



THE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS WHILE CONFLICTING WITH THEIR SUPERVISORSⁱ

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Abstract:

Conflict is everywhere as there are conflicts at educational organizations. One of the most affected groups from conflicts is administrators who are bridges between teachers and parents, supervisors. The aims of this study are to determine which strategies the school administrators use and how often they use these strategies and whether their strategies change according to their genders, educational situations and managerial status. 370 school administrators participated in this study and they were applied Organizational Conflict Management Instrument developed by Putnam and Wilson. Lisrel 9.0 and SPSS 20.0 programs were used during analysis. As a result, compromising strategy is the most used one while dominating is the less used strategy by school administrators while they were conflicting with their supervisors. Although the frequency of avoiding and dominating strategies differ according to their genders significantly, there aren't any significant differences among administrators in terms of their educational situations. Their reasons for conflict management strategies can be examined through qualitative research method.

Keywords: school administrators, supervisors, conflict, conflict management strategies

ⁱ A part of this research was presented in the VIII International Congress of Education Supervision

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1. Introduction

"All the people constituting of society spend most of their time in the organizations" (Aydın, 2010:336). According to modern theory, organization is a group of social system which is wide and complicated. Organizations bring people together close who have different skills in order to achieve their aims, so conflict is inevitable in the organizations (Robbins, 1991). People make organizations to supply their endless needs and they become a part of these organizations. If the sources of this organization are unsatisfying to supply the endless needs, the possibility of conflict raises. The important questions are these: how will the sources be distributed? Who will be the prioritized? How will be the justice secured? If these questions won't be answered satiablely, conflict will be inevitable. Not only the distribution of sources, but also the distribution of the positions of organization can cause the rivalry between interpersonal and intergroup; that is, it can result in conflicts. There isn't a common agreement on meaning of conflict. Conflict is defined as a contradiction which evolves from opposition of views and opinions (TDK, Methodology Concept Dictionary, 1981). Researchers define this term differently (Gündüz, Tunç & İnandı, 2013; Shetach, 2009; Robbins, 1991). According to Robbins and DeCenzo (2007), if one part is named X side and the other part is called Y side, conflict can be explained as a process in which X side doesn't want that Y side achieves its own aims. As for another definition, conflict is "*an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement or dissonance within or between social entities (i.e., individual, group, organization, etc.)*" (Rahim 2002, p.207). Despite the different definitions of conflict, Robbins (1991) asserts that there are some common points in literature: at least there are two parts (people, groups or instructions etc.), these parts must be aware of existing conflict and they must have such feelings as rivalry, opposition, detention besides these, inconsistency must exist between their aims and benefits.

There can be lots of reasons for conflict. Certo (1997) claims that there is contrary of aims, this opposition results from that personal and psychological properties, experiences, social and economic situations, cultural lives, roles and attribution of people differs. In addition to these factors, their understandings and objectives can be dissimilar (Yarbağ, 2015). Moreover; existing resources is limited and allocation of them creates competition, so obstruction of one side to the other side causes conflict (Robbins, 1991). Rahim (2002) adds some points: "*conflict may occur when two parties have partially exclusive behavioral presences regarding their joint actions and two parties are interdependent in the performance of functions or activities*" (p.207).

Conflict can be constructive or destructive in functioning of a group and a unit (Robbins, 1991). On the one hand, it is thought that conflict is negative and it ought to

be prevented. Since it may harm stagnation of organizations, group working can create tension and resistance to changes. On the other hand, conflict is sometimes beneficial for organizations because it increases creativity, competition, viewpoints to themselves (Božac & Angeleski, 2008; Knežević, Cvijanović & Zeremski, 2010 as cited in Besic and Stanisavljevic, 2014). In fact, managing conflict is as important as its existence in every level of organization (Shetach, 2009), for the effects of the conflict (negative and positive) are dependent on how it is managed. (Din, Bibi, Karim & Khan, 2014). Özalp, Sungur and Özdemir (2009) emphasize that conflict is a natural event and having a conflict management strategies and applying them is more beneficial than avoiding understanding or ignoring the conflicts. The conflicts which are managed constructively have positive effects on the achievement of organizations and performance of personnel (Alper, Tjosvold & Law, 2000; Özalp, Sungur & Özdemir, 2009). Besic and Stanisavljevic (2014) state that if it isn't managed effectively, it can destroy organizations.

