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Examining the Relationship between Participation and Academic Emphasis Based on the Views of School Principals

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between participation and academic emphasis in schools based on the views of school principals. The research group consisted of 828 Turkish school principals who participated in the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey. Within the scope of the research, the School Leadership Scale was used to determine the approaches of school principals to the participation of teachers, the Participation Among Stakeholders Scale was utilized to determine their views of stakeholder participation, and the Academic Pressure Scale was applied to determine the academic emphasis of the schools. In order to determine the participation level, the School Leadership Scale and Participation Among Stakeholders Scale were combined in path analysis. In the analysis of the data, *t*-tests, ANOVA, and LSD tests were used as post hoc tests, and Pearson correlation analysis and path analysis were performed. As a result of the research, it was determined that school principals' views were close to high levels regarding teacher and stakeholder participation and they were at high levels regarding academic emphasis. Significant positive correlations were observed between teacher participation, stakeholder participation, and academic emphasis, and school principals' views on participation were found to be significant predictors of academic emphasis.

Keywords: Teacher participation, stakeholder participation, academic emphasis, school principals

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Okul Yöneticilerinin Görüşlerine Göre Katılım ile Akademik Vurguları Arasındaki İlişkinin İncelenmesi

Makale Türü	Başvuru Tarihi	Kabul Tarihi
Araştırma	26.08.2021	10.06.2022

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Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, okul yöneticilerinin katılıma ve akademik vurguya ilişkin görüşlerini incelemektir. Araştırma grubu Uluslararası Öğretme ve Öğrenme Araştırması (The Teaching and Learning International Survey [TALIS]) 2018'e katılan 828 Türk okul yöneticisinden oluşmaktadır. Araştırma kapsamında okul yöneticilerinin öğretmenlerin katılımına ilişkin yaklaşımlarının belirlenmesi için okul liderliği ölçeği, paydaş katılımına ilişkin yaklaşımının belirlenmesi için paydaş katılımı ölçeği ve okulun akademik vurgusunun belirlenmesi için akademik vurgu ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Okul yöneticilerinin katılımcılık düzeyinin belirlenmesi için okul liderliği ölçeği ve paydaş katılımı ölçeği yol analizi modelinde birleştirilmiştir. Verilerin analizinde t-testi, ANOVA ve post hoc testlerinde LSD testi, Pearson Korelasyon analizinden ve yol analizinden yararlanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda okul yöneticilerinin öğretmen ve paydaş katılımına ilişkin görüşlerinin yüksek düzeye yakın olduğu saptanmıştır. Akademik vurguya ilişkin görüşlerinin ise yüksek düzeyde olduğu belirlenmiştir. Araştırma değişkeni olan öğretmen katılımı, paydaş katılımı ve akademik vurgu arasında anlamlı pozitif yönlü ilişkiler olduğu belirlenmiştir. Ayrıca, katılımcı okul yönetiminin akademik vurgunun anlamlı bir yordayıcısı olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Öğretmen katılımı, paydaş katılımı, akademik vurgu, okul yöneticileri

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Introduction

In the 21st century, innovations and changing social expectations have affected the fundamental values of organizations. These expectations require schools and principals to adapt to the changes. Education is a dynamic process that needs to be constantly updated and renewed. Therefore, in the literature, the topic of school leadership that adopts innovative approaches; values the concepts of accountability, participation, transparency, and democracy; and gives priority to the effectiveness of education is among the topics that are now frequently discussed (OECD, 2009).

An education system can only reach its targeted goal if educational organizations, or, in other words, schools, work effectively. Successful school leadership is at the forefront for schools to continue their existence efficiently and effectively. Effective school leadership is seen as the key for widespread educational reforms and the attainment of targeted educational outcomes (OECD, 2009). Contemporary leadership studies go beyond the traditional understanding of leadership and explain effectiveness not only according to the school principal but also considering other school stakeholders (Harris, 2014; Sergiovanni, Kelleher, McCarthy, & Fowler, 2009). While earlier studies on leadership focused on individual school principals, studies today are turning toward an approach that shares leadership. In this approach, leadership is considered as a process carried out together in cooperation rather than the individual leadership of the school principal.

