

## Principals' Views on the Factors Facilitating Idiosyncratic Deals They Make with Teachers<sup>1</sup>

### Müdürlerin Öğretmenlerin Kişiyeye Özel Anlaşma Başarılarını Etkileyen Faktörlere İlişkin Görüşleri

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#### ABSTRACT

Non-standard, personalized arrangements between employees and their managers that are not granted to other subordinates are referred to in the literature as "idiosyncratic deals" (i-deals for short). Although the factors that influence the realization of these agreements have been researched in various sectors, it is apparent that these factors have not yet been uncovered in the school setting. Because of this deficiency in the literature, the purpose of this multiple case study was to identify the factors that facilitate making i-deals between principals and teachers based on the perceptions of sixteen principals working in public and private schools. Semi-structured interview questions were developed, and findings were reported based on the researcher-developed framework of six dimensions of (1) professional development i-deals, (2) task flexibility i-deals, (3) schedule flexibility i-deals, (4) location flexibility i-deals, (5) reduced workload i-deals, and (6) pay-related i-deals. Implications for research and application were also discussed based on the results.

**Keywords:** Idiosyncratic deals, i-deals, school principals, teachers, multiple case study.

#### ÖZ

Çalışanlar ve yöneticileri arasında diğer çalışanlara sağlanmayan standart dışı, kişiselleştirilmiş düzenlemeler alanyazında "kişiyeye özel anlaşmalar" olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Bu anlaşmaların gerçekleşmesini etkileyen faktörler çeşitli sektörlerde araştırılmış olsa da bunların okul ortamında henüz ortaya çıkarılmadığı açıktır. Literatürdeki bu eksiklik nedeniyle gerçekleştirilen bu çoklu durum çalışmasının amacı, özel sektörde ve kamuda çalışan on altı okul müdürünün algılarına dayalı olarak müdürler ve öğretmenler arasında kişiyeye özel anlaşmalar yapılmasını kolaylaştıran faktörleri belirlemektir. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme soruları araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen altı boyutlu bir çerçeve kapsamında geliştirilmiş ve bulgular bu çerçeveye göre raporlanmıştır. Söz konusu altı boyutlar şunlardır: (1) mesleki gelişim, (2) işin içeriğinde esneklik, (3) çalışma programında esneklik, (4) çalışma mahallinde esneklik, (5) azaltılmış iş yükü ve (6) ücretlendirme konulu kişiyeye özel anlaşmalar. Bulgulara dayalı olarak, araştırma ve uygulamaya yönelik doğrular da tartışılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kişiyeye özel anlaşmalar, okul müdürleri, öğretmenler, çoklu durum araştırması.

## INTRODUCTION

The term "idiosyncratic deal" is defined in a frequently cited definition by Rousseau et al. (2006, pp. 978) as "voluntary, personalized agreements of a nonstandard nature negotiated between individual employees and their employers regarding terms that benefit each party." The concept of i-deals has become increasingly important in management research over the past twenty years. Based on my anecdotal experiences in educational organizations, as a teacher in four different schools, then as a teaching assistant, and finally as a faculty member in universities, I can confidently say that an educator's demand for a nonstandard working arrangement that is not granted to other educators is a common phenomenon, at least in the educational organizations in which I have worked. However, I can also state that there is not yet a discernible body of knowledge about this phenomenon in educational organizations. This is because when one examines the literature on i-deals, one finds that this literature has emerged through research conducted in organizations in sectors other than education, such as hospital employees (Hornung et al., 2010, 2011, 2014; Rousseau et al., 2009), public employees in a government agency (Hornung et al., 2008), or working parents (Tang & Hornung, 2015). Educational organizations differ from many organizations in other sectors in that they are organizations in which employee autonomy is paramount. This characteristic of educational organizations leads me to believe that this concept, which is thought to have important potential for understanding many issues related to organizational behavior and effectiveness in other sectors, may not be sufficient to explain personalized arrangements in schools. I believe that efforts to uncover the facilitating factors that determine the effectiveness of i-deals, which, when properly managed, benefit both the employee and the organization, should now include the context of interactions between teachers and principals. Liao et al. (2016) suggest that qualitative research methodology has the potential to make a valuable contribution to current understanding of the phenomenon of i-deals. Consequently, as a commonsense realist qualitative researcher, my goal in this qualitative multiple-case study was to identify the factors that facilitate making i-deals between principals and teachers based on the perceptions of sixteen principals working in public and private schools. In this way, I hoped to contribute to the literature on i-deals and school management. I should immediately state that the "facilitating factors" in the objective of the study above are not the factors that affect only the teachers' success or only the principal's success in these deals; they are the factors that enable both parties to have the deals happen. In the following pages, I will review the literature on idiosyncratic deals.

### 1.1. Theoretical Framework: Idiosyncratic Deals

As a result of increasing individualization in today's world, an increasing number of employees are negotiating their individual needs with their employers (Bal & Rousseau, 2016), which is, together with the recent tendency of human resource management strategies' shifting toward greater individualization (Liao et al., 2016) is the main reason why the concept of i-deals is so popular in today's organizational world.

Rousseau et al. (2006, p. 978) identified four key characteristics of i-deals: (1) "Individually negotiated" which means that individual employees initiate their personalized arrangements. (2) "heterogenous" in that an employee can have different (sometimes more favorable) arrangements from those of others in his or her workgroup. (3) "benefiting both employer and employee" meaning that they are designed to create win-win circumstances (Hornung et al., 2018), and (4) "varied in scope" such that only a single component of the employment package or the whole package can be idiosyncratic. Unlike cronyism or favoritism which are preferential treatments based on unjustified reasons, i-deals are justified in that they are beneficial to both the i-dealer and his or her organization (Rousseau et al., 2006).

I-deals vary in two critical ways: their timing and their content. Rousseau et al. (2016) identified three distinct points in time when i-deals are typically negotiated: (1) *ex ante* (i.e.,

