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PROJECT SCHOOLS AS A SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT MODEL

Research Article

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Abstract

Education is a very expensive investment with high opportunity costs. Efforts for attaining schools with intended quality top the agenda of world nations' education plans and programs. Turkish Ministry of National Education has also made several reforms to increase the quality of education. The latest reform made in the field of educational management model has been the project schools developed with various innovations. Including school principals into the teachers' selection process can be regarded as the new aspect of school-based management. Sharing authority to choose teachers with school principals is a brand new approach for the Turkish National Education system. This study aims to detect reflections of project schools' structural and managerial features in practice and depends on the qualitative method, including observation and interviewing techniques. The research sample comprises 15 Imam Hatip High Schools located in Istanbul in 2018-2019 Education Year and 23 teachers working in these schools. "Semi-structured Interview Questionnaire" was utilized for scaling. According to research results, we conclude that teachers in project schools are satisfied with the new education model. There seems to be a total increase in teachers' efficiency in addition to higher teacher performances, due to the teams built under the leadership of school principals.

Keywords: Project School, School-Based Management, Leadership, Teamwork

1. Introduction

Around the world, there is the growing recognition that teacher agency and professional influence are critical components in the pursuit of school and system improvement (Harris & Jones, 2019). Since the operation of traditional schools has been unable to meet the demand for high-quality school education, the trend of school reform has been shifted from "maintenance" to "performance" (Lu & Lin, 2016). Teamwork, learning organization in particular, constitutes the backbone of management approaches such as total quality management (Elma, 2002). When teachers work together on a clear and common set of shared goals, there can be a lasting and significant impact on learner outcomes (Sharratt, 2019). As the teams are formed, complementary skills and abilities exceeding those of any members of an organization arise. Communication increases and new information is shared within the team. A power (synergy) unleashes equal to or greater than the sum of team members. The magical word of teamwork is synergy (Karšli, 2004). One of the required conditions for effective teamwork is the presence of influential leadership within a team. Although teamwork is a product of holistic approach, its success largely depends on the effective leader of the team. The leader, as the individual who guides the team, ensures team awareness and spirit, attains power from team members' performances and guiding that

power to achieve team targets, contributes significantly to the team (Elma, 2002), (Ramberg, Brodin Låftman, Fransson, & Modin, 2019).

The Turkish Ministry of National Education has started to implement a new model that attaches great importance to teamwork in school management through project schools (hereafter referred to as PS). The most important difference distinguishing these schools from others is the fact that managers and teachers assigned to these schools are selected with a different method. The PS principal has been given the authority to build his/her own team. Besides, the principal's assignments are to be exempted from the prevailing regulations. Also, it is not allowed in these schools to assign managers and teachers through first assignment or change of working place. The school manager is also furnished with the authority to select both his/her deputies and teachers and review their performances (MEB, 2014). That very authority together with other managerial features makes PS a new and innovative model in the Turkish National Educational System. It can be predicted that this new management model will be sustainable and even popularized if PS teachers present a good teamwork under an effective education leader and these schools contribute to society.

1.1 Project-Based Learning and Project School

Project-based learning is a systematic teaching and learning method, which engages students in complex, real-world tasks that result in a product or presentation to an audience, enabling them to acquire knowledge and life-enhancing skills (Chen & Yang, 2019). The philosophy of project-based learning considers that learning is more engaged when triggered by a student's "I need to know" than by a teacher's "because you should know" (Lenz, Wells, & Kingston, 2015). The core of project-based learning is the project itself. Project is the word that distinguishes project-based learning from other instructional approaches, and this can be defined as "an act of creation over time", involving students in a constructive investigation (Chen & Yang, 2019).

Project school is defined as the school established at home and abroad within the framework of cooperation agreements with domestic/foreign institutions/organizations or countries, implementing certain educational reforms and programs together with the schools and institutions conducting national or international projects. The key distinctive features of the PS are as follows:

- 1) It accepts students with LGS (Highschool Entrance Exam) scores. The class size is 30.
- 2) The length of service of managers and teachers is 4+4 years, 8 years in total.
- 3) The school principal is given the authority and the right to select other managers and teachers and review their performances.
- 4) Multiple national/international education programs and projects are implemented. (i.e., IB, IGCSE, International Baccalaureate, Language Education Through Preparatory Classes, Physical Sciences and Social Sciences Education Programs)
- 5) It has an advisory board consisting of academicians and members of non-governmental organizations.
- 6) Foreign national teachers can be assigned for foreign language education.
- 7) At the end of each academic year, the school manager furnishes a report including his reviews and follow-ups as well as his recommendations for the next year and presents it to the Ministry of National Education (MEB, 2016).

Moreover, PS have top-level physical infrastructure (i.e., modern classrooms, physical and social sciences laboratories, language and technology laboratories, library, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, music and art workshops, cafeteria and boarding house) that enables various academic, social and sports activities.

