

## A Multivariate Investigation of Coping Strategies among School Administrators\*

### Okul Yöneticilerinin Başaçıkma Davranışlarının Çok Değişkenli İncelenmesi

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**ABSTRACT:** A multivariate investigation and comparison of the coping strategies used in dealing with stress and psycho-social factors among school administrators is the purpose of the current study. Personal and environmental independent variables were studied across 13 dependent variables. The participants were 214 school administrators who voluntarily responded to the Turkish version of the Coping Strategies Scales and a set of demographic questions. Results showed significant differences between men and women; among four age groups; and school type. Female administrators showed significantly higher preference for behavioral detachment; older administrators showed more preference for religion, whereas younger administrators preferred active coping and planning strategies. Those administrators who worked in middle schools scored higher on seeking instrumental and emotional social support compared to their colleagues who worked in elementary schools. Results are discussed in the light of current literature and suggestions were provided.

**Keywords:** coping strategies, educational administrators, multivariate differences

**ÖZ:** Okul yöneticilerinin stres yaratan psiko-sosyal etkilerle başaçıkma kullandıkları stratejilerin incelenmesi ve çeşitli değişkenler açısından karşılaştırılması araştırmanın temel amacını oluşturmuştur. Kişisel ve çevresel değişkenler ile 13 bağımlı değişken çoklu varyans analizi ile incelenmiştir. Araştırmaya Başaçıkma Davranışları Ölçeği ve Kişisel Bilgi Formu'nu içeren bir ölçme paketini gönüllü olarak yanıtlayan 214 eğitim yöneticisi katılmıştır. Bazı başaçıkma davranışlarının cinsiyet, yaş ve kurum türü gibi değişkenlere bağlı olarak istatistiksel anlamda farklılaştığı bulunmuştur. Sonuçlar kadın yöneticilerin, erkeklere oranla, davranışsal olarak ilgiyi kesme stratejisini daha çok tercih ettiğini; yaşı büyük olan yöneticilerin dine yönelmeyi tercih ederken, genç yöneticilerin aktif başaçıkma ve planlama stratejilerini tercih ettiklerini göstermektedir. Ortaöğretim kurumlarında görev yapan yöneticiler araçsal ve duygusal sosyal desteği ilköğretim yöneticilerinden anlamlı derecede daha fazla tercih etmişlerdir. Sonuçlar ilgili alan yazın ışığında tartışılmış ve araştırma sonunda bulgulara dayalı olarak öneriler getirilmiştir.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** başaçıkma davranışları, eğitim yöneticisi, çokvaryanslı farklılıklar

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Described as the illness of the century, stress can be defined as a breakdown in the nervous system that results from internal or external; real or imaginary; physical or psychological sources and shows itself in the form of tension, exhaustion, annoyance, or uneasiness. As learning institutions, there are plenty of psycho-social factors that can create stress in the school systems (Forlin, 2001; Nagel & Brown 2003; Rolf & Ulrich 2001). Research indicates that the main stress producing factors in schools are the management of human resources, time management, interpersonal relations, and financial problems (Campbell & Williamson, 1987; Doring, 1993; Fields, 200; Friedman, 1997). As a result of one or more of these factors, stress may have severe, direct or indirect, effects on the community of schools including administrators, workers, and the process of education in the short as well as long run (Ünal & Ümbet, 2005).

Stress has become one of the mostly investigated subjects in recent years in the field of organizational behavior (Aydın, 2004). In this context, organizational stress is defined as a

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balance reaction to external conditions that cause physical, psychological, and/or behavioral outburst among the members of the organization (Aktaş & Aktaş, 1987). Recent studies indicate that stress is consistently increasing among administrators (Mattson, 2012). Therefore, administrators, including school principals (Sunmaz, 2001), are the ones who experience stress most frequently and intensely (Tutar, 2000). Gündüz, Tuğç, and İnandı (2013) stated that anger control and stress coping approaches of administrators could be associated with and predicted the conflict management styles. In order to establish an efficient conformity and balance among the employees and an effective relationship between the management and employees, stress should be better understood and managed at individual and organizational levels (Ertekin, 1993).