prior to joining the organization), (2) *ex post* (i.e., following membership in the organization), and (3) when a high-performing employee threatens to resign. Rousseau and Kim's (2004) study, which inspired subsequent research on how i-deals are operationalized, drew on interviews with hospital administrators, staff, and human resource professionals and defined three domains: "reduced workload," "flexibility" (schedule), and "development" (career-focused). Using data from heterogeneous samples, Rosen et al. (2013) developed a reliable scale on i-deals, whose dimensions are similar to those proposed by Rousseau and Kim (2004), but with some variations. This scale includes four dimensions: (1) "Task and work responsibilities" includes items about employees receiving additional responsibilities compatible with their skills or can serve to develop their skills. (2) "Schedule flexibility" includes items about employees' having a say in the development of one's own work schedule or in taking time off from work. (3) "Location flexibility" included items about employee's freedom to complete their tasks in places other than their offices. (4) "Financial incentives" includes items about employees' ability to customize their own compensation packages based on their exceptional performances or skills. Rosen et al.'s (2013) conceptualization is not the last one. Hornung et al. (2014) preferred the dimensions of "task," "career," and "flexibility." Within this perspective, career i-deals refer to employees' efforts to create the necessary conditions for skill acquisition, which may help temporary employees obtain permanent positions and senior employees avert the risk of reaching career plateaus. This dimension is represented by only one item in Rosen et al.'s (2013) "task and work responsibilities" subscale. The concept of "task i-deals" was introduced by Hornung et al. (2010) to cover employees' negotiations for making their job content more enjoyable and suitable for their skills and interests. While career i-deals are also likely to affect job content, they are conceptually distinct from task i-deals in that they are strategically oriented at enhancing employability (Hornung et al., 2014). In this sense, the concept of career i-deals is synonymous with development i-deals, though Hornung et al. (2010) characterized the latter as a broader category including the concept of task i-deals. Hornung and Rousseau preferred not to use the concept of development i-deals and used task i-deals and career i-deals separately as has been pointed above (Hornung et al., 2014). However, in a more recent study, Rousseau et al. (2016) preferred to use the concept of development i-deals instead of career i-deals. I hold the view that the dimensions presented by Rousseau et al. (2016) as (a) development, (b) task, (c) flexibility (including schedule and location), (d) reduced workload, and (e) financial, give the full range of idiosyncratic deals and it is not appropriate to reduce the number of these dimensions as they are clearly distinct from each other. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, an employee may need to work from home, while she has no problem with the amount of her work responsibility. The same employee may need to use one of her skills, while she is not interested in developing that skill any further. I also hold the view that it is wise to use "development i-deals" instead of "career i-deals" because of the possibility that an employee may wish to develop her skill without any intention to use it for her career advancement. For example, an employee may demand to be a member of a committee merely she is interested in the activities of that committee. Before turning to the antecedent factors of I-deals, I would like to point out that in this research, based on my reading of the above sources, I created a framework with six dimensions and developed my interview questions based on this framework. These dimensions were (1) professional development i-deals, (2) task flexibility i-deals, (3) schedule flexibility i-deals, (4) location flexibility i-deals, (5) reduced workload i-deals, and finally (6) pay-related i-deals.

The large part of the scholarly literature on i-deals, is about their antecedents or predictors. Based on my literature review, I can say that research focusing on the perceptions on factors affecting i-deals can be subsumed under three groups: (1) Employee characteristics: In this group of studies, the employee's taking personal initiative (Hornung et al., 2008, 2009; Tang & Hornung, 2015), self-perception of being overqualified for the job (Huang & Hu, 2021), networking skills (Guerrero & Jeanblanc, 2017), individualism (on *ex ante* i-deals), perceived insider status (on *ex post* i-deals), and social skill (Lee & Hui, 2011), socioeconomic position

within the organization (Jonsson et al., 2021), having goals of achievement and the belief that coworkers received i-deals (Ng & Lucianetti, 2016), and political skills (Rosen et al., 2013) were found to affect i-deals. (2) Supervisor characteristics: In this group of studies, the supervisor's caregiving commitments for elders (Heras et al., 2017), experience of being a former i-dealer, and their exchange ideologies (Laulié et al., 2019), belief that the i-deal under negotiation brings mutual benefits to both the employee and organization (Davis & Van der Heijden, 2018), employee-oriented leader behavior (Hornung et al., 2011), affective and cognitive empathy (Rao & Kunja, 2019), and need to compensate unfulfilled reward obligations to employees (Hornung et al., 2009) were found to affect i-deals. (3) Organizational characteristics: In this group of studies, organizations' HR practices (Tuan, 2017; Villajos et al., 2019), structural conditions such as employees in different work conditions such as part-time working or telecommuting (Hornung et al., 2008) or the number of employees managed by supervisors (Hornung et al., 2009), and leader-member exchange relationships (Hornung et al., 2010, 2014; Rosen et al., 2013) were found to affect i-deals. When I look at the research that addresses the antecedents of idiosyncratic deals, I am struck by the fact that none of the above research has been conducted in a school setting.

I hold the view that the research on the outcomes of i-deals can be summarized under two headings: (1) those relating to organizational effectiveness and (2) those relating to individual employee well-being. The first dimension covers the research on positive outcomes, including commitment (Bal & Boehm, 2019; Hattori et al., 2021; Ho & Tekleab, 2016; Hornung et al., 2008; Rosen et al., 2013), work engagement (Hornung et al., 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011; Zhang & Wu, 2019), job performance (Hornung et al., 2014), OCB (Anand et al., 2010), employee initiative (Hornung et al., 2010), constructive voice behavior (Ng & Feldman, 2015), administrative error control (Tuan, 2017), psychological empowerment and taking charge (Wang & Long, 2018), innovative work behavior (Kimwolo & Cheruiyot, 2018), and finally, client satisfaction (Bal & Boehm, 2019).

The second dimension includes research on predominantly positive outcomes, including job autonomy, skill acquisition, reduced work overload, lesser work strain, and occupational self-efficacy (Hornung et al., 2014), job control, job complexity, and lesser job stressors (Hornung et al., 2010), job satisfaction (Ho & Tekleab, 2016; Rosen et al., 2013), creativity (Wang et al., 2018), psychological employment relationship (Rousseau et al., 2009), perceived organizational support (Zhang & Wu, 2019), work-family enrichment (Tang & Hornung, 2015), retirement preferences (Bal et al., 2012; Jonsson et al., 2021), and employability of older workers (Oostrom et al., 2016). Conversely, developmental i-deals were found to be negatively related to work-family conflict (Hornung et al., 2008). Kong et al.'s (2018) study suggested that, in the case of making comparisons with coworkers' i-deals, task i-deals can have both positive and negative influences on employee emotional exhaustion and deviant behaviors. The above research indicates that idiosyncratic deals, when properly managed, can bring remarkable benefits to organizations and are therefore of value as a research topic.

## **METHOD**

I chose a multiple case study design to examine the facilitating factors for i-deals between teachers and their principals. In this research, I assumed that three factors -sector, school level, and gender- would influence school administrators' views of the phenomenon I was studying, and I took these factors as dimensions of variation to ensure diversity in the formation of my study group (cases). I used the maximum variation method and tried to cover the dimensions of variation that I thought were important with as few participants as possible. The cases were 16 school principals working in an Anatolian city in Turkey. Table 1 served as my guide to ensure that participants were not lumped into any of the dimensions of variation (e.g., almost all school

administrators in Turkey are male). I gave each participant a code indicating their sector, school level, and gender. Within this coding system, in the context of the sector, "Pub" represents public, and "Pvt" represents private; in the context of school level, "Pre" represents preschool, "Prim" represents the primary school, "Mid" represents the middle school, and "Hi" represents high school; in the context of gender, "Fem" represents female and "Mal" represents the male. The characteristics of the participants and the abbreviations I used to identify them can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*An Overview Of The Study Group And The Abbreviations I Created For Each Participant.*

Sector	Public Sector								Private Sector							
School Level	Pre	Pre	Prim	Prim	Mid	Mid	Hi	Hi	Pre	Pre	Prim	Prim	Mid	Mid	Hi	Hi
Gender	Fem	Mal	Fem	Mal	Fem	Mal	Fem	Mal	Fem	Mal	Fem	Mal	Fem	Mal	Fem	Mal
	Publ-Pre-Fem	Publ-Pre-Mal	Publ-Prim-Fem	Publ-Prim-Mal	Publ-Mid-Fem	Publ-Mid-Mal	Publ-Hi-Fem	Publ-Hi-Mal	Pvt-Pre-Fem	Pvt-Pre-Mal	Pvt-Prim-Fem	Pvt-Prim-Mal	Pvt-Mid-Fem	Pvt-Mid-Mal	Pvt-Hi-Fem	Pvt-Hi-Mal

