THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP TECHNIQUES AND AUTONOMY SUPPORTIVE BEHAVIORS OF THE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Studies which look at the relation between the concepts of classroom management and leadership techniques of teachers and students' motivation need to be supported and updated from different angles. This study examines the relationship between class management and leadership techniques and motivational behaviors of teachers by using instructional management and people management areas for class management; interventionist, interactionalist and non-interventionist classification for leadership approach and emotion and thinking autonomy support, learning process autonomy support and assessment autonomy support factors for the autonomy support on students' internal motivation. The model of the research is a relational quantitative survey. The participants are elementary school teachers. Data was collected with Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control Inventory (ABCC) and Learner Autonomy Support Scale (LAS). The findings of the study presented that teachers are more interventionist in instructional management and more interactionalist in people management. The autonomy support they exhibit does not change according to their people management style but it changes according to their instruction management style.

Keywords: autonomy support; classroom management; leadership of teacher; self-determination; students' motivation.

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Educational Management and Class Management

Educational administration in general involves managing the schools scientifically in accordance to the processes and functions of management, which involves planning, organizing, leading and controlling of group activities in organizations which is a deliberate arrangement of people to accomplish specific goals (Robbins & Coulter 2007:7-8). Because social and humanitarian aspects of education are very dense and sustainable management strategies are seen necessary for academic success and social justice i.e. human rights, human dignity and equality (Deventer et al, 2015), school administrators are also expected to be leaders who can influence and motivate the teachers, and the teacher are expected to be the leaders who can influence and motivate the students. In another words, leadership development has been seen essential for high quality education and successful schools (Naicker and Mestry, 2015).

In line with the above approach the term educational leadership is widely used for educational administration in the last two decade especially since the beginning of the 21st century (Hallinger & Chen, 2015). Following that many different approaches and models about educational management or school leadership has been included into literature such as; instructional leadership, managerial leadership, transformational leadership, moral and authentic leadership, distributed leadership, teacher leadership, system leadership, contingent leadership (Bush & Glover, 2015), caring leadership, servant leadership (Vyver et al, 2014) and so on.

Being a sub-category of educational management, class management can be divided into two independent factors or sub-sections as; instructional management and people management (Martin et al., 1998a). Teacher is the manager and the leader of the classroom and management is usually linked with preserving the existing situation where leadership is linked with change (Bush, 2008). Because of the complexity of the work teachers are expected to perform successfully, like other managers, they also should have some

conceptual, technical and humanistic skills where they mean; ability to think and conceptualize about abstract and complex situation, job-specific knowledge and techniques needed to proficiently perform specific tasks and ability to work well with other people in a group respectively (Katz, 1974).

Different models have been mentioned about management and leadership in classroom focusing at different concepts (Demirkol, 2019a). According to the leadership style of the teacher classroom management can be classified as, interventionist, interactionalist and non-interventionist (Martin et al., 1998b) where interventionist approach results to present a string control on the students by the teacher and interactionalist and non-interventionist approaches support students' autonomy (Demirkol, 2019b).

1.2. Self-Determination Theory and Autonomy Support of Teachers

Self-determination theory suggests that students would tend to internalization of learning motivation and deal with lessons more autonomously when there is support in the classroom for their needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). Therefore, students need supporting environment to feed their intrinsic motivations. Undoubtedly, it is teachers who will create autonomy supported class and learning environments. Teachers can feed and strengthen or weaken and impair autonomous motivations of students. Learner autonomy can be supported by alleviating assessment pressure and force on student, increasing the sense that student has a voice and option in academic activities and providing a positive feedback on competence (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009).

A recent classification of the teachers' autonomy support on learners includes three dimensions as; emotion and thinking autonomy support, learning process autonomy support and assessment autonomy support (Oguz, 2013a). Examples for emotion and thinking autonomy support are; approaching to students empathically, allowing students and encouraging them to express their feelings and problems. Examples for learning process autonomy support are; encouraging students to have real life experiences related to subjects thought in class, helping them to define learning goals and cooperating with parents for the achievement of students. Examples for assessment autonomy support are; allowing students to assess their own performance, enabling them to evaluate each other's works, involving them to decision making of measurement and evaluation process (Oguz, 2013a).

The number of studies about educational management and leadership techniques of teachers and studies on students' motivation has been increased in recent years (Demirkol, 2019a). However studies which look at the relations between them are still required to be conducted. This work studies the class management and leadership techniques of teachers and learners' autonomy support behaviours of the classroom teachers. It is expected that the study would contribute to the literature.