A central aspect of contemporary theories of stress is coping processes (Gaziel, 1993). Coping is established as individuals' answers to stress, their evaluation of events, attention, and goals or the outcomes they desire (Zimmer & Skinner, 2008). These coping responses require great conscious effort to manage stress (Amirkhan & Auyeung, 2007). Coping strategies are defined as various behaviors that are developed to deal with such internal or external situations that constrain a person's resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The process of struggle with the stressful situation (Ekşi, 2001); attempts to overcome internal and external demands (Tuğrul, 2000); or a set of cognitive and behavioral efforts to regulate stress (Işıkhan, 2002) are some of the commonly used descriptions for coping.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) identified two general strategies for coping with stress: Emotion-focused strategies and problem-focused strategies. Whereas emotion-focused strategies include behaviors such as distancing, self-control, seeking social support, and acceptance; problem-focused strategies include active, calm, cognizant efforts that are directed to changing the stressful situation (Tuğrul, 2000). In general, the review of the relevant literature indicates that some coping strategies are more effective than others in protecting psychological well-being of the individual (e.g., Forlin, 2001; Nagel & Brown, 2003; Rolf & Ulrich, 2001) and that the failure in coping strategies may result in emotional and/or psychological disturbances (Aysan & Bozkurt, 2004). In addition, Gücüyeter (2003) found a significant relationship between coping strategies and self-acceptance. Mattson, (2012) identified source of positive stress and negative stress and claimed that professional responsibilities and accomplishments are the source of positive stress whereas budget and finance were the source of negative stress. He also indicated that administrator' years of work experience, self-confidence, willingness to seek advice from their colleagues, skills at building relationships, and ability to engage in strategic thinking strength their coping behaviors with stress. As mentioned in the Gaziel (1993), one of the unresolved arguments in the coping research is whether coping strategies are influenced by individual (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989; Fleishman, 1984; Folkman & Lazarus, 1980) and situational differences (Mattlin, Wethington & Kesler, 1990) or whether they are stable coping styles. There has been a noticeable increase regarding research focusing on coping strategies because of the increased intensity of stress in people's everyday and as well as professional lives (Aysan & Bozkurt, 2004; Crute, 2004). In a study among educational administrators in Turkey, Sunmaz (2001) found that income, complicated policies and regulations, and the lack of jurisdiction given to administrators were the highest sources of stress. She also found that the most preferred coping strategy with stress was talking with trusted someone. Another study with teachers found that gender had a significant effect on seeking social support strategy in that women teachers preferred this strategy more frequently than their male colleagues (Eraslan, 2000).

School is the essential knowledge production unit in societies and school administrators are the ones who are responsible for managing the manpower and other resources of these crucial institutions. Thus, the main purpose of the current study is to describe the preferred coping strategies among school administrators in the face of stress and compare and contrast these coping strategies across several personal and environmental variables such as gender, age, school

type, major, and position. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to identify the personal determinants of coping strategies with stress among educational administrators. Several assessment instruments have been developed in order to identify, quantify, and measure various common coping strategies. In the present research, we preferred among the most widely employed of these instruments, the Coping Strategies Inventory (CSI) developed by Carver, Scheier and Weintraub (1989). In the inventory, there are 13 scales that assess various coping strategies. They are religion, alcohol/substance use (alcohol), active coping, planning, humor, seeking social support- instrumental (social support-i.), seeking social support- emotional (social support-e.), behavioral detachment, emotional focusing, acceptance, problem focusing, positive interpretation (positive interp.), and denial (Altuntaş, 2003; Aydın, 2002; Ertekin, 1993; Gök, 1995; Klarreich, 1999; Tutar, 2000).

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Population and Sample

The population of the study is elementary and middle school administrators (i.e., principals, head assistant principals, and assistant principals) who are working in downtown and surrounding school districts in Tokat. In the population, there are a total of 675 administrators (Ministry of Education [MoNE], 2006). Using convenient sampling method, 462 administrators were selected and were sent the research package. A total of 241 administrators voluntarily responded to the packages and returned them (return rate = 55.62%). Therefore, the sample of the study comprises 241 administrators who were working in provincial center and vicinities in Tokat. Of the sample, 227 are men (94.2%) and most administrators were married ( $n = 228$ , % 94.6). The ages of the sampled administrators ranged from 25 years to 62 years ( $\bar{x} = 34.53$ ;  $SS = 8.22$ ). Other demographics of the sample are given in Table 1.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample\***

Variables		<i>f</i>	%
School Type	Elementary	146	60.6
	Middle School	95	39.4
Gender	Woman	14	5.8
	Man	227	94.2
Age	25-33 years old	35	14.6
	34-42 years old	73	30.4
	43-51 years old	98	40.8
	52 years old or older	34	14.2
Position	Principal	86	35.7
	Head Assistant Principal	22	9.1
	Assistant Principal	131	54.4
	Elementary Education	117	47.3
Major	Mathematics	37	15.4
	Turkish	56	23.2
	Arts	34	14.1

\* Missing values are not shown in the table

## 2.2. Instruments

The Turkish version (Gök, 1995) of the Coping Strategies Inventory (CSI, Carver et al., 1989) and a demographic information sheet were used to collect data in the present study. The CSI purports to measure responses to stressful and difficult situations and the coping strategies dealing with these situations on a 4-point Likert scaling. Originally, there are a total of 15 different sub-scales in the inventory. The Turkish form includes 13 sub-scales. Each respondent is asked to read and evaluate each item individually by selecting 1 to 4 for each item by indicating: "Never," "Frequently," "Sometimes," and "Often." The subscale scores are computed by adding the ratings given to respected subscale items, higher scores indicating more preference for that particular coping strategy. In addition, personal and environmental data were collected by means of a demographic data sheet, which asked age, gender, school type, major, and position.