PS introduces a new and different management and education model to the Turkish National Education system. The adopted different education models (intensive foreign language, physical sciences or social sciences programs), the desire to integrate with the international education society (IB, IGCSE programs) and the authority and resources granted to the school management (building teaching staff, furnishing reports, advisory board) are all regarded as steps for establishing a more efficient school.

1.2 School-Based Management

Decentralising major decision-making authority to the school level has been a mantra in international education development discourse and practices for some time. Such reform is often described as school-based management (Okitsu & Edwards, 2017). It is argued that by decentralizing decision-making authority and responsibility for school operations from the federal level to local stakeholders, these decisions can better reflect local needs and priorities leading to improved student outcomes (Santibañez, Abreu-Lastra, & O'Donoghue, 2014). School-based management has frequently been proposed as a way of making schools more productive in both developing and developed countries (Edwards Jr. & DeMatthews, 2014), (Ganimian, 2016). Cross-country evidence using international student achievement tests show that students perform better in countries with higher levels of school autonomy in process and personnel decisions (Han, 2018). Among other outcomes, it is generally expected that, school-based management, in addition to strengthening the accountability of the teacher, which in turn will lead to better student learning (World Bank, 2004). Fostering a school governance structure that enables higher accountability and better use of resources is one of school-based managements' key tenets (Santibañez et al., 2014).

This is the school-based management model on academic autonomy, shared decision making, expanded authority and responsibilities of school managers acknowledging schools as the basic decision-making unit (Güçlü, 2000), (B. J. Caldwell, 2005). In the school-based management, the manager is the central figure and not only the extent of his/her responsibilities but also his/her accountability is expanded (B. Caldwell, 1994), (Oswald, 1995). In addition influence, role and accountability of principals and teachers will increase in management and administration of the school better than the traditional way (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991). This precisely means additional workload, and even risk management and administrative accountability of principals and teachers (Vally & Daud, 2015). Robertson (1995) proposes the theoretical framework of school-based management or theory of change process school-based management. This model is in Figure 1:

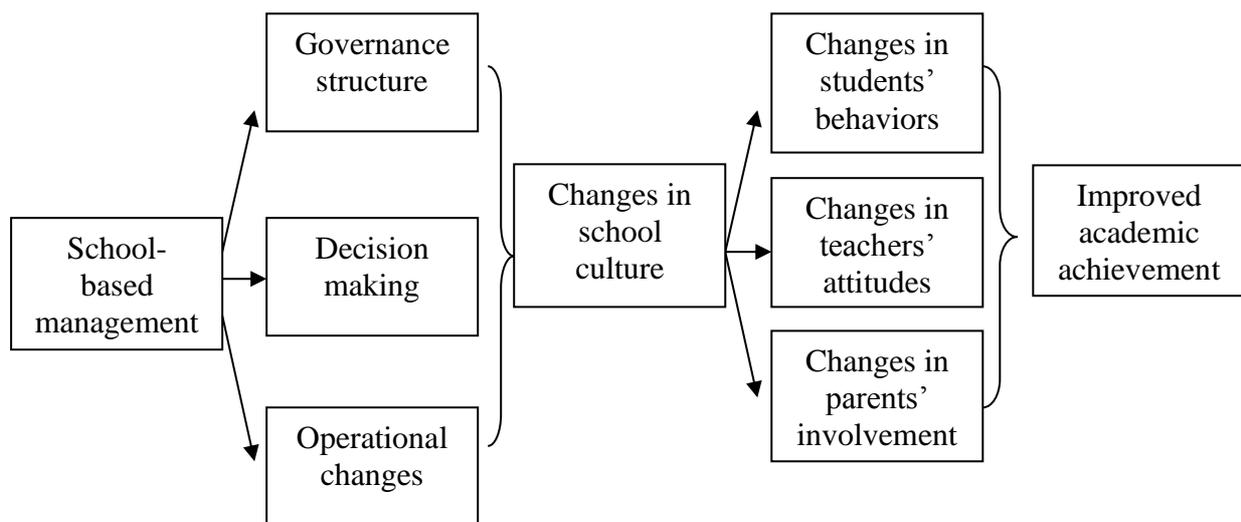


Figure 1: School-based Management Model

This model proposes that changes in governance structure, the decision-making processes and the way school operates will predict changes in then school culture, which will then lead to changes in behaviors (e.g., student attendance) and attitudes of actors involved (e.g., teachers' attitudes, parent involvement). These changes in behaviors and attitudes should lead to improved school quality and ultimately improved academic achievement (Robertson, 1995).

School-based management provides an environment for a school organization compatible with the premises and student needs and positions the student in the center of education. Thus, it helps to pervade "our school" approach, maintains the participation of parents in the education process, establish bonds with the society and build organic relationships with the school's surrounding (Santibañez et al., 2014). Besides, it is anticipated that the school-based management would increase staff commitment to the school and staff participation in school activities and help to develop better relations between the students and the staff (Karlsen, 2000), (Güçlü, 2000).