Conflict management is *'the application of resolution and stimulation techniques to achieve the optimum level of department conflict'* (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2007:392). Besic and Stanisavljevic (2014) point out that there isn't a specific conflict management strategy for every conflict and the efficient conflict management strategy is based on communication styles of people. Similarly, Rahim and Shapiro (2000) claim that how personnel in the organizations handle the conflict is one of the crucial factor for effective conflict management and they mention that some researchers propose conflict management strategies. The conflict management strategies are stated differently in the literature despite some common terms. For example, Certo (1997) categorize these strategies as *"Comprise, Avoiding and Smoothing, Forcing a Solution and Confrontation or Problem Solving"* while Robbins and DeCenzo (2007) state that *"Avoidance, Accommodation, Forcing, Compromise and Collaboration"*. Rahim (2002) mentions five conflict management strategies: *"Integrating, Obliging, Dominating, Avoiding and Compromising"*. According to conflict management classification of Follet (1940) which consists of domination, compromise, integration, avoidance and suppression, the first three ones are main strategies and the other two ones are secondary strategies. However, Blake and Moutan (1964) classify the conflict management strategies according to concern for production and concern for people. Their strategies are forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, compromising and problem solving. Rahim (1983) also categorize these strategies, integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising, as concern for self and concern for others. These strategies are explained as follows:

A. Integrating: Robbins and DeCenzo (2007) define integrating with some phrases which are “open and honest discussion”, “intensive listening”, “to understand differences” and “mutual agreement”. Moreover, it can be defined as an effective problem solving strategy (Rahim, 2002). This strategy is also mentioned as collaboration whose primary aim of this strategy is to meet the needs of two parts, thus satisfaction of both sides can be provided (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2007). Integrating is suitable when there is a complex problem or one part can’t solve this problem on its own and two opposing parts try to achieve a common solution by exchanging ideas, knowledge, suggestion choices (Rahim, 2002). Moreover, when making a decision is emergent and agreement and solution is valuable for both parts, it is appropriate (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2007).

B. Obliging: In this strategy, opposing topics are neglected and common points are emphasized. One part gives up its own desires to meet needs of other part. This strategy is appropriate when one part hasn’t enough information about the topic and the relationship, between both parts, is wanted to maintain (Rahim, 2002). Robbins (1991) states that relationship sometimes is more important for one part, so this part can be eager to sacrifice itself as well as to prefer the satisfaction of the other part. This strategy should be used when the topic isn’t important for one part and this part wants to gain credits for next issues (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2007).

C. Dominating: one part neglects the needs and satisfaction of other part and give importance to only its own goals to win position in this strategy (Rahim, 2002). Generally this situation occurs when one part has more power or formal authority (Robbins, 1991; Certo, 1997) and the effect of the conflict isn’t thought, but achievement of aims and gaining more advantages are taken into consideration (Robbins, 1991). This strategy isn’t suitable when

- a) the issue involved in conflict is complex and there is not enough time to make a good decision;
- b) both parts have equal power;
- c) being used this style by one or both parts may lead to stalemate;
- d) issues are not important to the part (Rahim, 2002:221).

D. Avoiding: one part sometimes thinks that conflict is bad, unnecessary or harmful for its own, so this part avoids coming into conflict (Certo, 1997). The reaction of the one part may be to withdraw when it realizes the conflict. This part shows indifference or behaves as if the conflict isn’t important and it hides its idea (Robbins, 1991). Avoiding

is appropriate when conflict isn't important for one part which doesn't have to make a decision (Certo, 1997; Rahim, 2002). In addition, the issue doesn't affect this part very much. Moreover, "cooling period" is necessary before they have to challenge for more serious problems (Rahim, 2002). However, this strategy is inappropriate when one part which has to decide about this issue, avoids discussion and conflict isn't important for one part. Besides these, one or neither parts want to wait and encouragement is necessary (Certo, 1997).

E. Compromising: As a result of this management strategy, there isn't a winning or losing part. Both sides gain some advantages but not all of them and they have to give up something. They share the conflict objectives (Robbins, 1991). "*Compromising means that the parties to the conflict settle on a solution that gives both of them part of what they wanted. No party gets exactly what it wanted, but neither loses entirely either*" (Certo, 1997:442).