The validity and reliability of the original CSI had been studied were studies by its developers (Carver et al., 1989) and the psychometric properties of the Turkish version were investigated by Gök (1995). The original inventory was given to two psychiatrists and two professional translators and these four individuals translated the inventory into Turkish independently. The Turkish form was administered to a total of 482 men and women whose ages ranged from 15 years old to 65 years old and whose occupations varied. In addition, a test-retest administration was conducted on 82 people. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients showed that the highest test-retest reliability coefficients were for Religion ( $\alpha = .90$ ) and Alcohol/Substance Use ( $\alpha = .90$ ) whereas the lowest coefficients were Waiting for Appropriate Time ( $\alpha = .33$ ) and Cognitive Detachment ( $\alpha = .30$ ) subscales. The subscales that had lower than accepted Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients (i.e.,  $> .60$ ) were dropped from the Turkish version, leaving a total of 13 subscales in the Turkish form. The remaining items and subscales are subjected to a principal component analysis with Kaiser Normalization followed by a varimax rotation and a total of 13 factors were obtained that exceeded eigenvalue of 1. Finally, internal consistency coefficient of the subscales in the Turkish form were found as follows: Active Coping ( $\alpha = .60$ ), Planning ( $\alpha = .70$ ), Focusing on the Problem ( $\alpha = .66$ ), Social Support-Instrumental ( $\alpha = .69$ ), Social Support-Emotional ( $\alpha = .68$ ), Focusing on the Emotions ( $\alpha = .66$ ), Behavioral Detachment ( $\alpha = .68$ ), Positive Interpretation ( $\alpha = .64$ ), Denial ( $\alpha = .65$ ), Acceptance ( $\alpha = .67$ ), Religion ( $\alpha = .87$ ), Alcohol/Substance Use ( $\alpha = .87$ ), and Humor ( $\alpha = .78$ ).

## 2.3. Procedure

In order to collect the data, written permissions have been obtained from the Tokat Provincial Directory of National Education [MEM]. Consequently, the survey packets were distributed in the downtown and two major district schools with the help of the MEM office. School administrators, who were voluntarily, responded to the research package. Completed packages were submitted back to the MEM office and the office delivered them to the researchers. Sixteen packages were determined unusable and discarded. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Inc, 2001) 11.0 was used to code and analyze the data. The assumptions of multivariate analyses were tested before proceeding with the analyses and, in case an assumption was not met, an equivalent non-parametric statistics was used. In order to test 13 dependent variables simultaneously, a between-subjects multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used with non-orthogonal design. Gender, age, school type, major, and position were used as independent variables. After a multivariate significance was detected, analyses proceeded with univariate F-tests and Tukey post hoc analyses.

Before the multivariate analyses, the assumptions of parametric statistics (i.e., normality, homogeneity of variances, linearity, and multicollinearity) were tested visually, numerically, and statistically. A non-orthogonal design (i.e., unequal cell sizes) was used. SPSS MANOVA (SPSS Inc., 2001) was used to adjust the non-orthogonality problem before the analyses. An investigation of the variances for each cell revealed that cells with larger sample sizes produced

larger variances. In such situations, the null hypothesis can still be rejected with confidence (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In addition, an overall test of the homogeneity of regression and tests for the homogeneity of regression for MANOVA stepdown analyses showed that the homogeneity of the regression assumption was met for all the dependent variables ( $p > .09$ ).

### 3. FINDINGS

The most and least preferred coping strategies among educational administrators are computed and reported. Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation scores for each coping strategy for the total group, men, and women. According to the table, Seeking Instrumental ( $\bar{x} = 5.20$ ;  $SS = .77$ ) and Emotional ( $\bar{x} = 4.40$ ;  $SS = .87$ ) Social Support and Behavioral Detachment ( $\bar{x} = 4.80$ ;  $SS = .81$ ) are the most preferred strategies; whereas Alcohol/Substance Use ( $\bar{x} = 1.27$ ;  $SS = .72$ ); Denial ( $\bar{x} = 2.11$ ;  $SS = .85$ ), and Acceptance ( $\bar{x} = 2.92$ ;  $SS = .74$ ) are the least preferred coping strategies among the administrators (Table 2).