1.3. Objective of the Study

This article studies the class management in the fields of instructional management and people management (Martin et al., 1998a); leadership techniques classifies as interventionist, interactionalist and non-interventionist (Martin et al.,1998b), and autonomy support of the teachers for student motivation in the areas of emotion and thinking autonomy support, learning process autonomy support and assessment autonomy support, (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and the objective of this study is to find out whether the classroom management and leadership techniques of the teachers predict their attitudes on learner motivational autonomy support behaviours.

In line with the general objective of the study the following questions are to be answered through the findings of the study:

Q1. What are the leadership techniques (interventionist, interactionalist or non-interventionist) of teachers during class management (instructional management and people management) process?

Q2. What is the level of exhibition of learner autonomy support (emotion and thinking support, learning process support and assessment support) behavior of the teachers?

Q3. Is there any relationship between class management and leadership techniques and the level of exhibition of learner autonomy support behavior of the teachers?

2. METHOD AND MATERİAL

The model of the research is a relational survey model and the study has used quantitative method to collect and evaluate data. The study was conducted in Antalya. Participants are 213 teachers working at different elementary schools.

3. DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Data was collected with *Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory (Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1998b)*. The adaptation of the ABCC Inventory into Turkish including translation, reliability and validity studies was done by Savran and Cakıroglu (2004). To measure the level of autonomy support of teachers *Learner Autonomy Support (LAS) Scale (Oguz, 2013b)* has been used. The scale is a valid and reliable one with cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient of α=0.92 for the exhibition autonomy support behaviour. LAS is a 5 point likert scale (min score is 1 and max score is 5) consists of 16 items and 3 factors, namely emotion and thinking autonomy support, learning process autonomy support and assessment autonomy support, for the teachers to reveal their views on the extent which they exhibited this behaviour. For emotion and thinking support there are 7 items and minimum score is 7 and maximum score is 35, for learning process support there are 5 items and minimum score is 5 and maximum score is 25, where for assessment support we have 4 items and minimum score is 4 and max score is 20 (Oguz, 2013b).

4. FINDINGS

The findings of the study are analyzed with SPSS.

Table 1 below shows the instructional and people management styles of the classroom teachers.

Table 1. The management and leadership styles of class teachers.

	Management style	N	Mean Rank	Percentage %
Instructional Management	non-interventionist	13	107,85	6,10
	interactionalist	94	93,77	44,13
	Interventionist	106	118,63	49,77
	Total	213		100
People Management	non-interventionist	6	141,42	2,82
	interactionalist	110	110,61	51,64
	Interventionist	97	100,78	45,54
	Total	213		100

According to the table 1 interventionist teachers are the highest in number in instructional management. In people management majority of the teachers are interactionalist (Demirkol, 2019a).

Descriptive statistics of class teachers' exhibiting of learner autonomy supportive behaviors is shown on the Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of classroom teachers' exhibiting of learner autonomy supportive behaviors

Autonomy Support Dimentions	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Emotion and thinking support	213	4,38	0,45	1,57	5,00
Learning process support	213	4,24	0,55	2,00	5,00
Assessment support	213	4,02	0,65	2,00	5,00
Total Autonomy support	213	4,21	0,48	1,86	5,00

As seen on the Table 2 teachers think that they exhibit a high level of autonomy support. They think they exhibit highest level of autonomy support on emotion and thinking. According to their view the exhibition of learning process support and assessment support are also high and mean of total autonomy support is 4,21 out of 5.

Kruskall Wallis test results of emotion and thinking support, learning process support and assessment support of the classroom teachers' according to type of people management style (interventionist, interactionalist, non-interventionist) are shown on Table 3.

Table 3. Kruskall Wallis test results of emotion and thinking support, learning process support and assessment support of the classroom teachers'; according to type of people management style:

	People Management Style	N	Mean rank	df	Chi-Square	P, sig.
Emotion and thinking support	non-interventionist	6	141,42	2	3,278	0,194
	interactionalist	110	110,61			
	Interventionist	97	100,78			
	Total	213				
Learning process support	non-interventionist	6	133,50	2	1,519	0,468
	interactionalist	110	103,83			
	Interventionist	97	108,96			
	Total	213				
Assessment support	non-interventionist	6	146,00	2	4,447	0,108
	interactionalist	110	111,41			
	Interventionist	97	100,78			
	Total	213				
Total Autonomy support	non-interventionist	6	146,17	2	2,935	0,231
	interactionalist	110	108,53			
	Interventionist	97	102,88			
	Total	213				

As seen on the Table 3 total autonomy support exhibition of the classroom teachers (p=0,231>0.05) do not change significantly according to people management style of the teachers. There is a slight change according to people management style and the highest support is exhibited by non-interventionist teachers (mean rank= 146,17). The highest difference is in assessment support where p=0,108 close to the reference value 0,5. But still the difference is not too significant.