Compromising is appropriate when,

- a. The objectives aren't as important as efforts and time which are spent during conflict.
- b. Both parts have equal amount of power but they attribute to different objectives
- c. It is necessary to find a temporary solution to critical issues.
- d. The parts don't have enough time to discuss any more and they have to make a decision immediately.
- e. When collaboration or obliging is impossible, compromise can be alternative (Robbins, 1991).

Compromising shouldn't be used when there is a complicated issue which requires "problem solving" technique and one part which thinks that making decision is its responsibility, has much more power (Robbins and DeCenzo, 2007).

"*Specifically, managing conflict for mutual benefit was found to predict to the extent team members believed they could handle various conflicts and to their supervisor's thought about their team's effectiveness*" (Alper, Tjosvold & Law, 2000:636). It highlights the important and broad role of the supervisor as a potential lever for change from negative to positive outcomes when employees are exposed to conflict in their workgroups. It also reinforces the important role that perceived fairness may play in workplace processes related to responding to conflict (Way, Jimmieson & Bordia, 2013). Which conflicts will occur and what the consequences for the organization will be, depend on the managers' competence to manage those conflicts (Besic & Stanisavljevic, 2014). According to Karcıoğlu, Gövez and Kahya (2011) most of the problems emerge from the ineffective management of conflicts. If the conflict creates competitive atmosphere in

the organization, personnel can be more ambitious, determined and hardworking (Yarbağ, 2015).

Appelbaum, Abdallah and Shapiro (1999) and Lippitt (1982) indicated that the administrators spent twenty percent of their time on conflicts. Furthermore, conflicts always exist in a working environment; its total elimination from the organization can't be thought of. It's, therefore, required of the school administrators that can be properly manage. It depends on the situation as well as their personal preference which style/s they want to adopt while dealing with conflict. The research shows that they adopt one or other type of conflict management style. They should adopt the style which best suit them and the situation which is in need of ending the conflict (Ghaffar, Zaman & Naz, 2012). Bailey (1971) offers some ideas on managing conflict to the school administrator. First of all, the school administrators should be aware of the recognition of conflicts timely and that they should promptly respond to the misunderstandings among their subordinates, educators and the students too. Secondly, they should utilize collective judgment in order to overcome their personal biases. Thirdly, and the most important one is that when one understands that conflicts are going to go out of control then the best and most suitable way is to appraise their resources, to see his enemy's strength and to handle the conflict by specifying what action plan needs to be adopted, how the decision would be implemented and how to prepare oneself for the possible attack. And at the final stage, the school administrator should be clear and very realistic about his/her merits and or demerits for managing conflict. The administrators can have their own conflict management strategies by managing conflict positively; thus, they can pay attention the issues on academics achievement, students and teachers; thus, their job stress can decrease (Gündüz, Tunç & İnandı 2013).

The aim of this study was to determine which conflict management strategies were used by school administrators when they experience conflict with supervisors. It is thought that the results of the study can be beneficial for training of school administrators in order to complete their deficiency on conflict management strategies and by the way, they can communicate with supervisors effectively and increase their productivity in the organizations. Regarding research aims, following research questions were generated for this study:

1. What were the conflict management strategies which were used by school administrators in order to manage the conflict experienced with supervisors? How often these strategies were used?
2. Were there any significant differences among school administrators according to gender on frequency of the conflict management strategies which were used by them in order to manage conflicts experienced with supervisors?

3. Were there any significant differences among school administrators according to educational situations on frequency of the conflict management strategies which were used by them in order to manage conflicts experienced with supervisors?
4. Were there any significant differences among school administrators according to managerial seniority on frequency of the conflict management strategies which were used by school administrators in order to manage conflicts experienced with supervisors?

2. The Population and Sample

The population of the study was the formal school administrators working at state schools in the districts of Muratpaşa, Konyaaltı, Kepez, Döşemealtı and Aksu, which are the central province of Antalya. The sample of the study was determined through simple random sampling method. In 2015, a total of 370 school administrators from 150 schools participating in the training on management were given the scale and 348 of them were analyzed.

3. Method

Quantitative research method was used through descriptive survey model. This model can be used *"...to find out is how the members of a population distribute themselves on one or more variables"* (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006:398). The data were analyzed with the help of SPSS 20.0 and LISREL 9.0. Firstly, explanatory factor analysis is conducted *"to define the underlying structure in a data matrix and... to analyzing the structure of interrelationship (correlations) among a large number of variables..."* (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998 :90). Secondly, confirmatory factor analysis was done. According to arithmetic mean, frequency groups were determined. If number of variable group is two, T-test was done, but in case that there are more than two variable groups, one way variance analysis was applied for statistical procedures.