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for the Total Group, Men, and Women**

Coping Strategies	Total		Men ( $n = 15$ )		Women ( $n = 14$ )		<i>U-test</i>
	$\bar{x}$	<i>SS</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SS</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SS</i>	
Religion	3.92	.96	4.10	.90	3.48	1.16	87.50
Alcohol	1.27	.72	1.37	.88	1.26	.75	104.00
Active Coping	3.56	.64	3.61	.72	3.90	.38	78.00
Planning	3.88	.63	4.23	.55	4.23	.45	76.00
Humor	4.37	.94	4.13	1.20	4.58	1.00	6.50
Social Support-Instrumental	5.20	.77	5.22	.45	5.58	.79	72.50
Social Support-Emotional	4.40	.87	4.63	1.16	4.62	1.10	88.50
Behavioral Detachment	4.80	.81	4.73	.70	5.25	.79	55.50*
Emotional Focusing	3.06	.79	3.58	1.00	2.77	.77	67.50
Acceptance	2.92	.74	2.98	.96	2.78	.42	8.00
Problem Focusing	2.96	.65	3.10	.73	2.96	.68	96.00
Positive Interpretation	3.90	.58	4.08	.69	4.16	.36	9.50
Denial	2.11	.85	2.08	.84	1.91	.99	86.50

\*  $p < .05$

In order to investigate school administrators' coping strategies across gender, age, school type, major, and position inferential parametric statistics, when appropriate, were used. However, there was a great unbalance between genders in the sample and women administrators did not have much representation. Therefore, a non-parametric Mann-Whitney U-test was used to analyze gender differences on coping strategies (Table 2). For this purpose, a random sample of 15 male administrators was randomly extracted among 227 male administrators in the sample. Table 2 shows that the only significant difference in coping strategy between men ( $\bar{x} = 4.73$ ;  $SS = .70$ ) and women ( $\bar{x} = 5.25$ ;  $SS = .79$ ) was Behavioral Detachment ( $p < .05$ ).

Age variable was divided into four categories as: 25-33 years old ( $n = 35$ ), 34-42 years old ( $n = 73$ ), 43-51 years old ( $n = 98$ ), and 52 years old and older ( $n = 34$ ). In order to test 13 dependent variables simultaneously, a between-subjects multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used with non-orthogonal design. After a multivariate significance was detected, analyses proceeded with univariate  $F$ -tests and Tukey post hoc analyses. Means, standard deviations, and  $F$  values of the 13 coping strategies on four different age groups are presented in Table 3.

A significant multivariate effect of age was found ( $\lambda = .76$ ,  $F_{(39, 664)} = 1.65$ ,  $p < .01$ ), which indicated significant multivariate differences among four age groups on the dependent variables.

However, association between age and the combined dependent variables was small ( $\eta^2 = .09$ ). Because omnibus MANOVA showed a significant multivariate effect for age, the nature of the relationships between this effect and the other dependent variables was investigated. Univariate  $F$  investigations showed that age groups differed significantly on Religion [ $F_{(3, 236)} = 3.93, p < .01, \eta^2 = .05$ ]; Active Coping [ $F_{(3, 236)} = 4.93, p < .01, \eta^2 = .06$ ]; and Planning [ $F_{(3, 236)} = 3.51, p < .02, \eta^2 = .04$ ] subscales.

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores across Age Group**

	(25-33) years old ( <i>n</i> = 35)		(34-42) years old ( <i>n</i> = 73)		(43-51) years old ( <i>n</i> = 98)		(52 years old or older ( <i>n</i> = 34))		<i>F</i> (3,236)
	$\bar{x}$	<i>SS</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SS</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SS</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SS</i>	
Religion	3.47	1.1	4.03	.92	3.91	.95	4.19	.83	3.93**
Alcohol	1.25	.60	1.26	.79	1.28	.71	1.26	.70	.01
Active Coping	3.83	.57	3.67	.61	3.48	.67	3.33	.61	4.93*
Planning	4.10	.50	3.95	.51	3.82	.71	3.66	.66	3.51*
Humor	4.25	.76	4.26	.96	4.45	.96	4.50	1.01	.98
Social Support- Instrumental	5.27	.74	5.20	.80	5.23	.76	5.03	.81	.74
Social Support-Emotional	4.42	.89	4.46	.90	4.68	.80	4.85	.94	2.39
Behavioral Detachment	4.61	.71	4.74	.77	4.78	.82	5.11	.93	2.49
Emotional Focusing	2.94	.76	3.05	.78	3.10	.85	3.14	.68	.48
Acceptance	2.88	.73	3.01	.72	2.84	.76	2.98	.74	.87
Problem Focusing	3.09	.57	2.90	.62	2.96	.70	94	.63	.67
Positive Interpretation	3.95	.46	4.01	.54	3.84	.60	3.80	.68	1.68
Denial	1.86	.74	2.05	.87	2.19	.88	2.30	.79	1.99

\*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .02$

Tukey post hoc analyses were performed to detect which specific age groups significantly differed. Results showed that those administrators who were in the 52 years old or older group preferred religion as a coping strategy significantly more than the youngest age group, 25-33 year old group ( $p < .01$ ). Similarly, those administrators who were in the 34-42 year old group preferred religion as a coping strategy significantly more than the 25-33 year old group ( $p < .01$ ). On the contrary, administrators, who were in the 25-33 year old and 34-42 year old groups, preferred active coping significantly more than the 52 years old or older group ( $p < .01$ ). Administrators in the 34-42 year old group preferred planning coping strategy significantly more than those who were in the 52 year old or older group ( $p < .01$ ).