I began data collection after obtaining (1) institutional review board approval, (2) permission from the Provincial Directorate of National Education, and (3) written informed consent from my study participants before each interview. In 2022, I conducted fifteen interviews by making digital audio recordings in participants' offices and one by video recording using Zoom software. During the interview, I asked participants six questions, each related to one of the six dimensions I derived from the i-deals literature. Readers can refer to these questions in the findings section. In analyzing the data, I followed the steps below:

1. I transcribed the interviews verbatim using the transcription mode of the MAXQDA 2020 software and the macOS speech recognition software together.
2. As a validity measure, I sent participants my participant-level interview summaries and asked them if I misunderstood anything or if they had anything to add. These summaries did not include the views of the other participants. All participants acknowledged that they had received their summaries, but no one asked to add or correct anything. Because of this practice, I was confident that they had not changed their views on the facilitating factors even two months after the interviews, so there was some consistency in the study data.
3. I performed the first and second cycle of coding using the MAXQDA 2020 program. Keeping in mind Sandelowski's (2001) warning about reporting research findings, I did not fall into the error of "analytic overcounting" (p. 237). Sandelowski (2001) gives several examples of this error. I understood this caveat as follows: I did not select the study participants to make generalizations about the attitudes of a larger population with statistical certainty. The goal of the maximum diversity sampling I used in this study was to get closer to capturing the full possible diversity of views in the population (I used "get closer" intentionally). I reported every factor that was mentioned by even a single participant. For me, there is no difference in importance between a facilitating factor mentioned by a single participant and another factor mentioned by all participants. Therefore, I did not report the frequency of the factors I found. This is not because I am categorically against the use of numbers in qualitative research but because it would be pointless in this study.

4. For the final validity check, I presented my analysis results to the participants, including my comments on the dimensions of variation and gave them ample time to inform me of their subsequent contributions or corrections. Only one participant asked me to correct some parts of his statements in the results, which I did.

Before turning to the results, I would like to briefly point out that I am a commonsense realist researcher (in line with Mark et al., 2000), which is evident in my approach to the validity measures I described above. The first-person singular narrative I have used is my deliberate choice of rhetoric to show that the present study did not conduct itself; this is my study, and I, as a nonpositivist qualitative researcher, take full responsibility for all its imperfections.

## FINDINGS

Like all other qualitative researchers, I felt the need to use quotations "to illustrate or provide a more concrete example of an idea, to represent the thoughts, feelings, or moods of the persons quoted, to evoke a feeling or mood, or to provoke a response in members of the audience for the research report" (Sandelowski 1994, p. 480). However, because there are many factors that I noticed during my research, and I did not want to exceed the word limits for a typical research paper, I thought it was appropriate in this section to include only one illustrative direct quote for a factor without further comment. Before discussing the factors that facilitate i-deals, I think it is useful to briefly discuss the factors that reduce the frequency of these arrangements that I found in the statements of the participating principals in order to look at the issue from a broader perspective. These factors were as follows:

**1. (Only in public schools) The practice of fulfilling only one request from a teacher regarding the weekly course schedule.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Mid-Mal, referred to this factor as follows: "At the meeting, I say, 'My friends, we are now going to make the weekly lesson plan. Please tell us one of your wishes in writing.' The teachers give their requests to the assistant principal, who creates the lesson plan. After he makes the lesson plan, the assistant principal comes to me. We sit down and discuss the lesson plan. We fulfill those requests 99% of the time."

**2. (Only in public schools) The practice of not accepting claims that are incompatible with the established system.** The participant with the code name Publ-Pre-Fem commented on this factor as follows: "I have certain lines, you know, I present my lines to the teachers from the beginning. They get pressured by the teachers, but I usually do not break my line too much. Since they know that, after a while, they let it go and think, 'The principal will not agree anyway.'"

**3. (Only in public schools) The practice of giving teachers one full day off per week.** The participant codenamed Publ-Mid-Mal commented on this factor as follows: "We made a rule that we give teachers who work less than twenty-four hours a week a full day off. But if they work twenty-five hours, we cannot give that teacher a day off. In that case, we give them two half days off per week."

**4. (Only in private schools) The practice of giving teachers half a day off per week.** The participant codenamed Pvt-Prim-Mal addressed this factor as follows: "Why do we give them a half day off? We do it so they can take care of their business that day. Maybe he has a health problem, a doctor's appointment, or he bought a house; the teacher takes care of that on that day and does not disrupt his work schedule."

**5. (Only in private schools) The practice of swapping class time with another teacher.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Prim-Mal, described this factor as follows: "If the math teacher has to take care of a problem outside of school, for example, because of a doctor's appointment, he can swap classes with a science teacher, for example. In this way, we help them."

**6. (Only in private schools) The practice in which school founders (rather than principals) conduct negotiations with teachers.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Mid-Fem referred to this factor as follows: "... In other words, such demands come, but in this school, upper management usually negotiates these agreements."

**7. (Only in private schools) Lack of job security for teachers.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Hi-Fem commented on this factor as follows: "... In private schools, teachers don't make special demands. Everyone is aware of their responsibilities; everyone must abide by the rules of the contract. But we help with small problems."

**8. (Only in private schools and public preschools) Teachers' obligation to be in school at all times during working hours.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Hi-Fem, described this factor as follows: "Our teachers enter school at nine and leave at four-thirty. They don't go out during school hours. They can help students solve questions or teach them something. Usually, they work. So, our teachers don't have any demands about whether or not there are gaps in the program." The factors I noticed in participants' statements that facilitate i-deals between teachers and principals are as follows:

### **1. Professional Development I-deals**

To uncover the facilitating factors in this dimension, I asked my participants the following question, "Have any of your teachers made an i-deal with you to create the appropriate conditions for developing professional skills? What were the factors that made this i-deal possible?" The facilitating factors that I noticed in participants' responses to this question, and a direct quote illustrating them, are as follows:

**1.1. The school administrator's expectation is that teachers will benefit their students more through the training they receive.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Prim-Mal, described this factor as follows: "I give them a day and a half off. A day and a half! In a private school! Most administrators don't grant that kind of time off, but I do because I know that teachers benefit kids more when they improve themselves, so I adjust their weekly work schedule accordingly and encourage them."

**1.2. The fact that the training, which takes place outside the school, does not disrupt school operations.** The participant with the code name Publ-Prim-Mal referred to this factor as follows: "I say, 'My friends, if you can arrange your schedule so that your schedule is not disrupted, so that work is not disrupted, so that the children do not fall behind, then, of course, you can attend such training.'"

**1.3. The fact that the principal has a master's degree.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Mid-Fem, referred to this factor as follows: "I can relate to the situation because I experienced it myself. When I studied for the master's degree, I also took Fridays off, but honestly, I did not have an administrator who had any setbacks or expectations for me."

