

The Effect of Organizational Reputation on School's Policy Encouraging Participation of Employees in Decision Making Process at School

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Abstract: The purpose of present study is to investigate the effect of organizational reputation on school's policy encouraging participation in decision making. The participants were 214 master's students in April 2013 in department of Educational Administration, Supervision, Planning and Economics (EASPE) from Zirve University and Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University (in cooperation with), and Harran University. The data were collected through personnel information form, single-item made yes/no for determining school's policy encouraging participation of employees in decision making process at school, and Reputation Management Scale in Education Organizations developed in Turkish, by Balay, Kaya, & Yildirim (2013) designed as five-point scale, and consisted of 56 items and eight dimensions. Logistic Regression Analysis (LRA) was carried out to predict school's policy encouraging participation in decision making using eight dimensions of organizational reputation entitled use of corporate entities, innovativeness, management quality, personnel's human relations ability, personnel's corporate performance ability, financial austerity, product and service quality, social responsibility as predictors. The results of study revealed a moderately strong relationship between organizational reputation and school's policy encouraging participation of employees in decision making process at school. Nagelkerke's r square showed that eight dimensions of organizational reputation together accounted for approximately 38 percent of the variance of school's policy encouraging participation in decision making. Of the independent variables, the Wald criterion demonstrated that only management quality dimension of organizational reputation made a significant contribution to prediction of school's policy encouraging participation in decision making.

Keywords: organization, reputation, decision making, logistic regression analysis.

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INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

Public education worldwide has got into a new path in which the school management emphasis has been going forth and back between centralization and decentralization. As the move into decentralization has gained more favor during these days, the reflections of this have started to pop up in other contexts and smaller organizations. In a time when everything evolves so fast, it is easy to see changes pervading in all areas from government systems to school managements etc. So today, it is no wonder to see the decision processes in the hands of school partners like those of school principals.

Today it is seen that all the managerial activities involving decisions necessitate participation of nearly all school partners or representatives that are led by the principal who still play an important mediating effect among the partners. In this regard, it is

vital that decision process involves "participation" of all. However, this "participation" does not mean the removal of principals as decision makers, however it enables them to share responsibility among all partners and helps him better see the results of decisions which are taken in guidance of different perspectives.

Of the most promising reform strategies for education, teacher participation in school decision making process has become significant [1]. Referring the level of input that teachers have in decisions at the school [2], employees' participation in decision making becomes essential for a modern and democratic organization. Also it is essential that the stakeholders are participated in developing process of decision making to prevent that the decisions may turn into a poor outcome [3].

School climate can influence teachers' decision participation[4], teacher-principal working relationships

also is important to insure teachers' willingness to participate in various decision areas [1]. Teachers' expertise, longevity, and leadership propensity affect participation in making decisions during school-conducted needs assessments [5]. The study by Keung [6] showed that there are predictive effects of bureaucratic control and professional autonomy in the involvement of teachers in pedagogical and managerial decision domain. Wadesango found that there is a positive correlation between teacher involvement in decision making and student performance [7].

Jenkins *et al.* investigated the impacts of a school reform process relying on multi dimensions [8]. Giving instruction to elementary school principals, they implemented a program consisted of school-based participatory decision-making. It resulted respectively in positive teacher attitudes toward the change process, in new approaches to organizing instruction, and in more mainstreamed instruction.

Nowadays effective management entails positive school climate and a healthy environment on the basis of rational decisions at schools [9]. In this regard, when analyzing the literature about the participation of employees in decision making process at school, it can be said that one of the potential variable is organizational reputation. Organizational reputation can positively influences applicant perceptions of job and organizational attributes and recruiter behaviors [10]; employee engagement [11]; reducing subsequent errors and contributing to learning research [12]; policy-maker's effectiveness [13]; productivity [14]; relationship between satisfaction and loyalty [15]; organizational citizenship behaviors [16].

Despite research has shown that organizational reputation can influence on the many organizational variables, little research has been conducted on its effects on school's policy encouraging participation of employees in decision making process at school.

Organizational Reputation

Reputation is the value and quality of any service or product presented to use in the eyes of people. The practice of shaping an attractive identity that is not shared by others and projecting a coherent and consistent set of images to the public is hard to keep as long as a positive reputation is desired. Reputation by itself helps people to decide better among service providers; there is no chance for those who want to be forerunner to stay behind other competitors as long as they want to keep or upgrade their reputation. This forms a cycle that promises people to find the equal or better next time, as seen in all sectors.