In order to investigate school administrators' coping strategies on school type (i.e., elementary versus middle schools), a between-subjects multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used with non-orthogonal design. After a multivariate significance was detected, analyses proceeded with univariate  $F$ -tests and Tukey post hoc analyses. Means, standard deviations, and  $F$  values of the 13 coping strategies on elementary and middle school administrators are presented in Table 4.

A significant multivariate effect of school type was found ( $\lambda = .92, F_{(13, 227)} = 1.61, p < .05$ ), which indicated significant multivariate differences between administrators who worked in elementary and middle schools on the dependent variables. However, association between school type and the combined dependent variables was small ( $\eta^2 = .08$ ). Because omnibus MANOVA showed a significant multivariate effect for school type, the nature of the relationships between this effect and the other dependent variables was investigated. Univariate  $F$  investigations showed that administrators in two different school environments differed significantly on seeking social

support-instrumental [ $F_{(1, 239)} = 5.12, p < .02, \eta^2 = .02$ ] and seeking social support-emotional [ $F_{(1, 239)} = 5.93, p < .02, \eta^2 = .02$ ] subscales.

**Table 4: Means, Standard Deviations, and F-Values across School Type**

	Elementary ( <i>n</i> = 146)		Middle ( <i>n</i> = 92)		<i>F</i> (1,239)
	$\bar{x}$	<i>SS</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SS</i>	
Religion	3.82	1.02	4.06	.85	4.06
Alcohol	1.31	.79	1.18	.54	1.33
Active Coping	3.59	.65	3.51	.63	.61
Planning	3.89	.63	3.87	.62	.69
Humor	4.29	.96	4.49	.91	2.97
Social Support- Instru	5.11	.74	5.35	.80	5.12*
Social Support-Emot.	4.49	.88	4.75	.84	5.93*
Behavioral Detachment	4.72	.80	4.91	.83	3.15
Emotional Focusing	3.09	.78	3.01	.82	.40
Acceptance	2.89	.75	2.96	.74	.71
Problem Focusing	2.94	.61	2.97	.70	.23
Positive Interpretation	3.88	.60	3.94	.55	.75
Denial	2.14	.81	2.01	.84	.33

\*  $p < .05$

Tukey post hoc analyses were performed to detect which specific groups significantly differed. Results showed that those administrators who worked in middle schools preferred seeking social support-instrumental coping strategy significantly more than administrators who worked in elementary schools ( $p < .01$ ). Similarly, administrators who worked in middle schools preferred seeking social support-emotional coping strategy significantly more than administrators who worked in elementary schools ( $p < .01$ ).

School administrators in the sample group were educated in different majors. Most administrators had elementary education majors in followed by Turkish language teaching, elementary mathematics teaching, and art teaching. Whether or not administrators' educational background had any significant effect on their coping strategies was investigated by a between-subjects multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with non-orthogonal design. Results showed no significant multivariate effect of major ( $\lambda = .19, F_{(39,667)} = 1.15, p < .25$ ). Similarly, there was no significant multivariate effect of position (i.e., principal, head assistant principal, and assistant principal) on the combined dependent variables ( $\lambda = .90, F_{(26,452)} = .91, p < .59$ ).

#### 4. DISCUSSION and RESULTS

The present study investigated multivariate differences of age, school type, major, and position in addition to univariate differences of gender on 13 dependent variables, which are 13 coping strategies assessed by the Turkish version of the Coping Strategies Inventory. Results showed that the administrators preferred instrumental and emotional social support seeking coping strategies the most. It can be concluded from these results that administrators seek the advice, knowledge, and help of those who are close to them. These close people may be their relatives, colleagues, and/or friends. Administrators seek support and sympathy from these groups in dealing with stressful events in their lives. Similarly, Sunmaz (2001) found that school administrators try to overcome the most stressful situations by talking with trusted someone. The least preferred coping strategies among educational administrators were found to be alcohol/substance use, denial, and acceptance. This finding indicates that even in the toughest times, administrators do not seek help from these kinds of harmful habits. Under stress, individuals may think that alcohol and/or substance use reduce physical and psychological tension temporarily and provide a short relief. However, this is the least preferred coping strategies among Turkish school administrators. One reason for this finding may have to do with

socio-cultural structure of the region in which the study was conducted. In addition, school administrators preferred to deal with the stressful situation rather than running away from the problem. These results are somehow different from the findings of Sunmaz (2001) where she found that administrators used behavioral detachment as one of the most preferred method for dealing with stressful situations. When the two studies are compared it can be seen that there is more than 10 years difference. Therefore, it can be argued that coping strategies among administrators tend to change.

