoglu and Ayyurek, 2014; Okcu, 2014).

In the current study, it is aimed to determine the teachers' perceptions about diversity in their schools and the way these diversities are managed. In order to achieve the goal of the study, the following questions were examined:

1. What are the main diversities teachers perceive in their schools?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of diversities?
3. According to the teachers, how do the principals behave towards the diversities in their school?
4. What are the expectancies of teachers from principals about managing the diversities?

METHOD

Research model

Qualitative research method is used in the current study. Qualitative researches are researches that allow qualitative processes for realistically and holistically propounding perceptions and events in natural environment (Yildirim and Simsek, 2013). In qualitative researches, the aim is to develop an understanding about how people make sense of their life, to outline the process of making sense, and to describe how people interpret their experiences (Merriam, 2013). In this research, it is tried to specify the teachers' interpretations related to diversity and diversity management thorough interview method.

Participants

Nine teachers working at the official high schools in the center of Denizli, Turkey during 2014-2015 fall semester constituted the research group. Firstly, the official schools in the central Denizli are classified by their type in specifying the schools. According to this classification, there are 2 general high schools, 15 technical and industrial vocational high schools, 13 Anatolian high schools, 1 social sciences high school, 1 teacher high school, 1 fine arts high school, 3 religious vocational high schools, and science high schools in Central Denizli. The highest number of teachers from each group is identified and one teacher from each school is connected by his consent. In this direction, it can be said that we benefited from the criterion sampling method which is a kind of purposeful sampling method. In criterion sampling method, the situations, defined earlier by the researcher, are taken into the study (Yildirim and Simsek, 2013). The criterion was taken as "the number of teachers in schools" in the current study. It is assumed that the diversities will increase with the number of teachers. While including one teacher from each school in the study, because there are too many technical and industrial vocational high schools, two teachers from two schools are included in the study. All of the teachers are included in this study on a volunteer basis. The information about the study group is in Table 1.

Measures

The data of the research were collected via semi-structured interview form which is developed by the researcher. Semi-structured interview enables the participants to explain the world they perceive with their own ideas (Merriam, 2013). After taking expert opinions on the interview questions, 4 pilot interviews were made, and after the necessary editing, the real interviews were made.

There are 6 questions in the interview form in total which are formed depending on the sub-problems of the research.

Data collection

Data of research were collected through face to face interview with teachers in their schools. These interviews were voice recorded by permission of the teachers. Each interview took approximately 30 min.

Data analysis

Data in the voice records were typed in on computer and approximately 70 pages of data set were composed. Data of research were analyzed in four stages via content analysis. Firstly, codes were acquired from participants' opinions. Then, themes were generated through assembling these codes under specified categories. In the third stage, the data of the research are identified and presented to the reader by organizing the generated codes and themes. In the final stage, the identified and presented findings were interpreted.

As mentioned above, all expressions of the participants were coded. In the next step, similar codes were collected under the same code. The examples of codes were given as follows; "Being a model to students, learning something different from different people, confusion of the students, being a bad role model to students, organizing activities, appreciating teachers' efforts, sharing information with each other for the teachers". Then, the codes were divided into categories by grouping such as "approach to student, teaching method, positive influence on students". Similarly, the main themes of the categories were created. To determine the category that is most importance for the participants,

Table 1. The study group of the research.

Participant	Sex	School type
P1	Male	Vocational High School
P2	Male	Anatolian High School
P3	Male	General High School
P4	Male	Science High School
P5	Female	Teacher High School
P6	Female	Vocational High School
P7	Female	Religious Vocational High School
P8	Female	Fine Arts High School
P9	Male	Social Sciences High School

the repetition frequency of the categories was calculated and expressed as frequencies. When analyzing the data, code number was given to each participant (P1, P2...).

Validity and reliability

According to Erlandson et al. (1993, cited in Yildirim and Simsek, 2013), in order to provide validity and reliability, some procedures are used like expert investigation, participant confirmation, consistency examination, and confirmation examination. Studies towards improving reliability and validity of this research are mentioned below.