The new trend in school leadership involves the sharing of authority and responsibility and an emphasis on teacher leadership (OECD, 2018). This leadership emphasizes the cooperation between schools, local governments, policy-makers, and non-governmental organizations. With distributed leadership, the relationships among teachers, students, parents, and school staff, as well as school principals, come to the fore (Grubb & Flessa, 2006). Basic elements of distributed leadership in educational organizations are co-decision-making, the participation of stakeholders in the academic development of the school, and school governance that involves empowering stakeholders and strengthening accountability for academic learning (Hallinger & Hack, 2010). School governance is defined as "the participation of [the] school community…in decision making, actively operated accountability, multidirectional communication channels, financial and administrative transparency, and the initiative towards the demands of the school community" (Yüner & Burgaz, 2019).

Studies in the literature reveal that regardless of school type and level, school principals are actors who contribute greatly to school success (Buluç, 2019; Yıldız & Akbaşlı, 2018). As school leaders, school principals are primarily responsible for the effective performance of teachers and other employees, the physical equipment of the school, the advancement of students, the building of positive relationships, and especially the successful execution of educational activities. It can be stated that school leaders are not only responsible for the execution of educational processes; they are also responsible for the regulation of relations within the school environment.

Contrary to the Coleman Report (1996), which stated that only a small percentage of student achievement can be explained by school factors, studies conducted with more detailed analyses and larger volumes of data have shown that besides socioeconomic conditions, many factors that are under the control of the school have impacts on student achievement (McGuigan & Hoy, 2006). Studies on the relationship between student achievement and school characteristics show that the school's collective efficacy (Goddard, 1998, Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), the school's trust in students and parents (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2001; Hoy, 2002; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999), and the academic emphasis of the school (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Goddard, Sweetland, & Hoy, 2000) have significant effects on success. Each of these qualities can be shaped by the actions of school principals. Therefore, even in schools with students of low socioeconomic status, there is an opportunity to increase academic success and make a difference. At this point, school principals have an important responsibility because school leadership is arguably the most important factor affecting educational effectiveness and student outcomes (Chapman et al., 2016). School leadership influences student outcomes by increasing teacher effectiveness and creating a proper school environment (Hallinger, 2011; Reynolds & Muijs, 2016). Accordingly, school leaders affect the academic emphasis of the school and the academic achievement of the students.

The goals of schools are to develop students mentally, physically, culturally, and socially and to realize their learning at the highest level. Along with social expectations, the academic performance expected from students is of great importance. Accordingly, it can be stated that academic emphasis in schools is a quality that needs to be evaluated. Academic emphasis is a school's degree of pursuit of academic excellence (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991). The academic performance of students, the quality of the learning environment, and the trust in the students are among the basic elements of academic emphasis. In schools with high academic emphasis, high academic goals are set for students by teachers, parents, and school leaders. These goals are high but achievable. An organized learning environment is created and academic achievements have primary importance for students (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991; Hoy, Tarter, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006). Students have high levels of motivation for school and learning (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). In these schools, the focus is on learning and it is believed that all students can achieve their academic goals (Hoy, 2012). Both parents and teachers support students. Students are expected to fulfill their responsibilities, seek out additional studies, collaborate, and show respect to those who achieve academic success (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991).

Studies on academic emphasis show that the quality of educational outcomes is higher in schools with high levels of academic emphasis. Goddard, Hoy, and Woolfolk Hoy (2000) revealed that academic emphasis affects teacher and student behaviors. It raises the collective efficacy of the school. Hoy (2002) defined academic emphasis as an important feature that affects student achievement despite socioeconomic status and differences in academic levels. This finding supports other studies reporting that the academic emphasis of the school, regardless of the school level, is significantly related to student achievement when socioeconomic variables are controlled (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991; Hoy & Sabo, 1998). For example, Goddard, Sweetland, and Hoy (2000) revealed that academic emphasis increased students' performances in the fields of language and mathematics. Similarly, academic emphasis has been found to reduce the differences in success among students (Phillips, 1997).