**1.4. (Only in private schools) The fact that the teacher takes on additional tasks to prevent negative reactions to the i-deal from other teachers.** The participant with the code name Pvt-Prim-Fem referred to this factor as follows: "This teacher has one day of hall monitor duty, but in return, he has one and a half days off. My gain from this practice is mainly to balance the other teachers' evaluations of this teacher. Other than that, I do not care if the teacher does this duty. I have teachers I can give these assignments to."

**1.5. (Only in private schools) The fact that the teacher applies for postgraduate training not to get a job at the university but to improve her teaching skills.** The participant with the code name Pvt-Hi-Mal commented on this factor as follows: "Sometimes, especially young colleagues have an approach like 'Sir, I will also take my chance there.' We have an approach like that: 'Do

you want to get a master's degree to contribute to us or to your teaching field, or do you want to use it as a steppingstone to find a job at the university while you are working here?"

**1.6. (Only in private schools) The contribution of the diploma that the teacher receives to the image of the school.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Pre-Mal, referred to this factor as follows: "It's also useful for me to put their diploma in their personnel file."

## **2. Task Flexibility I-deals**

To uncover the facilitating factors in this dimension, I asked my participants the following question, "Have any of your teachers made an i-deal with you about taking on tasks that they find interesting or that match their current skills? What factors made this i-deal possible?" The facilitating factors that stood out to me in participants' responses to this question, and a direct quote that illustrates them, are as follows:

**2.1. The principal's expectation that the teacher's work motivation and the benefit for her students will increase.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Mid-Mal, commented on this factor as follows: "If the teacher comes with a request like that, I assume it's one hundred percent a plus for the institution and therefore for the students."

**2.2. The principal's ability to empathize with the teacher.** The participant codenamed Publ-Prim-Mal referred to this factor as follows: "I remember when I was a teacher, I was preparing for some boards and commissions with my colleagues and applying for assignments by saying, 'Sir, I would like to serve on this board.'"

**2.3. The principal's expectation that if she satisfies teachers with i-deals, she can get them to agree to other demands in the future.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Pre-Fem, described this factor as follows: "I have the chance to say, 'I accepted what you wanted, I supported you, but I didn't get the efficiency I expected from you.'"

**2.4. The principal's concern that performance will be low on a task that the teacher does not want.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Hi-Mal, described this factor as follows: "If someone doesn't care about something, they do it superficially, and there is no success in that work. Instead of getting zero results in both areas, I'd rather get zero results in one area and get a plus in the other." (Publ-Hi-Mal talks about getting zero results if he does not give teachers the assignment they do not want, but getting a positive result if he gives teachers the assignment of their choice.)

**2.5. The success of the teacher to make the principal feel that she can accomplish the task of her choice.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Hi-Fem, mentioned this factor as follows: "For example, the teacher may ask to teach twelfth graders for university entrance exam; but will he really be able to do it? Of course, we have to assess that."

**2.6. The fact that the teacher has skills in the required task that other teachers do not have.** The participant with the code name Publ-Hi-Mal described this factor as follows: "If the teacher says, 'I'll do this task. Give it to me,' we give her that task. Suppose we had to meet with the mayor, that teacher would go, and if I wanted her to get three, she would get five. But other than that, for example, I don't burden this teacher with schoolwork."

**2.7. The way the teacher presents the request in convincing and appropriate language.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Pre-Fem referred to this factor as follows: "I can say that as he throws me the pass, I catch the ball accordingly. It all depends on how the teacher approaches me. I don't have any strict rules there. So, I decide according to how my teacher approaches me."



### **3. Schedule Flexibility I-deals**

Some of the participants indicated that the i-deals with teachers were almost exclusively about the weekly course schedule (no classes in the first hour of the day to be able to drop the child off at school, no classes on Friday afternoons, etc.), with statements like the following:

For example, our female teachers take their children to kindergarten or school. ... Sometimes our male teachers want to start teaching after they have brought their wives and children to school. ... This is the most common thing. (Publ-Hi-Fem)

Participants working in preschools stated that, unlike schools at other levels, there is no need for schedule flexibility i-deals in this school setting, where teachers do not even have the opportunity to rest by taking recess breaks.

To uncover the facilitating factors in this dimension, I asked my participants the following question, "Have any of your teachers made an i-deal with you for a more appropriate work program? What factors made this i-deal possible?" The facilitating factors that I noticed in participants' responses to this question, and a direct quote illustrating them, are as follows:

**3.1. The principal's expectation that teacher motivation and student benefits will increase as a result of the i-deal granted.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Hi-Fem, described this factor as follows: "If I can do it, why not. In other words, I believe that our teachers' happiness and well-being increase their success even more."

**3.2. Previous experience of the principal as a subordinate of a strict principal who has not accepted i-deals in the past.** The participant code-named Pvt-Mid-Fem referred to this factor as follows: "I love the lady (name of participant's former principal) very much, mainly because she raised me to be a principal, but there were times when I was very sad and cried. ... I always had to stay in school because my principal would not leave school before six o'clock, even if my work was done by five o'clock. Something like that made me sad, but I don't apply the same rules to teachers now."

**3.3. The ability of the principal to empathize with the teacher who has to take care of her elderly parents.** The participant with the code name Publ-Hi-Fem referred to this factor as follows: "The teacher has to go to his village to take care of his parents, or I don't know what, his parents have a farm in the village. I have received such requests. In this case, you empathize, 'even if you have a mother who needs help,' you say, 'you would also want to go.'"

**3.4. The principal's ability to empathize with the teacher when it comes to age and experience.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Hi-Mal, referred to this factor as follows: "... now I go swimming three evenings a week; when I get home, I am tired. So, since we also feel this physical fatigue, we can see that there is physical fatigue rather than arbitrariness behind such demands from the older teachers."

**3.5. The fact that the teacher applies for the i-deal to do her work more efficiently.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Mid-Mal, describes this factor as follows: "My teacher is being treated for his knee, and he said, 'I have to go to Ankara every two weeks. I don't want to interrupt my classes. Can I have Fridays off?' I said, 'Of course,' because he wanted that in good faith. So, I cut Fridays out of the weekly schedule."

**3.6. The fact that the teacher's total working time is not reduced.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Prim-Mal, referred to this factor as follows: "However, I would not allow a school counselor to come to school at noon and leave at six. Because by law, she has to serve my students."

**3.7. The principal's inclination to help the teacher in need.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Pre-Mal, referred to this factor as follows: "For example, the teacher says, 'My child got into

the afternoon class in the first grade of elementary school. Can I work the afternoon shift?' I consider such requests; I don't make them work the early shift."

**3.8. The fact that the teacher has benefited the school more than other teachers.** The participant with the code name Publ-Hi-Mal referred to this factor as follows: "For example, the teacher I just mentioned put a lot of effort into this school. If someone has put in a lot of work, if he has contributed a lot, then, of course, he can demand positive discrimination."

**3.9. The principal's impression that the i-dealer is a high-performing and affable teacher.** The participant codenamed Publ-Prim-Fem described this factor as follows: "I would never turn down a request from a high-performing teacher who works in harmony with other teacher colleagues."

**3.10. The fact that the i-deal will not cause problems among teachers.** The participant, coded Publ-Prim-Fem, referred to this factor as follows: "...but if this teacher's wish causes the other teachers' program to be disturbed, if I can only fulfill his wish and not the wishes of the others, then I can't accept it."