In order to increase the internal validity of the research, we benefited from an expert with knowledge about the topic and competence in qualitative research methods. All documents about research process (data, analysis, results) were sent to this expert and some regulations and changes were made considering the expert's feedbacks. According to the feedbacks, the order of the questions was changed and some of the questions were combined. Another procedure for providing reliability and validity was participant confirmation.

After completing the interviews, the relevant reports and analysis were asked to be read and given feedback on whether if they reflect the truth or not through writing down the voice records and sending them to the interviewers. Yet, in order to increase external validity, data of research were tried to be presented to reader by describing them comprehensively. For this purpose, direct quotations were made from interviews.

In order to increase internal validity of the research, interview data was re-coded by another expert. The situations that both experts used the same codes were considered as consensus, the situations that the experts used different code were considered as dissensus. Reliability coefficient was found 74 % by using the [Consensus / (Consensus + Dissensus) x 100] formula (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Yet, in order to provide external validity, researcher withholds the voice recordings, printed documents, coding, and all the reports and analysis of the research process in case of need for confirmation examination.

RESULTS

The findings obtained from the research are presented in sub-topics in relation with the questions asked in direction with the aim of the research below:

Table 2. Opinions of teachers about the main diversities in their schools.

Themes	Categories	f
<i>Demographical diversities</i>	Branch	6
	Age	5
	Sex	4
	Education	3
	Seniority	2
	Place live in	1
	Income	1
<i>Occupational practice diversities</i>	Approach to student	4
	Occupational understanding	4
	Whether or not to complete the assigned duty	3
	Teaching method	3
	Disciplinary approach	2
	Perception by the management	2
	Assessment and evaluation method	1
	Belonging and commitment	1
	Approach to manager	1
	Control over the class	1
	Motivating to the lesson	1
	Tuition fee	1
	Adapting to technology	1
	Perception by student	1
Self-improvement effort	1	
<i>Idea , belief and life style diversities</i>	Political view	6
	Union	5
	Point of view	4
	Life style	4
	About religion (belief, sect, conservatism)	4
	Outfit	4
	Rising environment	3
	Expectation from life and priorities	1
	Rising style	1
	Culture	1
	Family structure	1
<i>Personality diversities</i>	Character, temperament	5
	Human relations	2
	Self-regulation	1
	Sociable	1
	Self-confidence	1
	Self-directed perception	1

Main diversities observed in schools

In the direction of the aim of the research, teachers firstly asked about the diversities they perceive among the teachers. The responses of teachers were coded and these codes collected under themes. As seen in Table 2, the diversities teachers perceive in their schools are separated under four themes which are demographic diversities; occupational practice diversities; idea, belief

and life style diversities, and personality diversities.

The mostly highlighted demographic diversities by teachers are branch diversities. These diversities are followed by age, gender, and educational diversities.

When the findings about the occupational practice diversities are examined, it is observed that each teacher necessarily mentioned about the occupational practice diversities. In terms of these diversities, the diversities mentioned the most by the teachers were approach to

Table 3. The opinions of teachers about advantages and disadvantages of diversities.

Themes	Categories related to advantages	f	Categories related to disadvantages	f
<i>Educational</i>	Positive influence on students	6	Negative influence on students	3
	School achievement	2	Comparison of teachers by students and/or parents	2
	Positive influence on parents and management	1	Decreasing of educational quality	1
<i>Organizational</i>	Variety and abundance	4	Groupings	4
	Positive interaction	4	Tension in the atmosphere	2
	Creativity	1	Negative influence on teachers' performance	2
	Gratification	1	Not wanting to join in to decisions	1
	Preventing conflict	1	Conflict	1
	Carrying the business	1	Negative interaction	1
			Disturbance	1

students, and occupational understanding. The teachers mentioned next the diversities in teaching methods, and completing the assigned duties.