The ratio of men to women administrators in the study was more than 16 to 1, which indicates that there are much fewer women school administrators in the sample. When national statistics are investigated similar trend is confirmed at the national level. In a comparative study, Türkoğlu and Baloğlu (in press) found an exact reverse ratio on a German school sample. It is suggested that women be encouraged to take more leadership role in the Turkish educational system.

Because of such discrepancy in gender, parametric statistics were not possible; therefore, a non-parametric statistics was used for gender comparisons. It was found that men and women differed significantly on behavioral detachment coping strategy. Behavioral detachment is characterized as reducing or giving up the attempts in dealing with stress and, instead, moving into other activities that are more enjoyable to the person. This result indicates that women administrators tended to use more behavioral detachment compared to men which indicates that women administrators do not prefer to make an effort in solving the problem but rather they discontinue their efforts. This was the only significant difference between men and women. It can be concluded that men and women administrators are more alike than they are different in dealing with stress. Significant difference on behavioral detachment coping strategy between men and women is a confirmation of the results of Akbağ (2000) and Uçman (1990). However, this finding contradicts with the results of Aysan and Bozkurt (2000) where they found that women tend to seek more social support and focus on emotions. No such difference was found in the present study. Once again, time difference can be one of the sources of such discrepancies. The fact that women administrators use behavioral detachment more may mean that they are less of a fighter. The tendency to run away from the reality of a stressful situation may trigger psychological complications and; therefore, we could argue that women administrators may need more frequent psychological support in dealing with stressful situations. In addition, in-service training sessions may be designed to increase the resistance among women administrators. Whether men or women, literature suggests that all administrators spare their times and talk to other administrators and build a support system (Goodson, 2000; Educational Research Service, 1999; Marnik, 1997).

The present study also found differences on coping strategies among different age groups. For example, older administrators preferred religion more frequently compared to their younger counterparts whereas younger administrators preferred active coping strategy more. People who use religion as a coping strategy increase their religious activities in the face of stressful events (Gök, 1995). It can be concluded that older administrators seek support from religion and religious activities and keep their distance from trying to find quick solutions to stressful problems. Directly and immediately beginning to act and increasing the efforts in the face of a problem are the most distinguishing characteristics of active coping strategy. These are more common characteristics among younger administrators. Additionally, planning is a coping strategy that is less preferred among older administrators. We can conclude that as administrators get older, they tend to give up on more active and planned coping strategies and incline toward more passive strategies such as putting their trust on others than themselves (i.e., religion). In general, active coping strategies such as planning, focusing on the problem, and active involvement have been found to be more effective in dealing with stress and administrators should be encouraged and trained use them.



In addition to personal and psychological attributes, environmental factors have tremendous effects on behavior as well (Everard & Morris, 2003). Hence, school type and administrative position in the school were investigated in relation to 13 coping strategies. No significant effect of administrative position was found; however, there was a significant effect of school type on administrators' coping strategies. On both seeking instrumental and emotional social support, middle school administrators scored higher compared to elementary school administrators. Instrumental social support is not just patting on the shoulder or sweet talk but includes help and suggestions on the problem (Altuntaş, 2003). Middle school administrators seek more advice, moral support, help, and knowledge from their social environments. Literature shows that one of the most effective ways of dealing with stress is social support (Tutar, 2000). Studies indicate that the level of support received from familial, societal, and occupational sources is negatively related with the detrimental effects of stress (Aydın, 2002). In this context, it can be said that elementary school administrators are more vulnerable to the effects of stress.

In sum, it is important to know the sources of stress and the strategies school administrators use to deal with it in order to increase their effectiveness and efficiency in schools. Only after pinpointing the abovementioned areas can we try to develop appropriate stress reduction plans. In this context, to support school administrators alleviate their stress new management approaches such as stress management and crisis management should be studied by contemporary school administrators and be implemented in the schools. Other professionals such as psychologists should also be included in these studies to inform and reduce school administrators' stress. In-service training or continuing education sessions can be used to provide such services. Finally, as Goss (2001) indicated, the development of psychological support services with training programs by professional counselors should be made available to school administrators.

## 5. REFERENCES

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## Uzun Özet

Bir eğitim örgütü olan okulda eğitimciler üzerinde stres yaratan birçok psiko-sosyal etkiler bulunmaktadır (Forlin, 2001; Nagel & Brown, 2003; Rolf & Ulrich, 2001). Eğitim yöneticilerinde strese neden olan faktörlerden başlıcaları insan kaynakları yönetimi, zaman yönetimi, kişilerarası ilişkiler, ve mali konulardır (Doring, 1993; Campbell & Williamson, 1987; Fields, 2005; Friedman, 1997). Stres uzun ve kısa vadede, eğitim örgütünü, örgüt yöneticisini ve elemanlarını ve eğitim-öğretim faaliyetlerini olumsuz olarak etkileyebilmektedir (Ünal & Ümmet, 2005). Çalışan insanlar arasında bir uyum ve dengenin kurulması, sağlıklı üst ilişkilere sahip olmasının sağlanabilmesi ve hizmetin niteliğinin iyileştirilmesi için stresin bireysel ve örgütsel düzeyde daha iyi anlaşılması ve yönetilmesi gerekmektedir (Ertekin, 1993).