3.1 Instrument

The data were collected through "Organizational Conflict and Management Instrument" that was developed by Putnam and Wilson (1982). The instrument consists of 30 items and seven point likert type which is from always (1) to never (7). There are three main dimensions: Non-confrontation, solution orientation and control. Solution orientation is divided into two as comprising and collaboration. The frequency values were given in Table 1.

Table 1: The frequency values

1 (Always)	2 (Usually)	3 (Often)	4 (Sometimes)
1-1,45	1,46-1,91	2,38-2,83	3,30-3,75
4,22-4,67	5 Seldom	6 Rarely	7 Never
	4,68-5,13	5,14- 5,59	6,51-7,00

As stated in Table 1, seven was divided into thirteen and according to the result, the main and intermediate values were determined.

3.2 Validity and Reliability

First, written permission was taken from the developers of this instrument before the instrument was used. Then, it was translated into Turkish by researchers and Turkish version was translated into English by two experts of both languages. Finally, its final form was designed by together with two experts in educational administration department. Next, with the help of Lisrel 9.0 program, path analysis was done but the values of the instrument were inadequate. According to Seçer (2013), there can be different factorial structure from the original structure of an instrument while it is being adapted. Different factor and numbers of items from its original form can appear as a result of path analysis and factor analysis in the language which was adapted because of the cultural differences of the adapted language in theoretical structure of the instrument. So, through SPSS 20.0 program, exploratory factor analysis was done initially, and then path analysis was applied.

According to results of exploratory factor analysis, the KMO value of the instrument was .829 and its Bartlett's test value was 2699.716. Totally, the rate of variance explanatory was 53.31 %. Factor loadings changed between .43 and .82. As a result of the analysis, six items were removed from the instrument (items: 3,7,12,17,28,30) and the final form of the instrument had twenty four items. The dimensions of the scale and their alfa values were given in Table 2.

Table 2: The alfa values of dimensions as a result of exploratory factor analysis

	The names of the factors	The numbers of the items	Alfa
1	Obliging	14,15,27,13,25,24,6,29 (eight items)	α .81
2	Integrating	9,4,1,8,11 (five items)	α .79
3	Compromising	19,20,21,16 (four items)	α .76
4	Avoiding	5,2,23 (three items)	α .76
5	Dominating	18,10,22,26 (four items)	α .66

As indicated in Table 2, the scale consisted of five dimensions. The avoiding dimension was divided into two as avoiding and dominating. The alfa values changed between .66 and .81. As for items in the dimensions, the obliging dimension had eight items (item14,15,27,13,25,24,6,29); Integrating dimension consisted of five items (item 9,4,1,8,11); Compromising dimension owned four items (item 19,20,21,16); Avoiding had three items (item 5,2,23) and Dominating dimension consisted of four items (item 18,10,22,26).

After the exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis was applied. Fit indices, acceptability level and the values in the scaled were given in Table 3. Finally, chi square\sd was indicated at the end of the table.

Table 3: The results of confirmatory factor analysis

Fit Indices	Acceptability Level	The Values In The Scale
IFI	90 and more	.93
CFI	90 and more	.93
GFI	85 and more	.88
AGFI	85 and more	.85
RMR	Between .050 and 0.80	.072
REMSEA	Between .050 and .080	.064
NFI	90 and more	.89
NNFI	90 and more	.92
Chi Square\SD	Less than 4	2.42

As indicated in Table 3, all the values in the scale were in acceptable level except for NFI. NFI was found .89 and it was quite near to acceptable level (.90 and more). The value of Chi Square\SD was 2.42 and it was below 4. In figure 1, the image of the confirmatory factor analysis was given. The items were connected to the related dimensions and the analysis was conducted.