2. Method

2.1 Research Model

This research is made according to the qualitative research method. The qualitative research method covers a process revealing perceptions and facts in a natural and inclusive manner aiming at understanding human life styles, behaviors, organizational structures and social change by utilizing data gathering methods such as observation, interview and document analysis (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). In this part of the research, "semi-structured interview questionnaire" was delivered to the participants. The research model is shown in Figure 2:

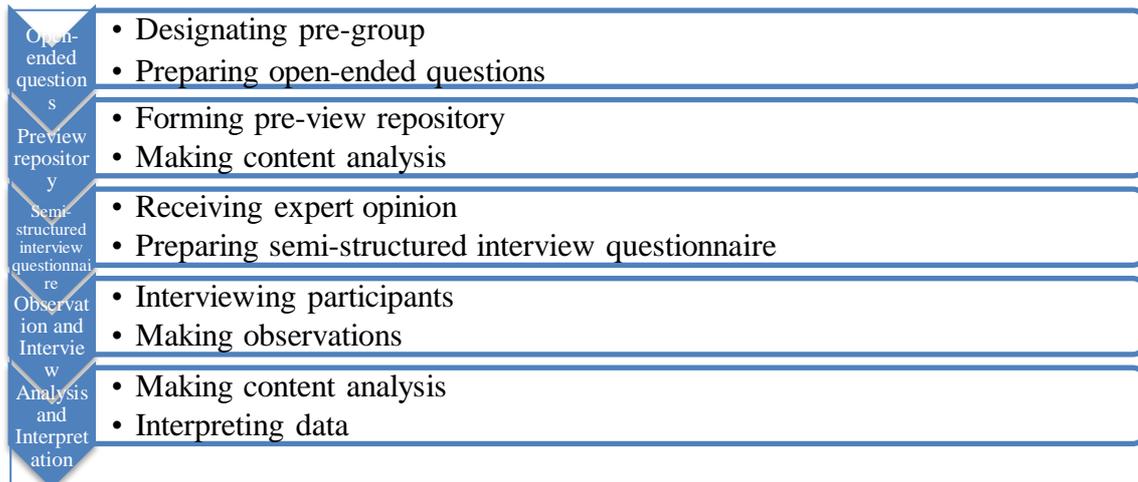


Figure 2: Research model

2.2 Question Used In Research

What do teachers and managers working in Project Imam Hatip High Schools think about PS in terms of its structural and managerial features as well as School Principal's authority to build his/her own team?

2.3 Research Population and Sample

The research population consists of all 55 Imam Hatip High Schools (or Religious Vocational High Schools) which are PS, located in Istanbul in 2018-2019 Education Year. The research sample, however, comprises 15 schools randomly selected from 55 project Imam Hatip High Schools and 23 managers and teachers working in these schools.

23 managers and teachers have participated in the research. The demographic characteristics of research participants are shown in Table 1:

Table 1: The demographic characteristics of research participants

	Variable	N	%
Duty	Teacher	14	60
	Manager	9	40
Gender	Female	11	48
	Male	12	52
Educational Status	Bachelor's Degree	13	57
	Master's Degree	10	43
Length of Service in MEB (Ministry of National Education)	5-9	9	40
	10-19	7	30
	20+	7	30
Length of service in the current school	1-5	18	78
	6-10	3	13
	11+	2	9
TOTAL		23	100%

9 of research participants are managers and 14 of them are teachers. When we look at the gender variable, we see 10 female and 13 male. 10 of them have a master's degree and 13 of them have a Bachelor's Degree. It can be said that variables present a balanced distribution.

The same applies in the participants' length of service in MEB (Ministry of National Education). When it comes to the participants' length of service in their current schools, we see that 78% of participants are in their first five years. This can be attributed to the fact that PS is newly opened. Length of service in MEB and in current schools presents us with two important opportunities for understanding the current situation:

1) All participants' length of service in MEB is more than 5 years. This shows that participants have worked in other schools before. That allows them to make a better comparison between their old and current workplace environment.

2) Because 22% of participants have been working in PS for more than 5 years, it allows them to compare their school's status before its inclusion to the PS with the current status.

2.4 Data Collection Instrument

Before preparing semi-structured interview questionnaire, open-ended questions were asked to 5 participants who have similar characteristics with the research group. The pre-view repository is formed with the answers given to these questions. The data gathered from this repository were assessed through content analysis and used a database for semi-structured interview questionnaire. After receiving opinions from Education Management experts, a semi-structured interview questionnaire with 4 questions was formed. Here are the questions addressed to the participants in the semi-structured interview questionnaire:

1) What are your thoughts about the contribution (if any) of PS structural and managerial features as well as its organizational climate to its turning into an "efficient school"?

2) How important is the PS school principal's "efficient leadership characteristics" for the school's effectiveness? (*Can you give examples if there are any?*)

3) To what extent do the PS "physical infrastructure facilities" affect on its being an effective school?