**3.11. The fact that the requested i-deal will not have a negative impact on the operation of the school.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Prim-Fem, described this factor as follows: "If we can make adjustments without disrupting other teachers' schedules, or if the same class is not taught three hours in a row, or if math class does not fall on the last hours, if the program allows, we can accept those requests."

**3.12. A female principal if childcare permission is required.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Prim-Fem, referred to this factor as follows: "... in cases where the teacher's child is sick or the babysitter can't come, ... we give the teacher breastfeeding time for her baby, but if the teacher says, 'One hour is not enough; can we extend it?' we feel that the teacher is a mother and offer her flexibility. The fact that she's a mother and we know her child needs her more during that time naturally influences us."

**3.13. (Only in preschools) The need to design the instructional program according to the needs of the students identified during the day.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Pre-Fem, referred to this factor as follows: "Second, the kindergarten program is flexible. If the teacher says, 'The kids are very active today, so I replaced the math lesson with the art lesson the next day. I am going to do art today.' 'Of course,' I would say."

**3.14. (Only in public schools) The small number of teachers in the school.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Prim-Fem referred to this factor as follows: "The fact that you have a small school is a facilitating factor. If the school is big, the demand is also very high because the staff is overcrowded. There are no limits to the demands. It's harder to put limits on the demands, and it's harder to please everybody."

#### **4. Location Flexibility I-deals**

To uncover the facilitating factors in this dimension, I asked my participants the following question, "Have any of your teachers made an i-deal with you to arrange a change of work location that would better suit them?" The facilitating factors that stood out to me in participants' responses to this question, and a direct quote illustrating them, are as follows:

**4.1. The fact that the principal considers the change of environment appropriate for the benefit of the student.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Prim-Fem, referred to this factor as follows: "...we allow it, and we welcome it very much. Because being somewhere other than the classroom can be another source of motivation for them."

**4.2. The principal's concern that the teacher's performance, forced to work in an undesirable environment, will decrease.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Mid-Mal, described

this factor as follows: (the participant speaks of a teacher who did not want to work in the basement of the school) “‘I don't want to work here, in this basement, I want to work in a classroom,’ she said ... I could have forced this teacher to teach there if I wanted to, but I didn't want her motivation to go down.”

**4.3. The principal's assessment that no other teacher will make the same request.** The participant with the code name Publ-Prim-Fem referred to this factor as follows: “I can make a special arrangement for this teacher and change his classroom. But we have to use that classroom again next year. What if another teacher comes to me and says, ‘I don't want this classroom,’ how am I going to meet that demand?”

**4.4. The principal's assessment that the teacher will not abuse the i-deal for her convenience.** The participant with the code name Publ-Hi-Mal referred to this factor as follows: “I accepted this teacher's request to hold her lesson in the schoolyard. Ten minutes later, half of the students were playing volleyball, and the teacher was drinking tea in the cafeteria. I said, ‘My friends, no one should come to me with such requests.’”

**4.5. The ability of the principal to empathize with the teacher because of the conditions in his office room.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Hi-Mal, referred to this factor as follows: (After mentioning that his own office is also cold in the winter) “Because we feel it, we accept that our friend is right.”

**4.6. The fact that the location flexibility i-deal does not lead to conflicts between teachers.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Mid-Mal, referred to this factor as follows: “If there's a request that ‘I will always be inside in the winter,’ I will not accept it because it will cause conflict between teachers.”

**4.7. The teacher's ability to provide a convincing justification (about health problems or the quality of teaching, etc.).** The participant, codenamed Publ-Mid-Mal, referred to this factor as follows: “... but the teacher said, ‘I have some problems, I have asthma’ and so on; so, I said, ‘OK.’”

**4.8. (Only in private schools) Principal's ability to control teachers teaching online from home.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Hi-Mal, referred to this factor as follows: “During the pandemic period, we could control whether the teacher entered and left the class on time, even if we did not follow the entire lesson.”

## **5. Reduced Workload I-deals**

To uncover the facilitating factors in this dimension, I asked my participants the following question, “Have any of your teachers made an i-deal with you to ensure that their workload is reduced to a manageable level?” The facilitating factors that I noticed in participants' responses to this question, and a direct quote illustrating them, are as follows:

**5.1. The principal's perception that the request arose out of necessity.** The participant, codenamed Publ-Hi-Fem, referred to this factor as follows: “If this woman could have endured her problems any longer, she would not have asked me or told me, ‘I have such a problem.’ So, she should have felt suffocated this year.”

**5.2. The fact that the principal thinks that the teacher's workload should be reduced for some reason.** The participant codenamed Publ-Prim-Fem mentioned this factor as follows: “The teacher's father was diagnosed with cancer, and she and her husband were in the process of separating. These events took a toll on her. The teacher taught only her classes that year. I didn't say to her, ‘Why are you not doing project work this year?’”

The question is whether a principal's support for a teacher who is in distress (e.g., because she has a young child, has lost a relative, has family problems, or fears being dismissed from the

doctoral program for not defending her dissertation on time) falls within the scope of i-deals defined by mutual benefit. I think this is the case because, in these arrangements, the principal has the expectation that (1) the teacher will overcome her obstacle to performance, or at least the stress she perceives will decrease, and (2) the teacher's motivation to work will increase after a while because she will feel gratitude for the support she receives from the school administration.

**5.3. *The fact that the principal considers the request to reduce the workload as necessary for the teacher's efficiency.*** The participant with the code Pvt-Mid-Mal referred to this factor as follows: "If the teacher says, 'I can't be efficient after twenty-five hours; give me as little as possible,' then, of course, I'll do it. When she is reluctant, if you say, 'I'm going to put you teach for forty hours,' then those hours are wasted. Is it possible for her to be efficient if she is reluctant to enter the classroom?"

**5.4. *The fact that the principal feels the need to provide convenience to teachers who have a heavy workload.*** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Prim-Fem, described this factor as follows: "The teacher may come with a request, such as, 'You know, my workload has increased, do not give me the task of watching the hallway.' In such cases, I think the teacher is right. Sometimes I even say, 'I wish I would have noticed this sooner.'"

**5.5. *(Only in public schools) The fact that the principal considers the request for a reduction in workload as a right arising from the teacher's seniority.*** The participant, codenamed Publ-Pre-Mal, referred to this factor as follows: "We also pay attention when we assign certain tasks and responsibilities. We want our young friends to work a little harder and the experienced friends to have a little more rest." From another perspective, Publ-Hi-Fem commented on this factor as follows: "I think it's right. It is the man's right. He has worked for twenty-five years. So, he doesn't want to be a hall monitor anymore. I think he has the right."

**5.6. *(Only in public schools) The fact that the reduction of the teacher's workload does not cause the reaction of the other teachers.*** The participant with the code name Publ-Mid-Mal referred to this factor as follows: "In the case of a teacher who did not take hall monitor duty due to health reasons, other teachers said, 'How is she supposed to teach if she is not able for watch duty?' Some teachers were upset about that, so I started assigning watch duty to that teacher."

**5.7. *(Only in private schools) The fact that the teacher makes the school administration feel that she is aware of her legal rights.*** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Prim-Fem, explained this factor as follows: "But when the institution realizes that the teacher knows her rights, they say, 'The teacher knows her rights, so we have to act accordingly.' The most important thing is that the teacher knows her legal rights."