Under the theme of diversities are idea, belief, and lifestyle, political view, point of view about life, union, lifestyle, religion, outfit, raising style, expectations from life and priorities, culture, and family structure. When Table 3 is examined, the diversity teachers mentioned the most is political view diversities.

Lastly, under the theme of personality diversities are examined. The teachers stated the diversities they encounter in their schools the most as character – temperament, human relations, self-regulation, sociability, self-confidence, and in terms of perceptions of themselves.

The advantages and disadvantages of diversities

The opinions of teachers about advantages and disadvantages of diversities are presented in Table 3 under two main themes which are; educational and organizational.

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that most of the teachers (six teachers) point to the fact of positive effect of diversities on students. Some of the positive effects are sampling of the students, broadening of students' horizon, looking from different perspectives, development of their personalities, and easing of their learning processes by seeing different methods.

P5: *"Diversity is always good. Because not everything should be like a prototype. For instance, the child sees a different personality and identity from you. Sees a different method. Like teaching a lesson, or management of the class....Gets to know different people at the same time. You can't extent the children's horizon too when we all are stereotyped or the same. The children because sees only the single point of view, single type of human.*

But now he/she sees a different kind of thing. Something different than you. Learns something different than this difference. Like sometimes without me being the dominant character he/she learns something different. Not let them be more naive, more polite, more silent of our friends they learns something. He/she takes as a model the things appropriate to them."

P7: *"I mean we knit the student for the society if we think of a vignette. I like the pink color while someone else gives the green color.... Let me say my own diversity for instance. I love the biology classes. I can say that I will be a biology teacher if I ever born again. I am more environmentalist than normal biology teachers. Maybe this is a diversity of mine for instance and I try to imprint this in every school I go and I gain good achievements every time."*

P8: *...Then it is beneficial for students for it to let them to see from different perspectives for instance, in my opinion. I think there is not such a thing as black or white... Children have chances to observe those things by themselves. They have chances to result from those diversities. But because there is no alternative to differentiate this as this is good, they accept this as good.*

When the teachers' statements on educational advantages are observed, one of the teachers mentioned diversities to be effective on parents and management as well as students. He/she stated this situation by making a comparison:

P4: *"One's income can diminish against some difficulties if he/she has an income only from one source while he/she obtains this income. But if he/she happens to be gaining this income from three different sources, he/she won't be affected by a negativity situation. He/she will know that he will have two other incomes if one does not giving to him/her. If we happen to apply this to teachership, there will be as many positive effects we will*

face when there are as many diversities either on parents, or students, or managers.

Another one of the advantages diversities can produce is about them increasing the success of the school. Both of the teachers (P5 and P7) have presented opinions about diversities between teachers being reflected as contribution to the success of the schools.

When the disadvantages of diversities in terms of education are considered, teachers mention them on the students like they did on the advantages. According to the statements of the teachers, not managing good or prevention of the diversities, the inconveniences that can be count among possibilities are diminishing of the role models of students, endeavors of teachers to adapt their opinions on the students, confusion of the students, being a bad role model to students, groupings among the students:

P2: *"...Everybody pull towards themselves. Everybody tries to transfer their opinions on the students. This establishes students to get confused. What happens when the students get confused. An unhealthy generation happens."*

P4: *"...everybody happen to be the same, students' role models will diminish. I had happened to been entered the class the student had happened to made my behavior as his/her role model. Had made another teacher friend of mine as his/her role model because of his/her appearance, made another teacher friend of mine as his/her role mode because of his/her approach to the student. But if these diversities happened to diminish, the role models of the students will decrease. ...His/her personality will change accordingly"*

P8: *"...Now this type of conflicts can affect students negatively. I mean polarizations may happen to occur between the students. The polarizations between the teachers may be reflected to students...."*

The advantages and disadvantages of the diversities are examined organizationally as a second theme. When Table 3 is examined, the teachers have stated that diversities create variety and abundance, cause positive interaction, provide gratification, prevent conflicts, increase creativity, and let the business to carry on.