4) To what extent do the national/international projects applied in PS contribute to its being an effective school? (*Can you give examples if there are any?*)

2.5 Collecting Data

Data collection was done in Istanbul, on the dates between 02/01/2019 and 08/03/2019. In the research, interview and observation methods were used. We made appointments with participants before the interviews. Semi-structured interview questionnaires were sent to all participants before these interviews. In all of the interviews, written approvals were received from participants. Also, interviews were recorded and written notes were taken during those interviews. Interviews lasted 16 minutes the least and 53 minutes the most. Total time of the interviews was 386 minutes with an average time of 27 minutes. Written notes taken during the interviews, voice recordings and written answers gotten from the participants were all transcribed and subjected to content analysis. Also, we observed the managerial acts, school climate, organizational behaviors, physical facilities and contents of applied projects, and gathered detailed information on these mentioned factors.

2.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis was based on content analysis. Content analysis is a method used for gathering similar data within the scope of certain concepts to be able to explain them. It is also for interpreting the collected data by organizing them in such a way that the reader can understand. One of the techniques utilized in the content analysis method is coding. Coding refers to denomination of parts creating a meaningful whole in itself with descriptive words or phrases by a researcher (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Themes and codes were formed for this research by evaluating participants' answers to the semi-structured interview questionnaire.

Qualitative researches differ from quantitative researches in terms of their targets and structural design. Thus, validity and reliability criteria vary across quantitative and qualitative research methods (Krefting, 1991). So, several models are developed in which criteria are categorized according to the research types in concern. One of these models is Lincoln and Guba's model (1985) presenting 4 criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Table 2 shows this model:

Table 2: Validity and Reliability Model

Criteria	Qualitative Research	Quantitative Research
Truth Value	Credibility	Internal Validity
Generalizability	Transferability	External Validity
Consistency	Dependability	Reliability
Neutrality	Confirmability	Objectivity

Table 3 shows what we did to achieve credibility and reliability in data analysis for this research:

Table 3: Applied Data Validity and Reliability Procedure

Credibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data collection, scaling and research method were well structured. 2. Organizational diversity is provided by selecting schools with different student and teacher profiles. 3. The research is based on participant's voluntariness. Participants were informed prior to interviews. 4. Questions were re-structured by means of a pilot scheme. 5. Data Conformability was provided by sharing them with the participants.
Transferability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All interview data were recorded after receiving participant approvals and the quotations were entirely based on voice recordings. 2. Details were attained by taking notes during the interviews. 3. Recording, taking notes and observation were all made in the natural environment, i.e. in schools. 4. All recordings were transcribed and then combined with the taken notes. 5. Transcribed data were quoted directly, without making any changes.
Dependability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research time and place were shared. 2. The demographic characteristics of participants were explained. 3. The phases and details of study were expressed to allow research repetition. 4. Expert reviews were received.
Confirmability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation bias was avoided with the help of expert views during the preparation scales for data collection. 2. We paid strict attention to select participants who did not know the researcher before. 3. To avoid participant reaching a consensus with the researcher, we organized focus group meetings. 4. To preserve social distance with participants, interviews were made in the school environment.

3. Findings

In this research, managers are coded from M1 to M9 and teachers from T1 to T14. Themes and codes are formed according to the participant answers to four questions in the semi-structured interview questionnaire. Based on them, 10 codes were created under 3 themes in total. Both the observations made during the interviews and the views of participants revealed that 7 codes out of 10 have a positive effect on school effectiveness and teachers' efficiency while 3 of them have negative effects. We have given both the code frequencies and participants' views in the research.

3.1 The Effect of PS Features on School Effectiveness (1. Theme)

Attaining a more effective school and more efficient education is the ultimate aim of PS. Therefore, PS is equipped with different privileges in terms of structural and managerial features, even to be superior to other schools. According to teachers' views those features increase school effectiveness and teachers' performances to a large extent. While organizational attraction and positive organizational climate within the first theme affect school effectiveness and teachers' efficiency in a positive manner, the test anxiety has negative effects. 3 codes that falls under the first theme are shown in Table 4:

Table 4: The Effect of PS Features on School Effectiveness

Codes	Definition	Effect	Participants	N	%
Organizational Attraction	PS structural features making the school attractive for teachers and students.	Positive	T4, T5, T6, M3, M4, T8, M7, M8, T2, T3, M9	11	48
Positive Organizational Climate	The satisfaction of students and teachers for being in PS having a positive effect on their working and educational life	Positive	T14, T2, M3, M5, M8, T5, T8, T3, M7	9	40
Test Anxiety	The test anxiety arising from getting into a good university having a negative effect on project works in PS.	Negative	M2, M8, M1, T9, T10, M3	6	26