In the context of contemporary school leadership, the leadership and participation policies of the principal affect the school's climate, vision, effectiveness, and expectations for academic success. Supporting teacher leadership leads teachers to work more collaboratively with their colleagues. Teachers become more willing to achieve the school's visions and goals (Harris & Muijs, 2004). Empowering school leadership enhances teachers' competencies and fosters a collaborative culture in the school, which leads teachers to realize their potential.

In the present study, school principals' participatory policies for school stakeholders, and especially teachers and parents, are discussed because the new paradigm for school leadership entails a leadership that empowers, enables, and facilitates. It can be thought that a participatory form of leadership that gives responsibility to teachers, students, and parents and takes their demands into account will increase the academic emphasis of the school. It can furthermore be assumed that schools in which processes are carried out with stakeholders in harmony and cooperation will ensure and advance academic success. Accordingly, this study aimed to examine the relationship between school leaders' participatory policies and academic emphasis in schools.

Method

Research Design

This research was undertaken as a quantitative study and conducted with a relational survey model. Within the scope of the study, it was aimed to examine the direction and degree of the relationships between school leadership, stakeholder engagement, and academic emphasis based on the views of school principals.

Study Group

The research group of the study was composed of 828 school principals from Turkey who participated in the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). As a result of the examination of the research data, it was seen that 780 participants would be statistically sufficient for the analysis. The data of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Participant Data

Variable		N	%
Gender	Woman	57	7.3
	Male	723	92.7
ISCED	1	165	21,2
	2	187	24,0
	3	428	54,9
Seniority	1-5 years	368	49.5
	6-10 years	180	23,1
	11-15 years	96	12,3
	16-20 years	42	5,4
	21+	53	6,8
Education level	Secondary	18	2,3
	License	533	68.3
	Master	227	29.1
	Doctor	2	0.3
Total		780	100

Data Collection Tools

In this research, data from the 2018 TALIS were used. Within the scope of the study, the School Leadership Scale was utilized to determine school principals' views on teacher participation, the Participation Among Stakeholders Scale was used to examine principals' views on stakeholder participation, and the Academic Pressure Scale was applied to determine the academic emphasis of the schools. In order to determine the participation levels of the school principals, the School Leadership Scale and Participation Among Stakeholders Scale were analyzed together in a path analysis model. The necessary permission for this research was obtained from the Ethics Committee of Yozgat Bozok University (date: 23.12.2020; decision no: 17/10).

School Leadership Scale

This scale includes items such as "I took action to ensure that teachers feel responsible for their students' learning outcomes." The scale has a Likert-type structure and items are scored between "very often" (4) and "never or rarely" (1). As a result of the reliability analysis of the scale, the omega coefficient was found to be .826. Within the scope of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the fit values were reported as CFI = .896, TLI = .896, RMSEA = .011, and SRMR = .446 (OECD, 2019).

Participation among Stakeholders Scale

In this scale, there are items such as "This school provides staff with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions" and "This school has a culture of shared responsibility for school issues." Items are scored between "strongly agree" (4) and "strongly disagree" (1). As a result of the reliability analysis of the scale, the omega coefficient was reported as .885 and the fit values within the scope of CFA were reported as CFI = .985, TLI = .962, RMSEA = .056, and SRMR = .026 (OECD, 2019).

Academic Pressure Scale

This scale has a one-factor structure and it was developed to determine the academic emphasis of schools according to the opinions of school principals. In this scale, there are items such as "Teachers hold high expectations for student achievement" and "Students have a desire to do well in school." School principals were asked how often the scale items were applied in their schools and they scored the items accordingly from "not at all" (1) to "a lot" (4). As a result of the reliability analysis of the scale, the omega coefficient was reported as .943 and, within the scope of CFA, the fit values were reported as CFI = .937, TLI = .937, RMSEA = .073, and SRMR = .247 (OECD, 2019).