One of the participants tried to explain that diversities create variety and abundance by making a comparison:

"Existing of diversities always is good, variety. You happen to go to a breakfast a brunch. As many varieties there are your eyes... you will get satiated faster. But if there are two varieties, you try to catch from both of them and you will keep an eye on something else. A person will get satiated as fast as there are varieties of food, varieties of meal. You will get the taste and the other one. Your palate will develop in the meantime." (P2)

Another one of the organizational advantages of the

diversities is settled as causing positive interaction between the teachers. Teachers have stated that with this interaction, their points of view have developed, they shared information with each other, and they benefited from diversities. Some of the striking opinions on that topic are as follows:

P4: *"Branch diversities for instance For instance, from geography, a problem about biology about chemistry about physics about mathematics or when we encounter with a problem I can't overcome, I am able to get the answer directly from my teacher friends... This is the reflection of branch diversities to us."*

P5: *"But there is such a thing you learn very different things from different people. For example, I always say this. Your point of view becomes colorful as you know as many people as you do...."*

P8: *"In terms of developing oneself for teachers... Teachership is not a thing like we do what we should and leave. It is always in a state of revolution. Even teachers can learn different things from each other and they have the opportunity to expand the window of their life styles..."*

When the organizational advantages of diversities are examined, four of the teachers stated that diversities can cause groupings. The important point in here is that each of the four teachers mentions the political view groupings of the teachers:

P2: *"Groupings happen quite a lot because of the age differences. Such a great disadvantage. The strings are not attached they even break. Like the biggest problems are in those schools. Elder younger groupings are one. Women male let to be some extent. But the main scary and frightening grouping is political grouping and union grouping. It causes disturbance a lot. What do these effects. Effect the quality of education."*

P3: *"...Such groupings happen. But this happens for instance. The biggest thing is political. I think politics should not occur in schools..."*

P5: *"...I mean political views occur. Depending on political views, unions for instance."*

P8: *"...The polarizations occurring between the teachers can be reflected to the students.... Union activities, political pressures.. these all are things that bother in business settings."*

The behaviors of principals towards diversities

The opinions of teachers towards principals' behaviors about diversities are grouped under two themes which are positive and negative. As seen in Table 4, teachers mostly stated positive behaviors of their principals that their principals create an atmosphere of unity and solidarity, they do not discriminate between the teachers, are fair and objective, they tolerate diversities, and pay attention to diversities in distribution of tasks. On the

Table 4. The opinions of teachers about the behaviors of principals towards diversities.

Themes	Categories	f
Positive	Creating an atmosphere of unity and solidarity	5
	Fair, equal, objective, not discriminating	5
	Tolerating diversities	4
	Paying attention to diversities in distribution of tasks	4
	Knowing the diversities of employees	2
	Creating a peaceful school environment	2
	Appreciating the positive outcomes of diversities	2
	Respecting diversities	1
	Supporting diversities	1
	Appraising diversities	1
Negative	Not being objective	1
	Not including in decisions	1
	Not being open to diversities	1
	Trying to prevent diversities	1

other hand, in negative behaviors, teachers mentioned principals being not objective towards the teachers they are in closer relationships to, not including others in decisions, not being open to diversities in situations causing problems for management or themselves, disturbing the process of the school, and they do not want diversities in those situations.

When the opinions of teachers on the behaviors of their principals about diversities are examined, two teachers responded as “positive in general” but criticized them for showing negative behaviors sometimes; and one teacher refused to talk on that topic and responded as “...let’s say, not as it should be...” while six out of nine teachers presented completely positive opinions by indicating that their principals respond “positively” to the diversities.

Some of the opinions of the teachers stating that their principals accept diversities positively are presented below:

P1: *He/she approves, supports diversities. For instance, he/she has just gathered us. The ones who made a great effort for the dance night, poem, theater night, the ones who made a great effort for graduation. He/she gave an emotional speech to all the friends while buying them tea or coffee...*

P3: *...The breakfast example I have just mentioned, for instance. Just to let there be unity and solidarity. There will be like a dinner soon. In the middle garden again. They really put effort on this.*

P5: *The management knows everything indeed and behaves accordingly to everybody. Because this is a teamwork. The most important thing in a team is knowing the people. I mean, with whom to travel with, with whom not to travel with. The first example is in the beginning of the year when the commissions are formed, the*

management chooses people depending on this... because this is teamwork....