3.1.1 Organizational Attraction

PS is an attraction center for teachers and students. First of all, this is because these schools admit students through an exam. A student who gets into a PS because of his/her earned success in LGS (High School Entrance Exam) also means that he/she has already gained self-discipline in studying. Teachers have intense feelings about teaching students who have self-discipline in studying since they feel more job satisfaction. T4: *"I am happy here because I can do my job better.* T8: *"The most important factor in PS is the quality, high-profile of its students."* T2: *"The best aspect of PS is its students with high academic success. That increases job satisfaction in PS."* M9: *"The best aspect of PS is that students with the same levels are educated together. That increases a teacher's job satisfaction. The most enjoyable period of my career had been in a super high school that lasted 6 months, now I experience it again in PS. PS also increases teachers and students success."*

The school not only appeals to teachers but also to students and parents. T5: *"The high-level profile of students has made me love teaching again. My children are also going to PS, I am also glad as a parent."* M3: *"PS has helped students love the school. It has also had a substantial positive effect on the perception of Imam Hatip High School within the society."* T3: *"Students' being together with their peers who have the same educational levels presents a favorable situation. That helps teachers feel more job satisfaction."*

3.1.2 Positive Organizational Climate

When teaching staff formed under the leadership of school principal integrates with the students who have already gained self-discipline in studying, a positive organizational climate arises. That positive climate makes it easier to achieve PS targets. As the organizational commitment of workers increases, it becomes easier for them to adopt organization targets and identify themselves with the organization; their urge for self-sacrifice increases; they can maintain their organizational membership on a voluntary basis and fulfill their roles in a more efficient manner (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002), (Bastas & Öztuğ, 2012). T14: *"We are a good team in this school, I am very happy."* T2: *"The most important thing here is the climate. We do not drag our feet*

when we come here. We feel the team climate more here, we can easily overcome the difficulties.” M3: “The school principal’s building his/her own team highly contributes to the positive school climate. The factions forming among teachers in other schools, as I have witnessed before, are not seen in PS; teachers and managers feel a more positive team climate. In PS, instead of assigning tasks to teachers pertaining to a project, teachers themselves volunteer to participate in projects. They even spend their time on projects after work hours.” M5: “If the teaching staff is built properly, that has a positive effect on teachers’ room.” M8: “Working in PS increases job satisfaction, contributes to the positive climate in school.” T5: “The targeted aim is very good; the working of a team knowing each other is the key to success.”

3.1.3 Test Anxiety

On the way to be an effective school, PS has favorable features: student profile and teamwork. However, the school manager abides by the same laws, rules and regulations applied to others although he/she is subject to a different regulation in terms of the assignment. So, the exam anxiety seen in other schools is also witnessed in PS, as the university exam is also applied to PS students. Especially in the last two years of high schools, students as well as teachers tend to spend their whole energy on working for that exam and avoiding to participate in projects which underlies PS. Thus, project-based education comes to a halt form time to time. Y2: *“Despite having a separate regulation on teacher and manager assignment in PS, we are subject to the same laws, rules and regulations applied to others as in “curriculum, discipline, exam, university entrance, etc.” That prevents PS to be a whole project. For PS to be sustainable, the government should support PS in terms of both regulations and funds. If that is not provided, then there will only be a separation between PS and non-PS on the basis of admitting students through exams or not.”* M1: *“The most important advantage PS has is being able to select its students and teachers. Its disadvantage is to produce and administer its projects in addition to the central projects. That makes teachers and students feel anxiety about possible negative effects on exam studies.”* M8: *“The projects in PS should be valued and encouraged through incentives such as extra points in the university entrance exam. Otherwise, the last two years will be spent on preparations for the university exam instead of projects.”* M3: *“As a manager who worked in a PS for a short period of time, I find it rather meaningful that project works in PS have no use in university entrance.”*

3.2 The Effect of PS Principal’s “Effective Leadership” on School’s Effectiveness (2. Theme)

Effective school leadership is considered a key constituent in achieving school improvement (Day, Gu, & Sammons, 2016), (Preston, Goldring, Guthrie, Ramsey, & Huff, 2017). The assignment procedure of PS managers is an important feature distinguishing it from other schools. Manager assignments are exempted from current regulations. In PS, managers do not come to office through first assignment or change of working place. The PS manager is first appointed and then, after a certain period of time, assigned as a member of the staff. One of the reasons for it is to check and see the school principal's "effective leadership" during his/her period of office. Because, as the participants stated, the school principal plays a key role in PS with his granted authority. While organizational citizenship behaviors and collective learning adequacy within the second theme have a positive effect on the school effectiveness, the professional inadequacy has negative reflections. 3 codes falling under the 2nd Theme are shown in Table 5:

Table 5: The Effect of PS Principal's "Effective Leadership" on School's Effectiveness

Codes	Definition	Effect	Participants	N	%
Developing Organizational Citizenship Behavior	The organizational citizenship anticipated to occur in PS with the principal's leadership and team working in harmony.	Positive	M5, M3, T8, M8, M7, T1, T5, T7, T12, M2	10	43
Increase in Collective Teacher Adequacy	The teaching staff shaped around principal bringing synergy within the scope of PS vision	Positive	T4, T3, T6, T7, M1, M4, M5, T2, M7	9	40
Professional Inadequacy	PS Principal's not acting professional when he/she builds teaching staff and reviews teachers.	Negative	T8, M4, M7, T5, T2, M6	6	26