Organizational reputation can be defined as a set of beliefs about capacities, intentions, history, and mission [17]. Additionally, it can be explained as various considerations upon the capacities, intentions,

history, and mission of organization in multiple structure. In this regard, organizational reputation is a complex phenomenon having many dimensions, conceptualizations, and operationalizations [18].

Reputation management is a new and emerging theme in the public education and is paid more attention as people of this age are more outcome-oriented and take the schools' image into account in choosing schools. Today schools which entice more students are more hardworking ever than before. When their reputation is compared to others, they attract more students that keep contributing to reputation of the school by word of mouth. Old days that people perceived all schools as similar is gone, now we have families that are more attentive to image of the schools and schools that try to foster a good quality image to attract students and place themselves at the top of the list. Thus, managing the reputation plays an important role in education institutions by leading parents to desired options and by becoming accountable to funders and them.

Heugens *et al* [19] identified four capabilities of reputation management which can be summarized as follows:

- (1) *engaging in a cooperative dialogue with relevant stakeholders;*
- (2) *presenting the organizational point of view favourably in the eyes of external beholders;*
- (3) *avoiding organizational 'ownership' of critical reputational threats; and*
- (4) *communicating meaningfully with affected parties, even under conditions of high adversity and time-pressure.*

There is an important thing that counts most; reputation is not spontaneous process. It requires leadership, management, and organisational operations; the quality of products and services; and – crucially – relationships with stakeholders [20] and a good reputation is mostly based on the ideas of people that are affected by the above-mentioned factors. Reputation is an intangible resource for organizations [21]; intangible values that organization carry have been more considerable than the tangible ones with regard to competitive advantage [22].

When it comes to question of how reputation is to be managed, Fombrun [23] highlights that fact that building reputation is not only doing things right – but doing the right things by taking necessary notice or snapshots of the core values and environment in which organization work. According to Kartalia [24], identification of issues, problems, and perceptions that may affect negatively an organization's reputation are to be considered and finalized in order to manage reputation successfully. These potential drawbacks could be easily found through interviews, surveys,

focus groups, case studies etc [25]. However, managing reputation can lead to different ways depending on the mentality. Although reputation is thought to favor only positive sense, it does not [20]. Reputation has two sides; when the case of Mafia-controlled waste disposal industry in New York is checked, the prosecution of racketeers actually added to the negative reputation of the industry, which inhibited honest business people from attempting to enter the industry[23]. This example could be narrowed down to schools. Generally schools located at outskirts of the city where drugs use is common, negative reputation is also attributed to these schools in part due to surrounding environment. Actually even this negative reputation of the school stemming from the non-controllable sources affects the decisions of parents against these schools and put reputation of alternatives such as home schooling, religious schools, charter schools or private schools on rise. Whether managed or not, all school or other organizations will have a varying reputation in others minds depending on controllable and non-controllable sources. It can depend on acts of organization itself or any other environmental effect.

Due to competition among schools, especially private ones, a vast effort is spent on building a strong reputation of the school. So is no wonder that Cookson [26] reports that parents and students of private schools claim to feel safer and more positive about their school than public school students. Today, with the negative image and perceptions about public schools, private schools have experienced a growth in their student enrollment [27]. These examples are not given to propose any illogical thesis that private ones are more successful the governmental ones. However, these are the good reputation examples that show how decisions of clients or parents are affected through well planned management that includes advertisement, recruiting and spreading

According to Benek[28], as clients can be motivated about the brand in terms its reputation, and as they seek to actively be linked with it, they tend to be more to participate in relationship with the organization and be part of it. Thus, schools seeing this fact opt for increasing their reputation in their areas.

School reputation may depend as much on its diligent works and student success as on how people perceive it. Hard work, good teachers and education are all important for reputation of the institutions. Be it organization or any other entity, reputation is the most powerful asset more than the contacts, experience, skills and knowledge that can be attained as it is the reputation that goes far beyond the goals by effecting the path chosen, business opportunities, wealth, influence and the chance of being selected among others [29]. However, strong reputation desired by all partners in a particular school district or place takes years to

develop but only days to destroy[25]. Far worse than this, it can be even destroyed to some extent in a matter of minutes, as disgruntled customers or even competitors can publish or share defamatory information instantaneously across the world through social media or internet [30]. So, today schools take care of decisions, planning and application processes or any other management dimension more than ever before to protect their image, produce more accepted results through getting all partners more into decision making process because according to reputation is a factor affecting the decisions regardless of whether the target is a supplier or a competitor and help strategic alliance to be formed. Thus, reputation is in part depended on decisions taken together in schools as reputation springs from experiences and values of people collectively who see themselves as stakeholders of the school.