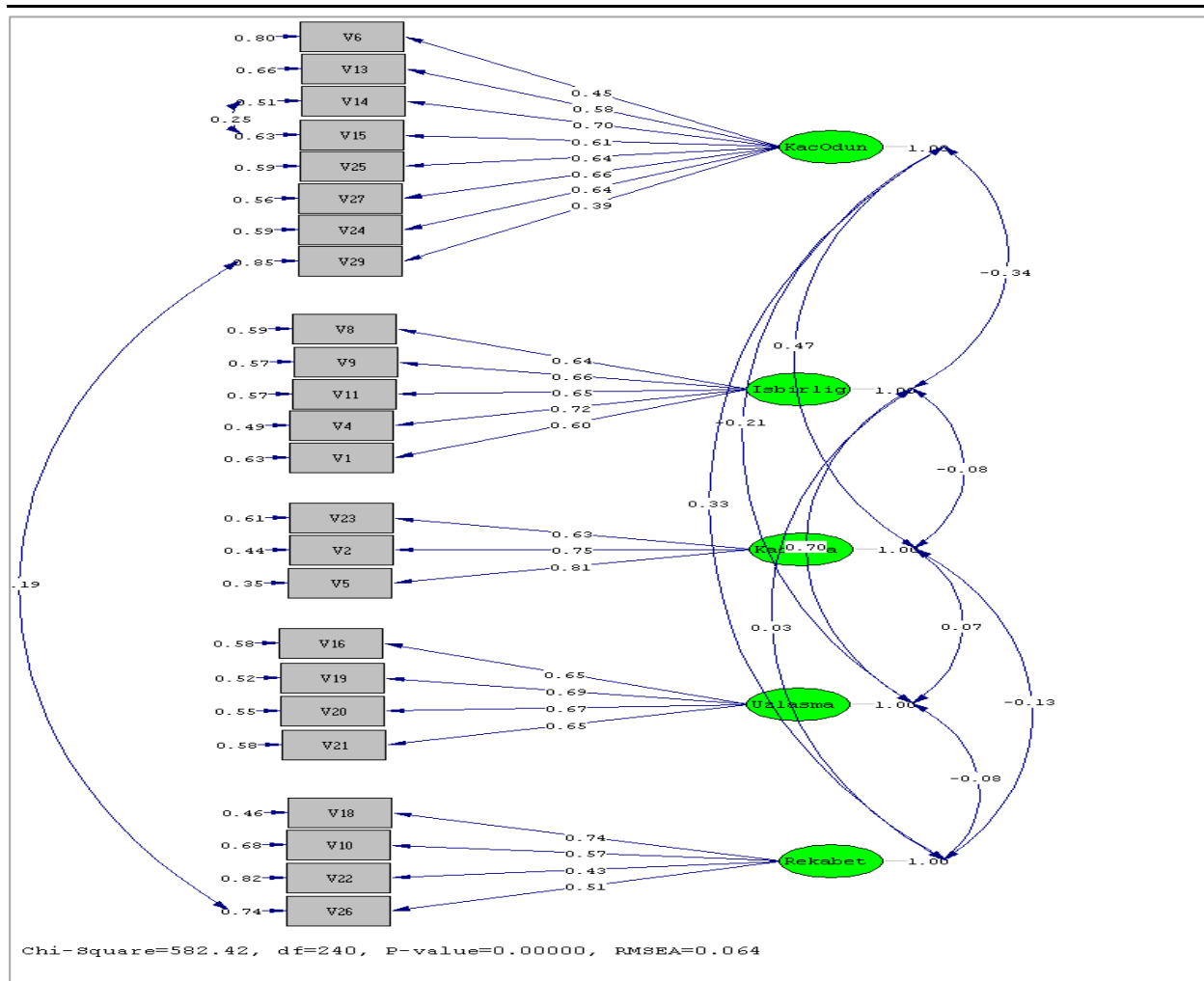


Figure 1: The Image of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis

As stated in Figure1, two modifications (item 14, 15) were done. The highest error variance of the items was .80. This value was appropriate because it wasn't above .90 (Yılmaz & Çelik, 2009). And all items are in 0.01 significant level.

4. Findings

A. The conflict management strategies of school administrators and, while conflicting with supervisors, how often these strategies are used

The conflict management strategies of school administrators and the how often they use these strategies were given in Table 4. Min, Max, Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation values as well as their corresponding frequency were stated.