3.2.1 Developing Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Collective efficacy is an important explanation for success (Donohoo, 2018). Organizational citizenship behavior is defined as the voluntary acts going above and beyond the formal or official requirements of the organization. For PS, it refers to teachers' putting more effort to help their students and colleagues be successful (DiPaola & Hoy, 2005). Organizational citizenship behaviors function through affecting social, psychological and normative environment of the organization, either directly or indirectly (Bogler & Somech, 2004). PS principal's leadership and harmonized team he/she builds seem to have the key role in developing organizational citizenship. M5: *"Teachers in PS, are, yes, working more, compared to other schools but I have not seen much of them who complain about it. Everybody seems to be pleased with the school environment and working in general. If the principal is good, then that is felt everywhere in the school."* M3: *"The school is good as much as its principal. From this point of view, it sounds reasonable to give vast initiative to a principal."* T8: *"In a school, the principal adequacy and leadership come right after the student qualification. Teachers' qualification ranks number three. If the first two are not good, then both the school environment and the teachers' efficiency become unsatisfactory."* M8: *"Principal's building his/her own team reflects quite positively on organizational behaviors. But the outcome depends on the characteristics of principal. The principal's effective leadership plays a crucial role in achieving an effective school."*

A manager, after emphasizing principal's key role, stated (M7): *"Selecting principal, in particular, is the most critical threshold for PS. Everything starts with it. Therefore, the principal's educational stance, entrepreneurial spirit and academic career –as it gives a person vision and expands his/her horizon- must be attached great importance."*

3.2.2 Increase in Collective Teacher Adequacy

Collective efficacy is based on the belief that through collective actions educators can influence students' results and enhance their achievements (Sharratt, 2019). Collective teacher adequacy is defined as teachers' believing in their abilities to administer and organize

required actions for affecting students positively (Goddard & Goddard, 2001). What results in an increase in collective teacher adequacy possible is the teachers' direct experiences in school (Cybulski, Hoy, & Sweetland, 2005) and the principal and colleagues' support and encouragement (Ross, Hogaboam-Gray, & Gray, 2004). Teachers in PS have the opportunity to experience teaching directly by means of students' academic successes and projects. Besides, the vision of the entire teaching staff shaped around the principal to achieve a qualified educational environment reveals a power (synergy) that is greater than those of team members. T4: *"The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Based on this idea, I think the principal's building his/her own team is grand and would have a substantial positive effect on the school environment."* T3: *"The principal's authority to build his/her own team is extremely good."* T6: *"The principal's authority to build his/her own team is very good. Accountability increases success and performances. Team spirit positively affects job satisfaction. Teacher's feeling to be selected and being with good students makes him/her happy."* T7: *"The team spirit created in the school is absolutely contributing to teachers' job satisfaction."* M1: *"The authority to build team highly contributes to organization climate."* M4: *"The principal's authority to build his/her own team is very important. The principal should be able to work with a team he/she trusts. Because he/she cannot control each and every teacher. So, the existence of team members believing in themselves becomes very important."* Y5: *"The principal's right to select teachers causes teachers to make more self-sacrifice and display better performances."* T2: *"Enabling principal to build his/her own team is wonderful."* M7: *"The principal's building his/her own team is a very good practice."*

3.2.3 Professional Inadequacy

PS Principal's not acting professional when he/she builds teaching staff and reviews teachers has negative effects on the school effectiveness and teachers' adequacy. One of the teachers gives a very good example: T8: *"I work in a PS. I have worked with five principals in the last five years. With one principal, teachers' room becomes full of whining, with another principal school environment becomes very positive."* M4: *"PS should have standards like TSE (Turkish Standards Institution)."* M7: *"The defects in our reference system prevent us building a right, effective and qualified teaching staff."* T5: *"If the appointments are not made according to merits, if managers and teachers are not selected and reviewed according to objective performance criteria, it seems unlikely to achieve the aimed targets."* T2: *"The principal's building his/her own team is splendid. But, as the public administration is not professional enough, I think this practice is luxurious and would not last long."* Y6: *"There should be a professional understanding and objective criteria for selecting and reviewing teachers. Otherwise, the principal may misuse his authority to select and review teachers."*

3.3 The Effect of Education Vision in PS on School Effectiveness (3. Theme)

PS are schools established to increase educational effectiveness and teaching staff efficiency. PS has some features that contribute to the realization of this vision. However, it has also some features which are far from the desired levels. While physical infrastructure facilities, self-fulfillment of students and teachers and PS becoming a learning organization within the third theme positively affect school's effectiveness, shortage in auxiliary staff and funds needed to achieve the mentioned vision negatively affects school effectiveness and decreases teachers and managers' adequacy. 4 codes under the 3rd Theme are shown in Table 6:

Table 6: The Effect of Education Vision in PS on School Effectiveness

Codes	Definition	Effect	Participants	N	%
Physical Infrastructure Facilities	PS physical infrastructure facilities being sufficient for effective education	Positive	M5, M3, T8, M8, T9, M7	14	60
Self-Fulfillment	PS students and teachers being able to self-fulfill	Positive	T6, T7, M6, M4, T10, T11, M7	6	26
Learning Organization Culture	Teachers and parents' involvement in education as much as students by means of	Positive	T6, M1, M2, T11, M8	5	21
Shortage of Auxiliary Staff and Funds	Shortage of auxiliary staff and funds required to use physical facilities at full capacity and implement projects fully.	Negative	M4, M6, M7, T1	4	17

3.3.1 Physical Infrastructure Facilities

It is important to have education environments ready for effective education. With top level physical infrastructure enabling various academic, social and sports activities such as modern classrooms, physical and social sciences laboratories, language and technology laboratories, library, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, music and art workshops, cafeteria and boarding house, PS meet all the conditions of an effective education. M5: *"Having all required physical facilities, having boarding schools increases educational quality. Y8: Having all required physical facilities is extremely important to achieve an effective school and PS does provide it."* M6: *"The physical infrastructure of these schools is completed before opening, but other schools are devoid of the same means."*

To tell that physical infrastructure is a means not an end for an effective education and the quality is still at the hands of education leader, one manager said: M9: *"Physical infrastructure is important but what's more important is to guide students to the good in the right way. A student can be happy even when he is playing in a 3-square meter area and develop behaviors at the same time. If the school manager is too protective, then the physical infrastructure would be useless"*

3.3.2 Teachers and Students' Self-Fulfillment by means of Projects

According to one of the well-known motivational theories i.e., Maslow' hierarchy of needs, human needs have certain hierarchies and the need lower down in the hierarchy must be satisfied first for the next to appear (Schultz & Schultz, 2001). The highest need is the self-actualization needs. Education and projects in PS aim at fulfilling these needs (Steers & Porter, 1991). Teachers and students think that they fulfill their selves in PS, to a large extent. T6: *"Our school is "crazy about projects". Our school opens stands in magazine festivals with tens of magazines. All of them are carried out by students. The school activities are so good that I sometimes wish to be a student again and be among the students and be a part of the projects. By means of projects and activities, we have students communicating in English with a university teacher abroad with ease, thanks to the foreign language education they have in the preparatory classes; and thanks to their relationship with books we impose, they*

can easily solve paragraph questions which will be asked in the university entrance exam.”

T7: “Projects and activities carried out in school are so useful. These activities highly contribute to their vision and expand their horizons.” M6: “I think that projects and activities in PS provide and contribute to teachers’ job satisfaction.” M4: “Our school participates in every possible national/international projects and reaches high achievements in all of them. Our projects can be about vocational courses as well as TÜBİTAK (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) Projects. We also send students to the projects in Switzerland, Germany or İzmir. We attach great importance to language education as well as religious education. We pay attention to social activities as well as preparation works for university exam as best as we can. Besides, we have been hosting tens of projects to which students, teachers and managers from different Turkish cities and world countries attend. All these works help students prepare themselves for life meanwhile contribute to teachers’ self-fulfillment while they practice their profession.” T11: “Course hours in PS are more than the other schools, we definitely do extra courses. Since the student profile is good here, teacher can practice teaching with happiness and excitement. Because the teachers as well as students are selected, job satisfaction is higher here.”

3.3.3 Developing Learning Organization Culture

Teacher cooperation and consensus can be understood as subordinate to school leadership in the sense that a strong school leadership is largely a prerequisite for teachers to have the opportunity to collaborate and find consensus in important pedagogical and organisational issues (Ramberg et al., 2019). A systematic review of studies on teacher cooperation shows that a good and vital collaboration between teachers gives positive outcomes at several levels of the school organisation, benefiting both the students and the teachers (Vangrieken, Dochy, Raes, & Kyndt, 2015). More precisely, teacher cooperation revolves around conditions for regular communication among teacher colleagues to provide opportunities for recurring everyday interaction, planning of teaching and the exchange of educational materials and experiences (Van Waes et al., 2016).