## **6. *Pay-related I-deals***

To uncover the facilitating factors in this dimension, I asked my participants the following question, "Have any of your teachers made an i-deal with you to customize their own compensation package to fit their specific situation?" As for the dimension of pay-related i-deals, I must first make the following statement: In public schools in Turkey, the principals have no influence on the determination of the monthly salaries of teachers. Therefore, they were not able to provide data on this dimension. The eight private school principals who participated in this study fell into two categories: two principals who were the founders of their schools and could determine the compensation of their teachers and six principals who were appointed by the founders. Four of these six study participants said they had no direct influence over teacher compensation, but the other two said they participated in salary-setting meetings with teachers. One of the two participants with a founder position (Pvt-Pre-Mal) said that he pays the same salary to teachers with the same degree (Associate or Bachelor) at his school. In this case, there is only one participant who sets teacher salaries: Pvt-Prim-Mal. The two facilitating factors I

found in the statements of this participant and another participant (Pvt-Hi-Mal) who said he could influence teacher salaries by participating in discussion sessions with teachers are as follows:

**6.1. (Only in private schools) Positive evaluation of the teacher's performance by the principal.** The participant with the code name Pvt-Prim-Mal referred to this factor as follows: "I go to classroom observation. I observe my teachers and look at how effective they are."

**6.2. (Only in private schools) The need to keep qualified teachers.** The participant, codenamed Pvt-Hi-Mal described this factor as follows: "If you ask a teacher who has been working at Science High School for fifteen or twenty years, 'Do you know this teacher?' she would say about him, 'I know him, he is a great teacher.' We have such a teacher here. For example, his compensation system is different from almost all other teachers."

Finally, I would like to point out that in this study, I considered three different dimensions of variation (sector, school level, gender) that I assumed would influence participants' opinions. Based on my findings from the data, sector was the most effective of these dimensions of variation. I have found that gender (with the exception of needing a childcare permit) and school level (with the exception of preschools, which have their own working conditions) have little effect on differences. Looking at my research data, my impression is that the orientation of the school (whether it is focused on high-stakes testing or on teaching job skills) influenced the participants' views on the phenomenon I studied. But as I mentioned in the limitations, I did not anticipate such a dimension of variation when I selected my participants.

## DISCUSSION

When I attempted to compare the results of my research with those of other studies on the factors that facilitate the realization of i-deals, I encountered two problems: (1) There was no single study exclusively in the field of educational administration on the factors that facilitate i-deals, and (2) in research conducted in work settings other than educational institutions, the number of studies that addressed these factors was quite small. Nevertheless, I can say that there are some similarities between the results of i-deals research conducted in different sectors and the results of my study.

When I looked at the literature on i-deals, I found that both some of the facilitating factors I identified in my research and some of the other factors identified in research in the i-deals literature can be grouped under the term empathy. First, regarding the professional development i-deals, Rao and Kunja's (2019) research indicates that there is a positive relationship between empathy demonstrated by the leader and the leader's approval of i-deals about development. Consistent with this finding, the factor I refer to as "The fact that the principal has a master's degree" (in the professional development dimension) suggests that some participants respond positively to teachers' request for professional development i-deals because of this experience. Further, I can say that my findings on the factor I called "The ability of the principal to empathize with the teacher who has to take care of her elderly parents" (in the schedule flexibility dimension) support Heras et al.'s (2017) finding that managers' responsibility for elder care is positively associated with their schedule flexibility i-deals with subordinates. On the same topic, my findings on the factor I refer to as "The principal's ability to empathize with the teacher when it comes to age and experience" (in the schedule flexibility dimension) support the findings of the research conducted by Rao and Kunja (2019), which indicate a positive relationship between the emphatic concern shown by the manager and the authorization of flexibility i-deals for both work schedule and work location.

Other facilitating factors other than empathy that I identified in this research also showed parallels to the factors identified in the i-deals literature. First, Hornung et al. (2011) found that managers' consideration for their subordinates was positively correlated with the extent to which

employees negotiated i-deals about professional development and work schedule flexibility. The manager's consideration in the Hornung et al. (2011) study is a facilitating factor similar to what I call "The principal's inclination to help the teacher in need" in the schedule flexibility dimension. In the same dimension, the factor "The small number of teachers in the school," which I found only in public schools, confirms Hornung et al.'s (2009) findings indicating a negative relationship between the number of subordinates of an administrator and the authorization of individual i-deals related to flexible time arrangements. Finally, I found a facilitating factor for task flexibility i-deals, which I call "The way the teacher presents the request in convincing and appropriate language." Together with the findings of Lee and Hui (2011), who showed that employees' social skills are positively related to their both ex ante and ex post i-deals, I think that these results will draw attention to the importance of communication language for the success of i-deals.

In this research, I found that some of the facilitating factors I found in the reduced workload dimension also appear in the i-deals literature. For example, the factor "The fact that the principal considers the request for a reduction in workload as a right arising from the teacher's seniority," which I found only in public schools, supports the findings of Jonsson et al. (2021), who find a positive relationship between seniority and workload reduction i-deals in their study with public employees, including teachers. Also, the factor "The fact that the teacher makes the school administration feel that she is aware of her legal rights," which I only encountered at one private school, is consistent with the finding that making private demands through employee initiative is an influencing factor on i-deals (Hornung et al., 2008, 2009; Tang & Hornung, 2015). What surprised me was that this factor was addressed (or recalled) only in the dimension of reduced workload and only by a single participant. In addition, the facilitating factor I labeled "The fact that the principal feels the need to provide convenience to teachers who have a heavy workload," which I found in both sectors, seems to be consistent with Hornung et al.'s (2009) findings that managers' perceptions of not meeting their organizational obligations to staff correlate positively with their tendency to enter into reduced workload i-deals with their subordinates. In Hornung et al.'s (2009) research, "obligation" does not necessarily mean the responsibility to assign the same work to each employee. However, my interpretation based on the data is that some principals feel the need to create equal working conditions for teachers who have heavy workloads as an organizational obligation.

In the context of the similarities between my results and those in the literature, I would like to mention a facilitating factor that I have found to affect i-deals in all dimensions. As a qualitative study by Davis and Van der Heijden (2018) shows, the mutual benefit of the employee and the organization from the agreement leads the manager to have a positive attitude toward these agreements. Considering that mutual benefit is also one of the defining characteristics of i-deals, I am not surprised that the mutual benefit of the teacher and the school from the agreement is evident as a facilitating factor in all dimensions of this study, albeit under different names.