Table 4: The conflict management strategies of school administrators and arithmetic mean and standard deviation values of their frequencies

Strategies	N	Min.	Max.	\bar{X}	Ss	Frequency
Obliging	348	1,25	7,00	4,63	1,10	Sometimes-Seldom
Integrating	348	1,00	7,00	2,76	1,06	Usually-Often
Compromising	348	1,00	6,50	2,85	1,14	Often
Avoiding	348	1,00	7,00	3,18	1,41	Often
Dominating	348	1,75	7,00	5,07	1,07	Seldom

As stated in Table 4, school administrators *seldom* used dominating strategy ($\bar{X}=5,07$) while they *usually-often* employed integrating strategy ($\bar{X}=2,76$) during their conflict with supervisors. And they expressed that they *often* used compromising and avoiding strategies ($\bar{X}=6,50$ and $\bar{X}=7,00$). Finally, they *sometimes or seldom* employed obliging strategy ($\bar{X}=4,63$). Consequently, the dominating was the least used strategy of all while compromising was the most used strategy of all.

B. According to their genders, the conflict management strategies of school administrators during their conflict with supervisors

The data related to difference between gender groups of administrators in conflict management strategies preferences of school administrators during their conflicts with supervisors were given in Table 5.

Table 5: Difference between genders in conflict management strategies preferences of school administrators and T-Test Results

Strategies	Variable (Gender)	n	\bar{X}	Ss	sd	t	p																																												
Obliging	Female	51	4,60	1,15	346	,219	,83																																												
	Male	297	4,64	1,10				Integrating	Female	51	2,58	,91	346	1,31	,19	Male	297	2,80	1,08	Compromising	Female	51	2,67	,95	346	1,18	2,37	Male	297	2,88	1,16	Avoiding	Female	51	3,66	1,43	346	2,64	,01	Male	297	3,09	1,39	Dominating	Female	51	4,63	,88	346	3,19	,01
Integrating	Female	51	2,58	,91	346	1,31	,19																																												
	Male	297	2,80	1,08				Compromising	Female	51	2,67	,95	346	1,18	2,37	Male	297	2,88	1,16	Avoiding	Female	51	3,66	1,43	346	2,64	,01	Male	297	3,09	1,39	Dominating	Female	51	4,63	,88	346	3,19	,01	Male	297	5,14	1,08								
Compromising	Female	51	2,67	,95	346	1,18	2,37																																												
	Male	297	2,88	1,16				Avoiding	Female	51	3,66	1,43	346	2,64	,01	Male	297	3,09	1,39	Dominating	Female	51	4,63	,88	346	3,19	,01	Male	297	5,14	1,08																				
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Dominating	Female	51	4,63	,88	346	3,19	,01																																												
	Male	297	5,14	1,08																																															

As stated in Table 5, there were significant differences between avoiding and dominating strategies between genders of school administrators. It was determined that male administrators ($\bar{X}=3,09$) used avoiding strategy more than female administrators ($\bar{X}=3,66$) during their conflict with supervisors. Besides this, dominating strategy was used by female administrators ($\bar{X}=4,63$) more than male administrators($\bar{X}=5,14$).

C. According to their educational situations, the conflict management strategies of school administrators during their conflict with supervisors

The data related to difference among educational situation groups of administrators in conflict management strategies preferences of school administrators during their conflicts with supervisors was given in Table 6.

Table 6: Difference among educational situations in conflict management strategies preferences of school administrators and ANOVA Test Results

Strategies	Educational situation	N	\bar{X}	Ss	df	F	p
Obliging	College	48	4.44	1,23	345	.875	.418
	Undergraduate	264	4.67	1,08			
	Graduate	36	4.63	1,13			
Integrating	College	48	2.89	1,22	345	.946	.389
	Undergraduate	264	2.72	1,02			
	Graduate	36	2.92	1,13			
Compromising	College	48	2.71	1,19	345	.375	.688
	Undergraduate	264	2.87	1,11			
	Graduate	36	2.86	1,24			
Avoiding	College	48	3.11	1,50	345	.410	.664
	Undergraduate	264	3.21	1,41			
	Graduate	36	3.00	1,26			
Dominating	College	48	5.13	1,24	345	.161	.851
	Undergraduate	264	5.05	1,04			
	Graduate	36	5.12	1,01			

As stated Table 6, there weren't any significant differences among school administrators on the frequency of their conflict management usage in all strategies according to the result of ANOVA test. When examined arithmetic means of all groups in the strategies, their values were nearly the same. There aren't any significant differences among groups.

D. According to their managerial seniorities, the conflict management strategies of school administrators during their conflict with supervisors

The data related to difference among managerial seniority groups of administrators in conflict management strategies preferences during their conflicts with supervisors was given in Table 7.