P6: *This is the first time I work with a principle who is that fair, dealing with everybody as a proper and a complete manager. Because I have never been able to detect his current view. This means we have such a principle that is quite good, without giving out his side, who behaves equally to culturers and occupationists, even running social activities with culture teachers despite being an occupationist, applying the rules as knowing them very good. And maybe this is why there are not this many disturbances in such a big school. Not this many groupings.*

The opinions of teachers stating that principals accept diversities positively in general but criticizing them in some points are as follows:

P8: *...evaluate diversities. Don’t engage in negative approaches. Don’t engage in negative approaches against ideological diversities like this. Tries to create a school that every teacher can contribute, to according to their skills, capacities... My negative criticism; by forming more intimate relations with the teachers whom he feels closer to as characters but not in ideological way. Mostly characteristically. May be more distant to others while forming more intimate to them... This can cause disturbances sometimes... He/she may used to be not objective. But not as big as to cause big troubles in general...*

P9: *In my observations; he/she is open to diversities that won’t affect the general process of the school, won’t trigger troubles with parents or upper level organizations, as far as I see. But there are also points that they do not accept diversities in specific points.*

Table 5. Expectation of teachers from principals about management of diversities.

Themes	Categories	f
<i>Human relations and communication</i>	Supporting the employees	4
	Sociability	3
	Embracing	3
	Humane	2
	Intertwining with teachers	2
	Dealing with teachers one to one	2
<i>Valuing diversities and equality</i>	Being objective	6
	Justice – equality	4
	Tolerance for political views	3
	Openness to diversities	3
	Not preventing diversities	3
	Benefiting from positive aspects of diversities	2
	Accepting diversities	2
	Observing diversities of teachers well	2
<i>Directorial</i>	Inclusion to decisions	3
	Revolutionist, openness to change	3
	Focusing on achievement rather than the rules	2
	Teamwork	2
	Occupational efficiency	1
	Distribution of authority	1
	Coordination	1
	Being able to take risks	1

Yet another teacher responded as follows by refusing to comment on that topic:

P2: *I mean I can't say that it is something as such. ...let's say, it is not as it should be. There is a thing to rear something. Some people rear a school, some people can't...*

Expectation of teachers from principals about management of diversities

The opinions of teachers on their expectations from their principals about management of diversities are grouped under three main themes which are human relations and communication; valuing diversities and equality; and directorial. The theme and the codes acquired from the opinions of teachers are presented in Table 5.

Some of the opinions of teachers about their expectancies about diversities from their principals are presented below:

P1: *A principal is someone who embrace everyone, able to do teamwork... there are even many differences between a principal and a leader... ... A principal should give targets, direct, support teachers in their jobs. I can speak way more easily securely way more*

comfortably be present in interaction when I am presented in approach to my teacher friends, students, and parents, if I feel the principals' support behind me.

P2: *A principal should be an organizer, connective, and assembler. I mean he/she should be able to embrace in every manner. The famous roof formula is fundamental really something that should exist. And should be sharing, plus social. I mean a principal of a school that is presented there should be as a social person as possible. Should be at peace with everybody. Should be able to talk with everybody even with a child, with the oldest teacher, should be able to deal with the youngest teacher one to one. Should be able to sit around the same table. Should be able to drink the same tea. Communication, communication before everything.*

P3: *Should be able to always embrace everyone. Should be objective. Even should be able to leave his/her political view aside to evaluate everyone with the thing. Should evaluate them as a person, as an individual.*

P4: *...You can't discriminate between the teachers. They may treat everyone equally. There were favoritisms in the place I used to work despite me having very big negativities.....I mean because of the political views can be a sympathizer or a militant of Party A, even though we are civil servants. A principal should not impose his/her views on everybody. He/she should tolerate people from*

different political views.