Participation in Decision Making

In complex and changing dynamically expanding environment covering school system, it seems obviously that focusing on the employees is one of the changes for principals [31]. In contrast to classical management mentality in which the principal is unquestionable sole leader of the institution, now we have management understanding that incorporates not only ideas of leading figures in the organization, but also those of any school partner that ranges from student parents to industry members that will recruit students in future. Therefore, the principal's customary role has been subject to changes. School partners have been empowered to make decisions or contribute into decision making process which was formerly confined to just principal.

Consequently, it has been inevitable the changes in the roles of principals and all school stakeholders due to latest developments concerning decentralization that has taken its place in education arena. Now it has started to gain acceptance that empowering those who are closest to the students or intended source will produce decisions better suited to the particular needs of the target people, which will improve the performance of school as a whole [32].

Considering an integral process for organization, decision-making is can effect every level of individual, group, and organization [33]. Exerting for participative decision-making has given a new insight to management and decentralized authority, which bear a good potential for achieving outcomes that may not be attainable under schools' traditional top-down structures. On the other hand, increasing level of participation of all stakeholders in making decisions and extending their involvement in this process can make school policy and management more respondent towards the needs. Thus, incorporation of participative

decision-making into school setting for school stakeholders may yield significant outputs.

To sum up, employees' participation in decision making has been vital for the organizations. And the research on what factors affect on this process as a school policy seems important to understand what should be done for developing effectively this process at the school. To make contribution in this area, the purpose of this study has been to investigate the effect of organizational reputation on employees' participation in decision making. To achieve this purpose, the dimensions of organizational reputation are addressed in this study.

METHOD

Since the purpose of this study requires investigating the effect of organizational reputation (continues variable) on school's policy encouraging participation in decision making (categorical variable), the data were analyzed through LRA. LRA is preferred to investigate relationships between a categorical dependent variable and one or more categorical or continues independent variables [34]. It does not assume a linear relationship between the variables. It does not require that the independent variables be interval, normally distributed, linearly related, or equal variance within each group [35].

Participants

The participants were 214 master's students during the academic year 2012-2013 in department of Educational Administration, Supervision, Planning and Economics (EASPE), in the institutes of social sciences from Zirve University and Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University (in cooperation with), and Harran University. Descriptive data about the participants are given in Table 1.

Of the participants, 128 (59,81%) are male, whereas 86 (40,19%) are female. While 20 percent work at upper secondary school, 38 percent work at primary, and 42 percent work at lower secondary school. About 3 percent is pre-primary school teacher, 41 percent is primary teacher, and 56 percent is subject teacher.

The majority of participants work as teacher with 75 percent (n=160), and others work as school administrator. Additionally, participants attend master's programme of EASPE with thesis/non-thesis at Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam university in cooperation with Zirve University (n= 196), and attend master's programme of EASPE with thesis at Harran University (n= 18).

Table-1: The summary of descriptive data about the participants

		n	%
Gender	Female	86	40,19
	Male	128	59,81
School type	Primary	81	37,85
	Lower Secondary	90	42,06
	Upper Secondary	43	20,09
Subject	Pre-Primary School Teacher	7	3,27
	Primary teacher	87	40,65
	Subject teacher	120	56,07
Job position	School administrator (principal/vice-principal)	54	25,23
	Teacher	160	74,77
University	Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University / Zirve University	196	91,59
	Harran University	18	8,41

Measures

Personal information

Using personal information part in the questionnaire, the participants were asked to describe their gender, school type, subject, job position.

Dependent variables

To determine the school's policy encouraging participation in decision making, using Single-Item made Yes/No, the participants were asked whether the school employees were participated in decision making

process at school. The responses were coded as 1=yes, 0=no.