Data Analysis

Before the analysis of the data, univariate and multivariate outliers were examined. In determining the univariate extreme values, the z score was examined and the data outside the range of -3 to +3 were excluded. In order to determine the multivariate extreme values, the Mahalanobis distance was calculated and the extreme values were removed ($p < .001$). In addition, scales containing missing data were not evaluated. The skewness and kurtosis of the data were examined and it was found that the values were within the acceptable limit of -1.5 to +1.5 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). VIF and tolerance values were examined to determine whether the variables had multicollinearity problems. It was determined that the VIF values of the school leadership, participation among stakeholders, and academic pressure variables were less than 10 (1.17, 1.22, and 1.14, respectively) and the tolerance values were higher than .20 (.85, .81, and .87, respectively), which are reported as acceptable values in the literature. In addition, it was found that the correlation between variables was less than .80 (Table 6). Based on these results, the data were considered as normally distributed and parametric analyses were conducted. Descriptive analysis and path analysis were utilized. The SPSS and Mplus programs were used to analyze the data.

Results

In this section, the findings obtained with the scales for school leadership, participation among stakeholders, and academic pressure are presented based on the views of the school principals. In Table 2, findings of the descriptive analysis are presented.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics

	N	$\bar{x}$	Ss	Skewness	Kurtorsis
School leadership	780	2.9284	.54589	-.054	.076
Participation among stakeholders	780	2.9833	.36760	.292	-.041
Academic pressure	780	3.0600	.54606	.012	-.629

As can be observed from Table 2, the average score of the school principals regarding school leadership, participation among stakeholders, and academic pressure was above the medium level. School principals had the highest average score for the Academic Pressure Scale ($\bar{x} = 3.06$). Whether the views of the school principals differed according to the variables of gender and education level was examined by *t*-test. For the variable of education level, associate degrees and bachelor degrees were labeled as "bachelor" while master and doctorate degrees were grouped together as "graduate." Analysis results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.
t-Test Results by Gender and Education Level

Scales	Variable	N	$\bar{x}$	Ss	Sd	T	p
School leadership	Woman	57	3.14	.43	778	3.146	.002*
	Male	723	2.91	.55			
	Bachelor	551	2.90	.54	778	-1.763	.078
	Graduate	229	2.98	.55			
Participation among stakeholders	Woman	57	2.99	.37	778	.281	.779
	Male	723	2.98	.36			
	Bachelor	551	2.97	.37	778	-.902	.367
	Graduate	229	3.00	.35			
Academic pressure	Woman	57	3.13	.53	778	1.027	.305
	Male	723	3.05	.54			
	Bachelor	551	3.05	.53	778	-.303	.755
	Graduate	229	3.06	.57			

*$p<.05$

As can be seen in Table 3, education level did not make a significant difference. Gender, on the other hand, made a statistically significant difference in favor of female teachers in school leadership ($t = 3.146$, $p < .05$). Female principals ($\bar{x} = 3.14$) had a higher average score than male principals ($\bar{x} = 2.91$). For participation among stakeholders and academic pressure, gender did not make a significant difference ($t = 0.281$, $p > .05$ and $t = 1.027$, $p > .05$, respectively). ANOVA was used to examine the

views of school principals according to the level of the schools in which they worked. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
ANOVA Results by School Level

Scales	ISCED	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	F	p	Significant difference between groups
School leadership	1	165	2.97	2-777	1.097	.334	
	2	187	2.88				
	3	428	2.92				
Participation among stakeholders	1	165	2.99	2-777	.139	.871	
	2	187	2.97				
	3	428	2.98				
Academic pressure	1	165	3.20	2-777	8.364	.000	1-2
	2	187	3.05				1-3
	3	428	3.06				

As can be seen in Table 4, school level did not make a statistical difference, whereas academic pressure was found to make a significant difference [$F(2, 777) = 8.364$, $p < .05$]. As a post hoc test, the LSD test was applied to determine among which groups a significant difference existed. It was observed that principals working in elementary schools ($\bar{x} = 3.20$) had a significantly higher average score than principals working in middle schools ($\bar{x} = 3.05$) and high schools ($\bar{x} = 3.06$). Table 5 presents ANOVA results regarding whether the variable of seniority made a difference in the results.