Kruskall Wallis test results of emotion and thinking support, learning process support and assessment support of the classroom teachers' according to type of instruction management style (interventionist, interactionalist, non-interventionist) are shown on Table 4.

Table 4. Kruskall Wallis test results of emotion and thinking support, learning process support and assessment support of the classroom teachers'; according to type of instruction management style:

	Instruction Management Style	N	Mean rank	df	Chi-Square	P, sig.
Emotion and thinking support	non-interventionist	13	107,85			
	interactionalist	94	93,77	2	8,209	0,016
	Interventionist	106	118,63			
	Total	213				
Learning process support	non-interventionist	13	130,69			
	interactionalist	94	99,50	2	3,754	0,153
	Interventionist	106	110,75			
	Total	213				
Assessment support	non-interventionist	13	110,54			
	interactionalist	94	97,24	2	4,364	0,113
	Interventionist	106	115,22			
	Total	213				
Total Autonomy support	non-interventionist	13	117,08			
	interactionalist	94	96,52	2	4,879	0,087
	Interventionist	106	115,06			
	Total	213				

As seen on the Table 4 total autonomy support exhibition of the classroom teachers varies according to their instruction management style, the significance (p=0,087) is very close to the reference value (0,05). The difference for emotion and thinking support is very significant (p=0,016 <0,05). So we can conclude that the autonomy support in emotion and thinking changes according to the instruction management style of the classroom teachers. According to the table interventionist teachers show the highest autonomy support in emotion and thinking. During learning process non-interventionist teachers and by assessment interventionist teachers show the highest autonomy support but the difference is not too much significant for them.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Today, for both public and private organizations the most important and competitive factor/ input is the human resources. An organization can reach to its goals and objectives only by managing this factor effectively and efficiently. For the school organization, it is only possible to perform and fulfil the expected functions and to contribute to the economies of societies by exhibiting and executing an effective school/class management. Besides this it is very important to educate self-determining and autonomous individuals for the economies of both developed and developing countries which need entrepreneur, competitive work force, and this importance continuous by increasing and accelerating. Parallel to this situation number of studies on school/class management and gaining to students the skills of self-determination and autonomy is also increasing.

Despite new educational and instructional approaches today there are a good number of teachers who are not supporting autonomy and using classical control oriented autocratic leadership styles in different countries (Naicker and Mestry, 2013; Güvenc, 2011).

The objective of this study was to define the classroom management and leadership techniques of the primary school class teachers and to determine whether their classroom management and leadership style predicts their perceptions on learner autonomy support behaviour. Findings of the study presented that almost half of the teachers have interventionist and the other half have interactionalist leadership style. Number of non-interventionist teachers is very low. Teachers are more interventionist in instructional management and more interactionalist in people management.

The findings of the study also presented that according to their view, classroom teachers exhibit a high level of autonomy support in general. They exhibit highest support in emotion and thinking and lowest in assessment. The autonomy support classroom teachers exhibit does not change too much according to their people management style. Non-interventionist teachers exhibit higher autonomy support compared to the others and there is no difference between interactionalist and interventionist teachers.

The autonomy support class teacher exhibit changes according to their instruction management style. Especially in emotion and thinking support the difference is significant and interventionist teachers think they exhibit the highest support. They also exhibit highest support in assessment and in learning process non-interventionist teachers exhibit the highest autonomy support. Contradicting to our expectations interactionalist teachers think they exhibit lower autonomy support compared to others but we want to remind in general autonomy support of all teachers is high in general.

A similar study has been conducted by Guvenc and Güvenc (2014). They also found that teachers show middle level autonomy support. In instruction management interactionalist teachers exhibit higher level autonomy support and autonomy support does not change according to people management style.

As recommendation; it is suggested in the literature that teachers can be guided on providing autonomy support through training programs (Demirkol, 2019b). Teacher training programs including self-determination and autonomy support will increase internal motivation level of students. In addition to reduce the pressure on teachers, the directors should be informed about positive effects of supporting autonomy of the teachers through in-service education programs such as conferences and seminars or master degree programs.

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