Table 7: Difference among managerial seniorities in conflict management strategies preferences of school administrators and ANOVA Test Results

Strategies	Managerial Seniority	N	\bar{X}	Ss	df	F	p	Difference
Obliging	1-5 years(1)	148	4.65	1.06	345	.131	.877	
	6-15 years(2)	131	4.65	1.18				
	16 years and(+)(3)	68	4.57	1.07				
Integrating	1-5 years (1)	148	2.65	1.06	345	5.045	.007	1-2
	6-15 years(2)	131	2.99	1.00				2-3
	16 years and(+)(3)	68	2.56	1.10				
Compromising	1-5 years (1)	148	2.87	1,05	345	.077	.926	
	6-15 years (2)	131	2.84	1,14				
	16 years and(+)(3)	68	2.80	1,32				
Avoiding	1-5 years (1)	148	3.35	1,40	345	2.547	.080	
	6-15 years (2)	131	2.97	1,36				
	16 years and(+)(3)	68	3.17	1,49				
Dominating	1-5 years (1)	148	4.99	0.95	345	1.537	.216	
	6-15 years(2)	131	5.20	1.10				
	16 years and(+)(3)	68	4.99	1.22				

As stated Table 7, there weren't any significant differences among school administrators on the frequency of their conflict management usage in obliging, integrating, avoiding and dominating strategies according to the result of ANOVA test. However, in integrating strategy, there was a significant difference among administrators according to managerial situations. To determine which groups differed, the Scheefe values were examined. There was a significant difference between the administrators whose managerial seniorities were 6-15 years and the administrators whose managerial seniorities were 1-5 years as well as 16 years and more.

The administrators, whose managerial seniorities were 6-15 years, stated that they used integrating strategy less than the other administrator groups.

5. Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

There is a thought which conflict has harmful effect on performance of organizations and personnel. However, it is understood that this assumption isn't always true. According to its level, it can be harmful or constructive. Conflict in the organization should be on the optimal level which prompt creative and innovations but prevents stability and tension. In this optimal level, conflict doesn't damage the organizations but provides encouragement to personnel (Robbins, 1991). It is inevitable that there are various conflicts more or less in schools like any other organizations. The person who is responsible for living and acting in line with the aim of the school in the first place, is a school administrator. The ability of school administrators to benefit from the highest level of education supervisors, in position of training specialists, who provide them with counseling, guidance and on-the-job training (MEB, 2014) depends on their ability to use the most appropriate strategies in the conflicts they face with supervisors. A talented person knows what can be results of each strategy and which one is the most effective while handling the conflict (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2007).

According to results of this study, school administrators used five different conflict management strategies and the frequencies with which these strategies were used from the least to the most were (1) dominating, (2) obligating, (3) avoiding, (4) compromising and (5) integrating respectively. They sometimes or seldom employed dominating strategy ($\bar{X}=4,63$).

And they often used compromising ($\bar{X}=6,50$) and avoiding strategies ($\bar{X}=7,00$). They employed the obliging strategy at the most ($\bar{X}=2,85$) and compromising was the least used strategy of all. Until 2004 when the registries of supervisors whose names were primary education supervisors before, were removed (MEB, 2004; Kayıkçı & Şarlak, 2013), they used to be in an important position to determine and assess the future of school administrators because they had been the first registers of school administrators for a long time. So, school administrators have been lower level of the hierarchy than supervisors for a long time. And the supervisors have still supervised the school principals in the context of institutional supervision. They have decided the performance levels of school administrators and written reports on schools and this decision is effective for their future careers. All of these situations show that school administrators have less power than them and need to them. The obliging strategy is used when the opposing party is strong. Owens (1998) states that dominating strategy which is based on that while one side gains, the other side loses, is used when tendency of cooperation is low while tendency to protect one's own interests is high. If a side tries to reach its goals and increase its interests without considering the impact on the other

side, it competes. According to Robbins (1991), the more superior side is used their formal authority to the other as a dominant power in formal groups or organizations during such gains and losses disputes. When compared to the supervisors and school administrators, the supervisors are in a more superior position as the formal authority. Therefore, the use of dominating strategy by the school administrators to manage the conflict with the supervisors will not be effective and they can also go off the deep end when they employed this strategy. According to these, that school administrators used the dominating strategy at least can stem from the position of them to supervisors. The integrating strategy means that one side is sensitive to the interests of the other and the interests of both sides are protected (Owens, 1998); it requires that the both sides act together to resolve the conflict. This result showed that it is more rational that school administrators used integrating strategy rather than dominating strategy and sought solutions to cooperate with supervisors during their conflicts with them who advise and assess them. This situation does not only result in profitability of both sides but also is important in terms of effectiveness and efficiency of the organization.