Böylesine olumsuz etkileri olan ve oldukça sık karşılaşılan stresle başa çıkma, kişinin kaynaklarını zorlayan dışsal veya içsel durumlarla mücadele etmek için geliştirdiği değişken davranışlar olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Lazarus ve arkadaşları stresle başa çıkma yollarını, duygulara odaklanan ve soruna odaklanan olmak üzere iki şekilde sınıflandırmaktadır. Sorunlara odaklanan başa çıkma yolları, durumu değiştirmeye yönelik aktif, mantıklı, serinkanlı, bilinçli çabaları içerirken; duygulara odaklı başa çıkma yolları uzaklaşma, kendini kontrol etme, sosyal destek arama ve kabullenme gibi davranışları içermektedir (Tuğrul, 2000). Genel olarak, bazı başa çıkma yöntemlerinin diğerlerine oranla ruh sağlığı üzerinde daha olumlu etkileri olduğu (Nagel & Brown, 2003; Forlin, 2001; Rolf & Ulrich, 2001) ve stresle başa çıkma stratejilerinin başarısızlığının bireyde psikolojik bozukluklara neden olabileceği araştırmalarla desteklenmektedir (Aysan & Bozkurt, 2004).

Bu çalışmanın amacı, eğitimin temel üretim birimi olan okul örgütünde, insan gücü ve madde kaynaklarının kullanımını gerçekleştiren eğitim yöneticisinin, sorun yaratan durumlar karşısında tercih ettiği ve etmediği başa çıkma davranışlarını betimlemek ve bu temel amaç doğrultusunda eğitim yöneticilerinin başa çıkma davranışlarının cinsiyet, yaş, branş, mesleki kıdem ve okul türü bağımsız değişkenlerine göre nasıl farklılaştığını incelemesidir.

Araştırmanın çalışma evrenini Tokat ili merkez ve ilçelerinde Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na bağlı ilk ve ortaöğretim kurumlarında görev yapmakta olan müdür ve müdür yardımcıları oluşturmuştur. Çalışma evreninde 675 yönetici mevcuttur (Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü; MEM, 2006). Bu evrenden seçilen 462 yöneticiye araştırma paketi ulaştırılmış ve geri dönen anketlerden 241'i geçerli bulunarak incelemeye alınmıştır (Geri dönüş oranı = % 55.62).

Araştırmada, Başa çıkma Davranışları Ölçeği (Carver, Scheier & Weintraub, 1989)'nin Türkçe Formu (BÇDÖ; Gök,1995) ve kişisel bilgi formu veri toplama araçları olarak kullanılmıştır. Başa çıkma Davranışları Ölçeği'nin geçerlik ve güvenilirlik çalışmaları ölçeğin geliştiricileri ve uyarlayıcısı tarafından yapılmıştır (Carver ve ark., 1989; Gök, 1995). Pearson momentler çarpımı korelasyonu yoluyla hesaplanan test-tekrar test güvenilirliğinde, en yüksek güvenilirlik katsayısı Dine Yönelme ( $\alpha = .90$ ) ve Alkol \ Uyuşturucu Kullanma ( $\alpha = .90$ ), en düşük güvenilirlik katsayıları ise Uygun Zamanı Bekleme ( $\alpha = .33$ ) ve Zihinsel Olarak İlgiyi Kesme ( $\alpha = .30$ ) alt ölçeklerinden elde edilmiştir. Cronbach alfa iç tutarlık katsayıları düşük bulunan bu alt ölçekler Başa Çıkma Davranışları Ölçeğinden çıkartılmıştır.

Ölçeğin Türkçe formunda, 13 alt ölçeğe ait toplam 52 maddeye verilen yanıtlara, Temel Bileşenler Analizi uygulanmış ve Kaiser Normalleştirme Ölçütüne göre özdeğeri 1'i aşan 11 faktör elde edilmiştir.

Varimax Rotasyonu sonrası her bir maddenin faktör ağırlıkları bulunmuştur. Buna göre alt ölçeklerin maddelerinin ortalama faktör ağırlıkları şu şekildedir. Aktif başaıkma ( $\alpha = .60$ ), Planlama ( $\alpha = .70$ ), Diğer Faaliyetleri Bırakarak Sorun Üzerine Odaklanma ( $\alpha = .66$ ), Sosyal Destek Arama (Enstrümantal) ( $\alpha = .69$ ), Sosyal Destek Arama (Duygusal) ( $\alpha = .68$ ), Duygulara Odaklanma ve Duyguları Ortaya Koyma ( $\alpha = .66$ ), Davranışsal Olarak İlgiyi Kesme ( $\alpha = .68$ ), Olumlu Tarzda Yeniden Yorumlama ( $\alpha = .64$ ), Yadsıma ( $\alpha = .65$ ), Kabullenme ( $\alpha = .67$ ), Dine Yönelme ( $\alpha = .87$ ), Alkol/Uyuşturucu Kullanma ( $\alpha = .87$ ) ve Mizahi Yaklaşım ( $\alpha = .78$ ).