Independent variables

As independent variables, dimensions of organizational reputation derived from *Reputation Management Scale in Education Organizations* developed in Turkish, by Balay, Kaya, & Yildirim were used [36]. Scale was designed as five-point scale ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*),

and consisted of 56 items that were separated in following eight dimensions.

a) *Use of Corporate Entities* (e.g. “The organization where I work is sufficient in terms of physical infrastructure equipment, and technology”)

b) *Innovativeness* (e.g. “The organization where I work is open to innovativeness”)

c) *Management Quality* (e.g. “The administrators of organization where I work display effective leadership through a clear and shared vision”)

d) *Personnel’s Human Relations Ability* (e.g. “The organization where I work promotes employees’ honesty and openness in human relations”)

e) *Personnel’s Corporate Performance Ability* (e.g. “The organization where I work provides an environment for employees for using their potential in effective way”)

f) *Financial Austerity* (e.g. “The organization where I work is sufficient in terms of financial resources”)

g) *Product and Service Quality* (e.g. “The organization where I work pays attention to clients’ evaluation for quality of production and service”)

h) *Social Responsibility* (e.g. “The organization where I work behaves responsibly towards society”)

Reliability of the measures

The reliability of measures was tested by Cronbach's Alpha values. Cronbach's Alpha value was: 0,90 for all variables together; 0,90 for *use of corporate entities*; 0,87 for *innovativeness*; 0,87 for *management quality*; 0,87 for *personnel’s human relations ability*; 0,87 for *personnel’s corporate performance ability*; 0,92 for *financial austerity*; 0,88 for *product and service quality*; 0,88 for *social responsibility as predictors* [37]. It stated that the values were higher than 0,70 it could be interpreted that the measures derived from questionnaires were reliable. In turn, data of present study were reliable according to alpha values.

Goodness of fit test statistics

Table 2 indicates the results of classification table in beginning block, and final block when the predictors are included. By adding the variables it can be predicted with 82,2% accuracy. In this regard, the model seems good.

Table-2: The classification table in beginning block (0) and final block (1)

Observed			Predicted		
			Participating in decision		Percentage Correct
			No	Yes	
Step 0	Participating in decision	No	0	50	0
		Yes	0	164	100
	Overall Percentage				
Step 1	Participating in decision	No	21	29	42
		Yes	9	155	94,5
	Overall Percentage				

Table 3 shows that the case model chi-square has 8 degrees of freedom, a value of 24.096 and a probability of $p < 0.000$. Significant chi-square indicates

better prediction when comparing the model consisting of only constant.

Table-3: Omnibus tests of model coefficients

		Chi-square	df	Sig
Step 1	Step	62,253	8	,000
	Block	62,253	8	,000
	Model	62,253	8	,000

Table 4 shows that *H-L goodness-of-fit test statistic* is greater than 0.05, and the model’s

calculations fit data at an acceptable level. In turn, the model is quite a good fit.

Table-4: Hosmer and Lemeshow test (*H-L goodness-of-fit test statistic*)

Step	Chi-square	df	Sig
1	13,540	8	,095

Procedure

Participants were contacted to conduct the study during their master’s education in April 2013 (academic year 2012-2013). The participants were asked their willingness to participate in the study. After accepting to participate in the study, the participants were given fill the questionnaires and personal information form. Filling the questionnaire took approximately 30 minutes.

Using SPSS 18 for Windows, Logistic Regression Analysis (LRA) was performed to predict the school’s policy encouraging participation in decision making by dimensions of organizational reputation according to the views of employees through questionnaires.

When evaluating the results of LRA, Nagelkerke’s R-square was used. It can be considered as the R-square in linear regression and it does indicate the share of variance of the dependent variable explained by the independent variables [38]. When comparing Cox and Snell’s R-Square whose maximum value can be less than 1.0, the Nagelkerke modification can vary from 0 to 1 and be accepted as more reliable measure for investigating the relationship between the variables [35].

RESULTS

To achieve purpose of the study, LRA was carried out to predict school’s policy encouraging participation in decision making using eight dimensions of organizational reputation entitled *use of corporate entities, innovativeness, management quality, personnel’s human relations ability, personnel’s*

corporate performance ability, financial austerity, product and service quality, social responsibility as predictors. Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4 displayed that test of the final model against a constant solely model was statistically significant, indicating that the predictors as a set reliably distinguished between participated and non-participated cases in decision making process (chi square = 62,253, p < .000 with df = 8).

Table 5 displayed results of the final logistic regression model for predicting the school’s policy encouraging participation in decision making. Nagelkerke’s R² value of 0,38 indicated a moderately strong relationship between prediction and grouping. Prediction success overall was 82,2% (94,5% for participated and 42% for non-participated).