According to İpek (2003), in the conflict management, the strategy which enables that both I win and you win provides the most positive results in terms of individual's organizations. Furthermore, communication and collaboration are two key terms in today's working environment. (Altmäe & Türk, 2008). The strategy which enables that both I win and you win is based on integrating strategy and to achieve this, the law on civil servants has legal regulations on the essentials of co-operation of civil servants (DMK: item:8), and on the punishment of those who do not comply this principle (DMK:125/A-h). The presence of a co-operative principle in the management of conflicts may be one of the reasons that encourage both sides to use integrating strategy. Integrating strategy is the most preferred strategy by both hospital managers (Karcioğlu, Gövez & Kahya, 2011) and school administrators (Boucher, 2013). According to the results of another research, Turkish managers from different sectors stated that integrating strategy was the most used one and compromising strategy was the second most employed one of all conflict management strategies (Özalp, Sungur & Özdemir, 2009). Similarly, according to Gündüz, Tunç and İnandı (2013), the use of integrating at first, then compromising conflict management strategies would be more beneficial in education organizations. Rahim and Shapiro (2000) pointed out another important issue is that supervisor was a key determinant for conflict management strategies of personnel. When supervisors treated them justly, they would prefer cooperative and integrating styles at most.

There was a significant difference between genders in conflict management strategies preferences of school administrators during their conflicts with supervisors.

Female school administrators used dominating strategies more than male administrators. Besides this, avoiding strategy was used by male administrators more than female administrators. Altmäe and Türk (2008) stated that in their study, although there wasn't great difference between female and male managers, they differentiated into compromising and dominating strategies. Male managers tend to use these conflict strategies more than female managers. Moreover; Chaudhry, Shami, and Ahmed (2008) revealed that women used avoiding, obliging, dominating styles more than men though men preferred integrating, and compromising strategies at most.

There wasn't a significant difference among educational situations of school administrators in conflict management strategies preferences of school administrators during their conflicts with supervisors. According to this result, it was understood that school administrators with associate degree, undergraduate and graduate degree used conflict management strategies at similar frequency while experiencing conflicts with their primary supervisors.

The different conflict management strategies may be used in similar conflicts because of diversity properties such as character, seniorities of school administrators and school conditions (Gündüz, Tunç & İnandı, 2013). And in this study, it was stated that the school administrators whose seniorities were between six and fifteen years used integrating strategy less than the one whose seniorities were between one and five as well as between sixteen years and more. It was expected that the school administrators whose seniorities were between one and five years should be benefit from the supervisors at most. As a result of this, the administrators in this group may be more interested in collaborating with supervisors and taking advantage of them because of being less experienced. Moreover, it could be thought that the school administrators, whose seniorities were sixteen and more, tend to use integrating strategy more than the other administrator groups owing to the fact that they met and communicated with supervisors many times.

To sum up, the differences among individuals can bring advantages for organizations (Gündüz, Tunç & İnandı, 2013). Schools are complex, dynamic organizations, and opportunities for conflict abound. Considering the current strong focus on accountability and student achievement and circumstances in which conflict is probable for teachers and administrators increase the possibility of conflict (Boucher, 2013). Administrators need to pay more attention to conflict management as it leads to better solutions in achieving company goals. Conflict is not a temporary situation; it will not disappear as stress at work decreases (Altmäe & Türk, 2008). Moreover; every strategy has significant advantages and disadvantages, strengths and weakness, no one of them is the most beneficial for every situation, and each person has got one or one

more conflict management strategy. The important point is that he should be aware of which strategy or strategies which he is able to use successfully. Furthermore, it is wrong that he is limited himself with successful handled strategies. He should use all strategies whenever they are appropriate because the other strategies are beneficial for some conflicts (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2007).

Özalp, Sungur and Özdemir (2009) pointed out that the socio-economic and cultural conditions of countries may affect the conflict management strategies which managers use. Therefore this study can be applied both in the other cities of Turkey and in the other countries. Moreover, a qualitative research method can be used to find out the reasons why school administrators preferred these conflict management strategies and to what they pay attention while using them. Finally, this scale can be conducted with supervisors and its results can be compared with this study.

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