Table 5
ANOVA Results by Seniority Variable

Dimensions	Seniority	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	F	p
School leadership	1-5	386	2.93	4-752	1.063	.374
	6-10	180	2.89			
	11-15	96	2.95			
	16-20	42	3.06			
	21+	53	2.86			
Participation among stakeholders	1-5	386	2.97	4-752	.264	.901
	6-10	180	2.99			
	11-15	96	3.01			
	16-20	42	2.97			
	21+	53	2.95			
Academic pressure	1-5	386	3.02	4-752	2.061	.084
	6-10	180	3.07			
	11-15	96	3.19			
	16-20	42	3.11			
	21+	53	3.06			

As can be seen in Table 5, seniority did not make a significant difference for school leadership, participation among stakeholders, or academic pressure [$F(4, 752) = 1.063$, $p > .05$; $F(4, 752) = 0.264$, $p > .05$; and $F(7, 452) = 2.061$, $p > .05$, respectively]. Table 6 shows the results of the Pearson correlation analysis.

Table 6

Pearson Correlation Results on School Leadership, Participation Among Stakeholders and Academic Pressure

Factors	1	2	3
1. School leadership	1		
2. Stakeholder participation	.356*	1	
3. Academic pressure	.260**	.323**	1

**p<.01

As can be seen in Table 6, there are statistically significant relationships between all variables. A positive moderate significant relationship existed between school leadership and participation among stakeholders (r = .356; p < .01). A significant positive low-level relationship was observed between school leadership and academic pressure (r = .260; p < .01). There was a significant positive moderate relationship between participation among stakeholders and academic pressure (r = .323; p < .01). Path analysis of the model is presented in Figure 1.

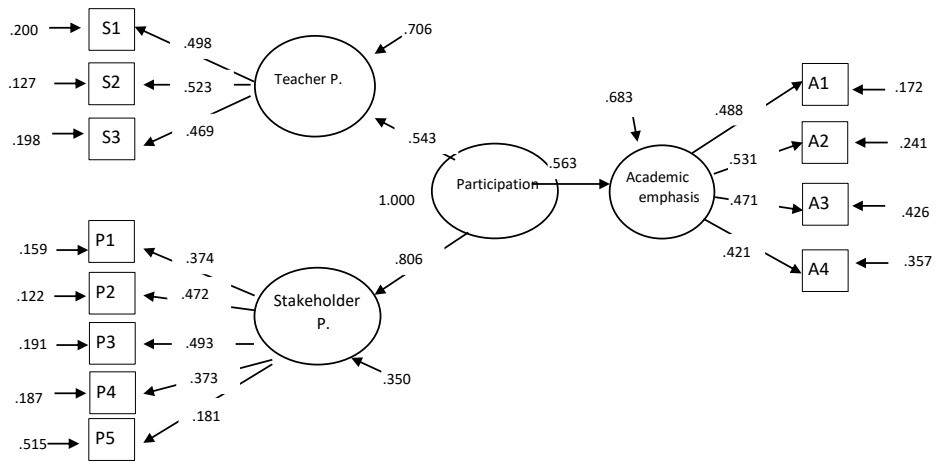

Figure 1.