However, I also found discrepancies between my results that empathy facilitates schedule flexibility i-deals and the results of two studies in the i-deals literature. Namely, my results on the factor I refer to as "A female principal if childcare permission is required" (in the schedule flexibility dimension) are not consistent with the results of Jonsson et al. (2021), who sourced their data from public sector employees, including teachers, and showed that female gender is negatively associated with i-deals dimensions (including work program flexibility), except for the financial incentives dimension. I think that the reason why this study provides different results than my study on female employees may be because the participants in that study were over 55 years old. Another discrepancy I noticed between the i-deals literature and my results is that the factor I cite, "Previous experience of the principal as a subordinate of a strict principal who has not accepted i-deals in the past," (in the schedule flexibility dimension) suggests that this troubling experience led the principal to develop a more empathetic attitude toward teachers who demand i-deals. On the other hand, Laulié et al.'s (2019) findings indicating a positive relationship between the experience of managers' who have received i-deals in the past and their propensity

to offer i-deals to subordinates seem to contradict this factor I cited. This finding of mine suggests that, at least in the context of i-deals, supervisors may develop empathic attitudes not only through the effects of their positive past experiences but also through the effects of their negative experiences.

#### **4.1. Implications for Research and Practice**

In this section of the study, I thought it appropriate to focus on the implications for practice that facilitate i-deals between teachers and principals. First, school administrators who are negative about i-deals with teachers because they fear a deterioration of balance and increasing conflict among teachers need to be convinced that these agreements should be skillfully implemented because they increase school effectiveness by allowing teachers to work with higher motivation. Another factor that reinforces principals' reluctance in this regard is the difficulty of meeting teachers' demands in schools with a large number of teachers (e.g., more than a hundred teachers). Therefore, it would make sense to limit the number of teachers in schools, perhaps to fewer than 50 teachers.

To benefit more from the management skills of the principals they hire in the schools they own, it would be appropriate for private school founders to give their principals more say, especially in ex-ante i-deals (regarding the selection of teachers, the setting of their salaries, and weekly hours of instruction). They should also increase job security for private school teachers. In this way, private school teachers will be encouraged to demand i-deals that benefit their schools as well.

Teachers need to be informed that their tendency to demand the same personalized arrangement without convincing justification -just because another teacher has received it- puts principals in a difficult position and negatively affects their attitude toward i-deals with teachers. Finally, I would like to point out that I believe that all teacher candidates should take a course on school culture, including the topic of i-deals, as part of their training to create a healthy organizational culture in schools.

I would also like to mention a limitation I felt during this research process. Since I was conducting this study alone, I wanted to limit the number of participants to a number that I could handle on my own. Therefore, I only interviewed four participants at the high school level, just as I did at the other three school levels. On the other hand, when analyzing the transcript of one of my participants, who was the principal of a vocational high school, I found that vocational high schools have very different conditions than other (academic) high schools. However, only one of my participants was from a vocational high school. I would recommend that participants in future studies be more diverse to reflect the different conditions, especially participants from vocational high schools.

Some of my participants felt that teachers needed equality in terms of working conditions first and foremost, and therefore, they tended not to go beyond the systems they set up at their schools on issues that might cause conflict between teachers. Educational institutions and for-profit organizations differ in terms of the expectations of their employees. Whether this difference leads to teacher attitudes that prioritize equality of circumstance over personalized arrangements should be investigated, and a clear answer to this question should be provided in future research.

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## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

### Giriş

"Kişiyeye özel anlaşma" kavramı, Rousseau ve çalışma arkadaşlarının (2006, s. 978) sıkça atıfta bulunulan tanımlarında, "tek tek çalışanlar ve işverenleri arasında, her iki tarafa da fayda sağlayan koşullar için müzakere edilen, standart dışı nitelikte, gönüllü, kişiselleştirilmiş anlaşmalar" olarak tanımlanmıştır. Rousseau ve çalışma arkadaşları (2006, p. 978), kişiyeye özel anlaşmaların dört temel özelliğini tanımlamıştır. Bu anlaşmalar, (1) "bireysel olarak müzakere edilmişlerdir", yani tek tek çalışanlara kişiselleştirilmiş düzenlemeler sağlamaya yöneliktirler; (2) bir çalışanın kendi çalışma grubundaki diğer çalışanlardan farklı (bazen daha olumlu) düzenlemelere sahip olabilmesi bakımından "heterojen" düzenlemelerdirler, (3) "hem işverene hem de çalışana fayda sağlarlar" ki bu da kazan-kazan koşulları yaratmak için tasarlandıkları anlamına gelir (Hornung vd., 2018), ve son olarak, (4) "kapsam bakımından çeşitlilik gösterirler" yani istihdam paketinin yalnızca tek bir bileşeni ya da tamamı, düzenlemeye tabi tutulabilir. Haksız nedenlere dayanan kronizm ya da kayırmacılığın aksine, kişiyeye özel düzenlemeler hem düzenleme talep eden çalışana hem de örgüte faydalı oldukları için etik açıdan da doğrudurlar (Rousseau vd., 2006).

Kişiyeye özel anlaşmalar alanyazını, doğru yürütüldüğünde bu anlaşmaların hem çalışanlara hem de örgüte önemli faydalar sağladığını açıkça göstermektedir. Ne var ki son yirmi yılda önemli bir ilerleme sağladığı görülen ilgili alanyazın incelendiğinde, iki eksiklik net bir şekilde göze çarpmaktadır: Alanyazını oluşturan araştırmaların tamamı yakını nicel metodoloji takip edilmiş araştırmalardır ve eğitim alanında gerçekleştirilmiş herhangi bir araştırma, henüz, görülmemektedir. Çalışanların özerkliğinin örgütsel etkililik bakımından büyük önem taşıdığı eğitim örgütlerinde, örgütsel etkililiğin önemli bir bileşeni olarak kendini gösteren bu sosyal fenomenin, nitel metodoloji takip edilerek incelenmesiyle, okulların etkililiğini artırma çabalarına önemli bir katkı sağlanabileceği düşünülmektedir.

İlgili alanyazında görülen eksiklikler nedeniyle girilen bu çoklu durum çalışmasının amacı, bir dizi fark alanında çeşitlendirilmiş on altı müdürün algılarına dayalı olarak, müdürler ve öğretmenler arasında kişiyeye özel anlaşmalar yapılmasını kolaylaştıran faktörleri ortaya çıkarmaktır. Belirtmek gerekir ki bu çalışmanın amacıyla yer alan "kolaylaştırıcı faktörler," sadece öğretmenlerin ya da sadece müdürün bu konulardaki başarısını etkileyen faktörler değildir; her iki tarafın da anlaşmaların gerçekleşmesini sağlayan faktörlerdir.

### **Yöntem**

Nitel araştırma metodolojisi kapsamında, çoklu durum çalışması olarak desenlenen bu araştırmanın katılımcı grubu, mümkün olduğunca çok sayıda kolaylaştırıcı faktör keşfedebilmek için maksimum çeşitlilik örnekleme yöntemiyle oluşturulmuştur. Bu yöntem kapsamında toplamda on altı katılımcının dengeli bir şekilde dağıldıkları fark alanları, sektör, cinsiyet ve okul düzeyidir. Araştırmanın verileri, etik açıdan gerekli olan izinler alındıktan sonra, 2022 senesi içerisinde, katılımcılarla biri çevrim içi ortamda, diğeri on beşi yüz yüze ve tamamı kayıt alınarak gerçekleştirilen yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerle toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın görüşme soruları, araştırmacı tarafından ilgili alanyazın göz önünde bulundurularak belirlenen altı alt boyut kapsamında geliştirilmiştir. Söz konusu alt boyutlar şunlardır: (1) mesleki gelişim, (2) işin içeriğinde esneklik, (3) çalışma programında esneklik, (4) çalışma mahallinde esneklik, (5) azaltılmış iş yükü ve (6) ücretlendirme konulu kişiyeye özel anlaşmalar.