In order to ensure the sustainability of the quality in the organizations, it is necessary to provide training to the employees at the levels required by their duties, powers and responsibilities and make it sustainable (Genç, 2011). An individual is expected to be useful first for himself/herself, then his/her family and then the society. That is also valid for organizations. Each organization emerges for a certain reason. Schools, in this respect, are the organizations aiming to reach academic success with students and contribute positively to their behavioral development. That being said, in schools, teachers, managers, parents and even the school and its institutional memory learn as much as the students do. PS has started to spread synergy with its activities and projects. But, as PS is newly established, it is early to talk about an established culture. M8: *“I treasure these projects and activities. When the student matures and becomes a part of social life, the activities and projects will shed his/her way and form his/her personality, as well. Activities should be perceived as the life itself, not as a burden. For that matter, we should be able to establish rewarding institutions like universities for our life.”*

Teachers stated that they should continue learning for PS to reach its aimed targets, thus be given the required support. T6: *“All teaching staff should receive in-service training, have a Master’s Degree at the very least and be sent abroad when needed. That is to say, we should develop our human resources, make them fit to the aimed targets and transform PS into an attraction center for teachers. Well-planned in-service training programs, teacher collaboration and sharing should avail career steps; in-service training should be planned and included in weekly working hours.”*

3.3.4 Shortage of Auxiliary Personnel and Funds

Only sufficient support of auxiliary personnel would make it possible for a PS to use its physical facilities at full capacity and for projects to be realized fully. For PS to be an effective school, a large number of auxiliary personnel (from security guard to cleaning staff, from mentor in boarding house to the cook in cafeteria, from librarian to the technical staff) should be available. Although the physical infrastructure is adequate, not having sufficient auxiliary personnel would hinder its maximum utilization. And that negatively affects PS success and sustainability (Koç & Bastas, 2019). M4: *“Two basic features distinguishing PS from other schools are selecting teachers and selecting students. We do not have a different economic support system from other schools but we need to find more fiscal resources as the students, senior managers and parents have higher expectations. So we are forced to employ more auxiliary staff.”* T1: *“There is not any fund for PS distinguishing features such as employing foreign teachers. Here it is expected from us to solve it with “local means”. Although many PS have boarding houses, personnel shortage such as instructor, servant, etc are at the highest level. These, too, are expected to be solved with local means.”* M6: *“Moral and material support given to PS would make these schools sustainable.”* M7: *“Perception is the reason for PS to be effective. In these schools, students and teachers are made feel special; they are always reminded that they are in a PS. A good outcome is expected from that attitude. That could carry PS up to a point. So, PS should be supported with curriculum, human resources and financial aid.”*

4. Conclusion And Recommendations

According to this research aiming at determining the role and effect of PS structural and managerial features in achieving effective school, we conclude that: (1) teachers in PS are satisfied with the new management model, (2) there has been an increase in collective teacher adequacy due to the teamwork shaped around the school principal’s leadership, (3) a higher teacher performance is achieved.

Based on the participants’ answers, the sufficiency of PS physical facilities is seen as the most positive feature of PS with a rate of 60%. That implies that PS is ready for an effective education in terms of its educational environment. However, utilizing physical facilities at full capacity depends on the amount of personnel used in the social and sports facilities and complementary departments –e.g. boarding house- Research participants express the inadequacy of funds and personnel required to use those facilities.

PS, with its student profile, physical facilities, flexible and responsive selection of managers/teachers, stands out as an attraction center. Although teachers in PS have to work more compared to non-PS, they do not complain about it in general. That’s because teachers think they can practice their profession better and reach self-actualization. The teachers’ satisfaction results in the development of organizational citizenship behaviors and increase in the collective teacher adequacy in PS. Synergy created by these factors increases the school’s effectiveness, teacher performance and student success.

As PS is new in terms of managerial features, its staff needs to undergo an adaptation process. Despite the mentioned positive effects of principal’s building his/her own team, there are some concerns regarding professional manners of managers and teachers since they have not fully internalized professionalism just like the private sector. One of those concerns is related with the overwhelming projects and activities. Teachers and managers are worried that the projects and activities would negatively affect the preparation process of students for the university entrance exam. However, we cannot verify the concern as PS has not produced graduates yet. Still, we should mention that several PS tend to ease projects partially in the

last two years of the school. This way, they intend to make more time for exam studies and reduce the exam anxiety in partial.

Based on the research results, we may recommend the following to educational policy makers, implementers and researchers:

Utilizing PS physical facilities at full capacity is crucial in terms of their effectiveness. For it, the government may provide the required auxiliary personnel in these schools. Cooperation with municipalities and NGOs may be better institutionalized for the sake of optimal usage of local means. By means of inter-institutional protocols, the financial burden on the shoulders of school managers may be reduced, thus have them focus more on the educational management.

Projects and activities in PS have great importance for students' contribution to educational production. But, university exam anxiety may hinder these works in the last two years of the school. To ease or erase that anxiety and make PS more productive, certificates can be awarded to students for their participation in national/international projects. Certain arrangements - extra points in the university exam- can be made for these certificates. Also, teachers can be supported through supplements for projects they administer.

As said before, we observe the positive reflections of PS principal's building his/her own team on the synergy created in the school. But, in order to establish professional manners that are new to staff in public schools, in-service training programs for teachers and managers can be enforced. For staff performance reviews, objective criteria can be set.

As PS is rather a new management model within the scope of Turkish National Educational system, researchers might study it with different scaling methods and different perspectives. Especially comparative studies focusing on PS and non-PS might reveal better results.

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