P7: My diversity is the environment. The management should observe these diversities well and support teachers to work for these diversities.... This is not that hard actually. The received documents are certain, the certificates of achievements teachers received are certain... Principals are monotonic, unfortunately. The school is a deposit to them in their opinions. They are responsible if something happens. Like is the teacher on duty? They always keep track of this. Are the lessons started on time? Are the lessons finished on time?...

P9: Understanding, showing the same respect to each unit in the organization he/she works, from the principal... I expect him/her not to be prejudiced. I expect him/her not to see the employees from their political views. His/her view can definitely be on a side but the organization is not his/her, not mine, not anybody's... the success of the organization should be his/her only aim.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the current study was to examine teachers' opinions about diversity and diversity management in their schools with a qualitative research technique. According to the results, the diversity teachers observed are grouped under four main themes which are; demographic diversity; diversity in application of the occupation; thinking, belief, and life-style diversity; and personal diversity. This classification can be claimed as suitable to multi-categorical diversity approaches. Multi-categorical diversity approaches are formed by clustering many diversity factors or classifying according to the relations between them. McGrath et al. (1995, cited in Mannix and Neale, 2005) distinguished and examined diversity in five categories namely; demographic features; job related knowledge, abilities, and skills; values, beliefs, and attitudes; personality and cognitive and behavioural styles; and status diversities.

The diversities mentioned the most by the teachers were branch and political view diversities. These diversities are followed by age, union, and character diversities. This finding is in accordance with Polat's (2012) findings. In his study with school principals, Polat (2012) reported that the most frequently observed diversities by principals are branch, attitude, experience, age, ideological-political tendency, personality, and union membership. In the study of Tozkoparan and Vatansever (2011), on the other hand, the diversities highlighted the most are education, culture, mentality, and personality diversities; similarly in the study of Cakir (2011) they are education, culture, and personality diversities.

The results in terms of advantages and disadvantages of diversities are examined under two main themes which are educational and organizational. These findings are in support of Memduhoglu's (2011) results. Thus, he highlighted that having teachers with diversities work has

advantages for management, teachers, students, and the school while it brings some hardships for the management of the school.

Teachers stated that diversities will affect students positively, and improve the success of the school. Memduhoglu (2011) has also concluded that teachers with diverse interests, skills, and competencies, from different sociocultural backgrounds working in schools, contribute to the development of schools and students as well as easing for schools to reach their goals. Findings of Allen et al. (2007) support the benefits of diversities to organizations in terms of organizational performance. Similarly, in their study, Choi and Rainey (2010) found a positive correlation between management of perceived diversities and organizational performance. Moreover, teachers indicated that diversities create variety and abundance (Cakir, 2011; Aksu, 2008; Yanasma, 2011), increase creativity (Cox and Blake, 1991; Millikan and Martins, 1996; Austin, 1997; Bassett-Jones, 2005; Lattimer, 1998; Roberge and van Dick, 2010), and provide gratification (Pitts, 2009; Buckingham, 2010).

As there are many advantages of diversities to organizations, there could be disadvantages as well, when they are not managed well. Teachers reported that diversities can lead to negative effects in educational process, grouping in organizations, negative effects in teachers' performances, disturbances in the atmosphere, conflicts etc. The related literature is also in support of these findings. In the study of Jehn et al. (1999), a positive correlation was found between social category and value diversities, and relational conflicts. It is reported in the study by Pelled et al. (1999) that diversities cause conflict, whereas Hobman and Bordia (2006) found a positive correlation between value diversities and conflict. In the study of Aksu (2008), the participants stated the most important problem that can occur in a team with different aspects as miscommunication/disagreement, and the second as conflict. Similarly, in the study of Yanasma (2011), the employees have also indicated the biggest problem that diversities cause as miscommunication and disagreement. Organizations should manage diversities well in order to benefit from these advantages and to diminish the disadvantages to the least possible level. At that point, the role of the managers cannot be denied. The attitudes of the managers towards diversities have an important effect on the success of diversity attempts (Buttner et al., 2006). In terms of diversities, Cox and Blake (1991) mentioned the need of organizations for managers insisting on the need of diversity, being a role model for the behaviors needed for change, and helping to carry the organization forward, through highlighting the managers being revolutionist. In order for managers to benefit from the advantages and decrease the disadvantages of the diversities, organizations are needed to be transformed from monolithic or pluralistic structures to multicultural structures. Pluralism, complete integration