Araştırmada eğitim yöneticilerinin en çok ve en az tercih ettikleri başaıkma davranışları betimlenmiştir. Eğitim yöneticilerinin en çok tercih ettikleri ilk üç başaıkma davranışının Sosyal Destek Arama-Enstrümantal ( $\bar{x} = 5.20$ ;  $SS = .77$ ), Davranışsal Olarak İlgiyi Kesme ( $\bar{x} = 4.80$ ;  $SS = .81$ ) ve Sosyal Destek Arama-Duygusal ( $\bar{x} = 4.60$ ;  $SS = .87$ ) olduğu görülmektedir. Eğitim yöneticilerinin en az tercih ettikleri başaıkma davranışları ise Alkol/Uyuşturucu Kullanma ( $\bar{x} = 1.27$ ;  $SS = .62$ ), Yadsıma ( $\bar{x} = 2.11$ ;  $SS = .85$ ) ve Kabullenmedir ( $\bar{x} = 2.92$ ;  $SS = .74$ ). Eğitim yöneticilerinin başaıkma davranışlarını tercih düzeylerinin cinsiyet, yaş, görev yapılan okul türü değişkenlerine göre farklılaşıp farklılaşmadıkları yordamsal istatistiklerle incelenmiştir. Araştırma kapsamında yer alan yöneticilerin başaıkma davranışlarının cinsiyet değişkenine göre farklılaşıp farklılaşmadığı Mann Whitney U-testi analizi ile incelenmiştir. Bu amaç için, karşılaştırılacak grupları eşitlemek üzere, öncelikle, erkek yöneticiler arasından, bilgisayara rastgele 15 kişi seçtirilmiş ve karşılaştırmada bu yeni grup istatistiksel kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular Tablo 2’de verilmiştir. Tablo 2 incelendiğinde, cinsiyetler arasındaki tek farkın Davranışsal Olarak İlgiyi Kesme başaıkma davranışında olduğu görülmüştür. Bu başaıkma alt boyutunda kadın yöneticiler ( $\bar{x} = 5.25$ ;  $SS = .79$ ) ile erkek yöneticiler ( $\bar{x} = 4.73$ ;  $SS = .70$ ) arasında, kadın yöneticiler lehine anlamlı bir farklılık olduğu tespit edilmiştir ( $U\text{-test} = 55.50$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

Eğitim yöneticilerinin başaıkma davranışlarını tercih düzeylerinin yaş değişkenine göre nasıl farklılaştığı sorusuna yanıt bulmak amacıyla, eğitim yöneticilerinin yaşları 25–33, 34–42, 43–51 ve 52 ve üzeri olmak üzere dört kategoriye ayrılmıştır. Bu yaş gruplarıyla başaıkma davranışlarının alt boyutları çok yönlü varyans analizi tekniği (MANOVA) ile karşılaştırılmıştır. Analiz sonuçları, eğitim yöneticilerinin başaıkma davranışlarının yaş grupları açısından Dine Yönelme, Aktif başaıkma ve Planlama alt boyutları açısından farklılaştığını göstermektedir. Örneğin, 52 ve üzeri yaş grubundaki yöneticilerin Dine Yönelme başaıkma davranışını tercih düzeyleri 25-33 yaş grubundaki yöneticilerden daha yüksektir. Aynı şekilde, 34-42 yaş grubundaki yöneticiler de 25-33 yaş grubundaki yöneticilere göre daha fazla Dine Yönelme başaıkma davranışını tercih etmektedirler. 23-33 yaş grubundaki eğitim yöneticilerinin davranışını tercih düzeyleri 43-51 yaş grubundakilerden anlamlı şekilde daha yüksektir.

Yöneticilerin, yönetsel görevlerini etkin ve verimli bir biçimde sürdürebilmeleri, strese yol açan kaynakları önceden belirleyerek etkilerini en az düzeye indirmelerine bağlıdır. Bu amaçla araştırmacıların eğitim kurumlarına özgü iyi bir stres planı hazırlamalarının faydalı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Eğitim yöneticileri açısından stresin ne anlama geldiği ve kaynaklarının neler olduğu araştırılmalıdır. Yeni yönetim yaklaşımlarının (stres yönetimi, değişim yönetimi, kriz yönetimi vb.) eğitimciler tarafından bilinmesi, eğitim sorunlarının çözümlenmesinde sorunların sağlıklı biçimde işe koşulması için temel bir gereksinimdir.

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