As seen in Figure 1, the path coefficients of all items of the school leadership, participation among stakeholders, and academic pressure scales are significant (p < .05). School leadership and participation among stakeholders, which were the independent variables of the study, were determined to be significant predictors of academic pressure (β = .563, p < .05). Chi square (χ^2), RMSEA, SRMR, and CFI values were analyzed for model fit. In this regard, it is expected that the ratio of χ^2/sd should be ≤.05, the RMSEA value should be ≤.05, and the SRMR value should be ≤.08. CFI values of ≥.95 indicate perfect fit and values of ≥.90 indicate acceptable fit (Kline, 2005; Hooper Coughlan & Mullen, 2007). Regarding the goodness of fit values of the model established in this study, it was observed that the model had high fit values [χ^2 = 219.613; sd = 51; χ^2/sd = 4.306, p < .001; RMSEA = .077; CFI = .92; TLI = .89; SRMR = .046].

Discussion

This study aimed to examine the relationship between school principals' views on participation and the academic emphasis of the schools. Primarily, participation was examined. For the level of participation, the responses to the School Leadership Scale regarding teacher participation and the Participation Among Stakeholders Scale regarding stakeholder participation were used. According to the school principals, the participation of the teachers is above the medium level (close to a high level). This finding is consistent with the findings of Baş's study (2019), in which both teachers and school

principals stated that teachers' participation in decision-making was close to a high level (above a medium level).

School principals are expected to manage their schools in cooperation with the teachers, students, staff, and parents who make up the school community. School principals should acknowledge that participation increases the quality of education and that educational efficacy can be achieved not only by principals but with the participation of all stakeholders (Grubb & Flessa, 2006; Spillane, 2006). In the present study, it was determined that school principals supported stakeholder participation near high levels. This finding is in line with Arslan's (2018) results. Arslan (2018), based on interviews with principals of private schools, revealed that principals cared about the active participation of parents. However, the participation process was found to mostly take place within the framework of social responsibility projects. Principals were found to have relatively negative views on participation in decision-making processes. It has also been stated that school principals evaluate parents' decisions as recommendations, and the final decision-maker is perceived to be the school principal (Arslan, 2018; Çakır, 2017). In order to overcome this negative perspective and to realize the different expectations of different stakeholders, principals should adopt open and participatory approaches for dialogue. It should not be forgotten that the success of participatory administration depends on the management style and attitude of the school principal. Increased participation would enable everyone to be more willing to take responsibility for the aims of the school (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). The cooperation of school principals with the school community is important in solving the problems of the school and in increasing the effectiveness of the school. The Ministry of National Education of Turkey also holds the opinion that sharing the school's duties with society through the cooperation and participation of stakeholders will increase the quality of education (2015).

Students are the target actors of the education system. For this reason, the participation of students as stakeholders will have a positive influence on educational processes and outputs. The benefits of student participation can be considered within the two categories of results regarding personal development and learning and results regarding school and classroom management. The participation of students will increase their sense of belonging and self-confidence; will provide them skills for communication, research, teamwork, and solving conflicts and problems; and will improve their responsibility. In terms of educational institutions, as students' belonging to the school increases, their learning and success levels will increase, conflicts and bullying will decrease, and a learning environment based on solidarity will be achieved.

In terms of the variables considered in this study, it was observed that the education level, seniority, and school level of the school principals did not make a significant difference for school participation. On the other hand, gender made a significant difference regarding the participation of teachers. Female school principals had a higher average score for teacher participation. According to this finding, female school principals support teacher participation more than male principals. This may be due to the negative experiences women experience in professional life. Female managers who have experienced difficulties in participation and academic life may desire to help others avoid such experiences.

Regarding another variable of this study, it was observed that the academic emphasis level of the schools was high. Based on this finding, it can be stated that schools attach high importance to academic performance, trust in students, and academic support by teachers and parents. The ultimate aim in academic emphasis is to increase student performance and reach the highest levels that can be achieved (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991). For this purpose, schools work in cooperation with families. Educational processes are carried out in two complementary environments in school and within the family. Schools with high academic emphasis have positive school climates that motivate academic progress and learning while respecting success. In such climates, challenging but achievable goals are set for students. Teachers are a source of both motivation and guidance for students to achieve these goals. In the family, parents provide the necessary support for students to take responsibility. They feel responsible for student's performances and are in communication with the school. Parents' support and expectations increase the achievement of academic goals. Thus, the academic emphasis of the school increases with the cooperation of the school and families.