of minority members formally and informally, absence of prejudice and discrimination, and low levels of intergroup conflict characterizes multicultural organizations. Each employee can reach to their potential when these conditions are met and “value in diversity” can be achieved (Cox 1991).

Moving from the point of the importance of managers in the process of diversity and diversity management, teachers are asked about the behaviors of principals for diversity. The results about principals’ behaviors are discussed under two themes which are positive and negative. It is a satisfying finding that six out of nine teachers present completely positive opinions towards their principals about diversities. Teachers stated that principals create an atmosphere of unity and solidarity, do not discriminate between teachers, are fair and objective, welcome the diversities, and pay attention to diversities in distribution of tasks. Similarly, in the study of Memduhoglu and Ayyurek (2014) with preschool teachers, participants largely agreed with that knowledge and skills are supported, experiences are shared in solving the problems between the employees, different opinions are welcomed, and different behaviors are taken normally, by stating that diversities are managed well in general at preschools. In another study of Memduhoglu (2007), teachers stated that principals in high schools present a management depending on the diversities, and possess personal attitudes and behaviors, and organizational values and norms.

Lastly, the expectations of teachers from principals about diversities and diversity management are examined in the study. The findings directed towards teachers’ expectations are summarized under three themes which are human relations and communication, valuing the diversities and equality, and directorial expectations. Teachers expect their principals to be supportive, social, and embracing in human relations and communication terms; to be objective, fair, tolerant to different political views, open to diversities, and not to inhibit diversities in valuing the diversities and equality terms; and to include the employees to decisions, revolutionist, and open to reforms in directorial terms. In the study of Polat (2012), school principals emphasized openness to reforms related to organizational values that should be shared by all employees – self-development, democratic attitude, fairness – equality, respecting the diversities the most. Yet, in the study of Anderson (2014), participants supported that managers should be in a continuous communication with the employees, and understand various perspectives of the employees in order to manage diversities effectively.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the results of the study, the diversities teachers mentioned the most are branch and political view diversities. Teachers stated that diversities can

affect the students positively, create variety and abundance, and increase the interaction of teachers when managed well, by discussing the effects of diversities from the point of the educational process and organization. But they stated that diversities can affect the students negatively, and cause groupings when they are not managed well. Most of the teachers mentioned that their principals adopt a positive manner towards diversities. Teachers want to work with managers who are objective, fair, supportive to their employees, and including employees to the decisions.

According to the results of the study, it can be concluded that it is needed to create a climate where diversities are respected, valued, and welcomed in schools. Diversities should be managed well in order to benefit from the advantages and diminish the disadvantages of the diversities. Thus, interventions can be made in order to raise awareness of the principals and the teachers about diversities and diversity management. Principals should create an atmosphere of unity and solidarity, and support teachers by developing positive relationships with them; and place importance in values such as objectivity, justice, and equality.

There are a scarce amount of studies about diversities and diversity management in Turkey. It can be ensured to increase the number of studies by attracting the attention of the academicians and the practitioners to the topic. Similar studies can be made in different educational levels (primary schools, secondary schools, colleges etc.) and with different work groups (school principals). The relations of diversities and diversity management with organizational outcomes such as commitment, gratification, or conflict can be examined with quantitative methods.

There are some limitations for this study. The participants of the study were limited as 9 teachers so the findings have not the function of generalization. As mentioned above, different groups (such as principals) can be added to the study.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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