Analiz sürecinden önce veriler yazıya geçirilmiş ve katılımcılara görüşme verilerinin özeti gönderilerek herhangi bir yanlış anlama ya da sonradan görüşlerinde oluşabilecek değişiklikler nedeniyle düzeltme talep etmedikleri sorulmuştur. Veriler üzerinde MAXQDA programı ile içerik analizi gerçekleştirilmiştir ve analiz sonuçları katılımcılara incelemeleri için sunulurken onayları alınmıştır.

### **Bulgular**

Analiz süreci sonunda varlığı tespit edilen ve katılımcıların da onaylamış oldukları kolaylaştırıcı faktörler şunlardır:

1. "Mesleki gelişim" konulu kişiyeye özel anlaşmaları kolaylaştıran faktörler şunlardır: (1) okul yöneticisinin öğretmenlerin öğrencilere aldıkları eğitimle daha faydalı olacakları yönündeki beklentisi, (2) okul dışında gerçekleştirilecek olan eğitimin okuldaki programı olumsuz etkilemeyecek olması, (3) okul yöneticisinin kendisinin de yüksek lisans derecesinin olması; sadece özel okullarda, (4) öğretmenin diğeri öğretmenlerden gelecek tepkiyi önlemek için ek görevler alması, (5) öğretmenin lisansüstü öğrenime üniversitede işe girmek için diğeri öğretmenlik becerisini geliştirmek için başvurması ve (6) öğretmenin aldığı diplomanın okulun imajına katkıda bulunması.

2. "İşin içeriğinde esneklik" konulu kişiyeye özel anlaşmaları kolaylaştıran faktörler şunlardır: (1) müdürün öğretmenin motivasyonunun ve öğrencilere faydasının artacağı yönündeki beklentisi, (2) müdürün öğretmenle empati kurabilme becerisi, (3) müdürün eğer öğretmenleri memnun ederse onların da kendisinden gelecek talepleri kabul edecekleri yönündeki beklentisi, (4) müdürün öğretmenin istemediği görevlerde performansının düşük olacağı yönündeki kaygısı,

(5) öğretmenin tercih ettiği görevde başarılı olacağını müdüre hissettirme başarısı, (6) öğretmenin talepte bulunduğu görev için diğer öğretmenlerin sahip olmadığı becerilere sahip olması ve (7) öğretmenin talebini ikna edici ve uygun bir dille ortaya koyabilmesi.

3. “Çalışma programında esneklik” konulu kişiye özel anlaşmaları kolaylaştıran faktörler şunlardır: (1) müdürün öğretmenin motivasyonu ve öğrenciye faydasının elde ettiği özel düzenleme nedeniyle artacağı yönündeki beklentisi, (2) müdürün geçmişte sert ve özel düzenlemeleri kabul etmeyen bir okul müdürünün astı olarak çalışma deneyimi, (3) müdürün anne babasına bakmak zorunda olan öğretmenle empati kurabilmesi, (4) müdürün yaş ve deneyim bakımından öğretmenle empati kurabilmesi, (5) öğretmenin kendine özel düzenlemeyi daha verimli çalışabilmek için talep etmesi, (6) öğretmenin toplam çalışma süresinin kısalmayacak olması, (7) müdürün yardıma ihtiyacı olan öğretmene yardım etme eğilimi, (8) öğretmenin okula diğer öğretmenlerden daha fazla katkıda bulunmuş olması, (9) müdürün talepte bulunan öğretmenin yüksek performanslı ve uyumlu bir öğretmen olduğu yönündeki algısı, (10) özel düzenlemenin öğretmenler arasında sürtüşmelere neden olmayacak olması, (11) özel düzenlemenin okulun işleyişine olumsuz etki etmeyecek olması, (12) çocuk bakımı için düzenleme talep edildiğinde müdürün kadın olması; sadece anaokullarında, (13) öğretim programının öğrencilerin gün içerisinde fark edilen gereksinimlerine göre düzenlenmesi gereği; sadece devlet okullarında, (14) okulda öğretmen sayısının az olması.

4. “Çalışma mahallinde esneklik” konulu kişiye özel anlaşmaları kolaylaştıran faktörler şunlardır: (1) müdürün ortam değişikliğinin öğrenciler için iyi olacağını düşünmesi, (2) müdürün istemediği bir ortamda çalışmaya zorlanan öğretmenin performansının düşeceği kaygısı, (3) müdürün başka bir öğretmenin aynı talepte bulunmayacağını düşünmesi, (4) müdürün öğretmenin bu düzenlemeyi kendi rahatı için istismar etmeyeceği algısı, (5) müdürün kendi ofis odasının fiziksel koşulları nedeniyle öğretmenle empati kurabilmesi, (6) bu konudaki düzenlemenin öğretmenler arasında sürtüşmelere neden olmayacak olması, (7) öğretmenin sağlık problemleri ya da öğretimin kalitesi gibi konularda ikna edici gerekçeler sunabilmesi, (8) müdürün evden çevrim içi ders veren öğretmeni kontrol edebilme olanağı.

5. “Azaltılmış iş yükü” konulu kişiye özel anlaşmaları kolaylaştıran faktörler şunlardır: (1) müdürün talebin gereksinimden kaynaklandığı algısı, (2) müdürün bazı nedenlerle öğretmenin iş yükünün azaltılması gerektiğini düşünmesi, (3) müdürün öğretmenin verimliliği için iş yükünün azaltılması talebini yerine getirmek gerektiğini düşünmesi, (4) müdürün ders yükü ağır olan öğretmenlere kolaylık sağlama gereği hissetmesi; sadece devlet okullarında, (5) müdürün öğretmenin kıdemi nedeniyle iş yükünün azaltılması talebinde bulunma hakkının olduğunu düşünmesi, (6) öğretmenin iş yükünün azaltılmasının diğer öğretmenlerin tepkisini çekmeyecek olması; sadece özel okullarda, (7) öğretmenin okul yönetimine yasal haklarının bilincinde olduğunu hissettirmesi.

6. “Ücretlendirme” konulu kişiye özel anlaşmaları kolaylaştıran faktörler şunlardır: Sadece özel okullarda, (1) müdürün öğretmenin performansına ilişkin olumlu değerlendirmesi ve (2) nitelikli öğretmenleri elde tutma gereği.

### **Sonuç ve Öneriler**

Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulara dayalı olarak, okullarda öğretmene özel düzenlemelerin etkili bir şekilde yapılabilmesi için her bir okul için öğretmen sayısının ellinin altında tutulmasının, özel okul öğretmenlerine iş güvencesi sağlanmasının ve sağlıklı bir okul kültürünün temellerini atabilmek için öğretmen adaylarına verilen eğitime bu konunun da dahil edilmesinin yerinde olacağı söylenebilir.

Gelecek araştırmalarda, bazı katılımcılar tarafından dile getirilen, öğretmenler arasında koşullar bakımından eşitliğin sağlanmasının daha önemli olduğu iddiasının doğru olup olmadığının ortaya konması, ilgili alanyazına önemli katkılar sağlayabilir.