The regression equation can be given as follows:

$$\ln(ODDS) = -3,055 - ,003 \text{ Use of Corporate Entities} - ,002 \text{ Innovativeness} + ,246 \text{ Management Quality} + ,018 \text{ Personnel's Human Relations Ability} + ,075 \text{ Personnel's Corporate Performance Ability} - ,011 \text{ Financial Austerity} + 0,087 \text{ Product and Service Quality} - 0,150 \text{ Social Responsibility}$$

The Wald criterion demonstrated that only *management quality* dimension of organizational reputation made a significant contribution to prediction (p = .009). The other dimensions were not a significant predictor. Exp(B) value indicates that when *management quality* dimension of organizational reputation size is raised by one unit (one person) the odds ratio is 1,3 times as large and therefore teachers at the school are 1,3 more times likely to be participated in decision making process.

Table-5: Final logistic regression model predicting the school’s policy encouraging participation in decision making

Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	d f	p	Exp(B) =odds ratio
Use of Corporate Entities	-,003	,042	,005	1	,945	,997
Innovativeness	-,002	,058	,001	1	,973	,998
Management Quality	,246	,095	6,775	1	,009	1,279
Personnel’s Human Relations Ability	,018	,071	,067	1	,795	1,019
Personnel’s Corporate Performance Ability	,075	,071	1,125	1	,289	1,078
Financial Austerity	-,011	,037	,089	1	,765	,989
Product and Service Quality	,087	,073	1,400	1	,237	1,091
Social Responsibility	-,150	,078	3,652	1	,056	,861
Constant	-3,055	,890	11,768	1	,001	,047
<i>Nagelkerke’s R²=0,38</i>						

DISCUSSION

The purpose of present study is to investigate the effect of organizational reputation on school’s policy encouraging participation in decision making. The results of study revealed a moderately strong relationship between organizational reputation and school’s policy encouraging participation of employees

in decision making process at school. Nagelkerke’s r square showed that eight dimensions of organizational reputation together accounted for approximately 38 percent of the variance of school’s policy encouraging participation in decision making.

With this study, it is understood that organizational reputation has been one of considerable predictors of school's policy encouraging participation in decision making in addition to following: applicant perceptions of job and organizational attributes and recruiter behaviors [10]; employee engagement [11]; reducing subsequent errors and contributing to learning research [12]; policy-maker's effectiveness [13]; productivity [14]; relationship between satisfaction and loyalty [15]; organizational citizenship behaviors [16] etc.

Nowadays effective management entails positive school climate and a healthy environment on the basis of rational decisions at schools [9]. Of the independent variables, the Wald criterion demonstrated that only *management quality* dimension of organizational reputation made a significant contribution to prediction of school's policy encouraging participation in decision making. when *management quality* dimension of organizational reputation size is raised by one unit the odds ratio is 1,3 times as large and therefore employees at the school are 1,3 more times likely to be encouraged participation in decision making process. *Management quality* in the present study refers administrators showing effective leadership through a clear and shared vision, motivating employees, creating outstanding identity enhanced values for stakeholders, being role-model with their behaviors and performance for other administrators and employees, paying attention to and developing creativity of employees, endeavoring for performance in inter-institutional competition, and carrying out successively developing both internal and external stakeholders. Consequently, improving these mentions seems important for developing school's policy encouraging participation in decision making.

Limitations

In this study the dependent variable *school's policy encouraging participation of employees in decision making process* was measured using single-item made yes/no category. Multiple-item measures can be much stronger than single-item measures [2]. However, endeavor was given to increase the reliability of results using logistic regression analysis as a strong not requiring that the independent variables be interval, normally distributed, linearly related, or equal variance within each group [35]. Also the data used in this study were limited with regard to views of master's student teachers and school administrators.

CONCLUSION

The results of study revealed a moderately strong relationship between organizational reputation and school's policy encouraging participation of employees in decision making process at school. Nagelkerke's r^2 showed that eight dimensions of organizational reputation together accounted for

approximately 38 percent of the variance of school's policy encouraging participation in decision making.

Of the independent variables, the Wald criterion demonstrated that only *management quality* dimension of organizational reputation made a significant contribution to prediction of school's policy encouraging participation in decision making. When *management quality* dimension of organizational reputation size is raised by one unit the odds ratio is 1,3 times as large and therefore employees at the school are 1,3 more times likely to be encouraged participation in decision making process.

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