In the present study, it was determined that the gender, education level, and seniority of the school principals did not make a significant difference for the school's academic emphasis. Studies in the literature present parallel findings for the variables of gender (Çağlar, 2013; Tepe, 2018), education level (Tepe, 2018), and seniority (Aydın, 2019). The only significant difference in terms of these variables was observed for school level. This study has revealed that the academic emphasis levels of school principals working in primary schools are higher. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of Yılmaz and Yıldırım (2017), who stated that academic emphasis was higher at the primary school level based on a study conducted with teachers at primary and middle school levels. This finding may be due to the fact that, in primary schools, teachers spend more time with students than they do at higher grade levels. Spending more time with students enables teachers to understand the students better. Identifying students' strengths and weaknesses more clearly will enable teachers to set individual achievable goals for students more accurately. Another characteristic of academic emphasis is that parents collaborate with teachers to support students. It can be stated that the primary school level has a great advantage in this regard. Parent support is particularly high in the literacy teaching process and families usually help students achieve their basic education goals.

When the relationship between participation and academic emphasis was examined, it was observed that academic emphasis had a low positive significant correlation with school leadership and a moderate positive significant correlation with stakeholder participation. School participation was also found to be a significant predictor of academic emphasis. Based on this finding, it can be stated that the academic emphasis of a school increases as the participation of teachers and other stakeholders increases. Many studies in the literature have observed positive effects of participation on school outcomes. Participation increases teacher motivation and job satisfaction and enables teachers to integrate with their schools (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). It is also seen that participation has both direct and indirect effects on learning outcomes. In the present study, it was observed that the efforts of school principals to ensure participation were related to the academic emphasis of their schools. This finding is in parallel with previous studies (Buluç, 2019; Yıldız & Akbaşlı, 2018) that revealed the effect of authority sharing by school principals.

One of the most important characteristics of academic emphasis is that it increases student achievement and decreases the gaps between students. Positive effects of academic emphasis have been observed even in cases of differences in socioeconomic situations, which can be considered as an alternative strategy for students who do not have equal opportunities. Equality of opportunity is one of the 14 principles included in the basic law of national education in Turkey. It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to take all necessary measures for this principle. However, socioeconomic and sociocultural factors may prevent the realization of this principle at the desired level. Considering the results of the current study and previous findings reported in the literature, it is important to increase the academic emphasis of schools and participation in schools for that purpose.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the relationship between participation and academic emphasis in schools according to the views of school principals. As a result, it was determined that school principals' views were close to high levels regarding teacher and stakeholder participation and were at a high level regarding academic emphasis. Significant positive correlations were observed between teacher participation, stakeholder participation, and academic emphasis, and school principals' views on participation were significant predictors of academic emphasis. These findings show the importance of school principals' participatory policies. The ultimate goal of the education system is to achieve the highest level of learning. In line with this goal, schools should have high levels of academic emphasis. At this point, the importance of following a participatory policy in schools can be emphasized. School principals are expected to evaluate their schools as a whole together with teachers, students, and parents and support the participation of these stakeholders. Teachers and parents included in the process will also have more positive perspectives on school and education. A school climate that supports students in achieving success, teachers who trust students and believe that they can achieve, and parents who support students in cooperation with their schools will increase the academic emphasis in schools.

Suggestion

This study was conducted with the data of school principals who participated in the 2018 TALIS. Conducting the study with a larger sample would provide more generalizable results at the country level. In addition, repeating the study in schools with different socioeconomic levels would produce meaningful results in terms of examining the status of variables in socioeconomic differences. Examining the views of school principals, teachers, and parents regarding participation via qualitative studies would be useful in determining the factors that prevent participation and in finding solutions to increase participation. In addition, studies conducted with models that include organizational variables and learning outcomes can produce practical results.

For this research, the necessary permission was obtained from the Ethics Committee of Yozgat Bozok University (date: 23.12.2020; decision no: 17/10).

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