



# The Relationship Between Participation in Administrative Decisions and School Effectiveness: An Empirical Study on Teachers

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to reveal the effect of teachers' participation in administrative decisions and their willingness to participate in decisions on school effectiveness. Predictive survey model was used in the study. In the 2021-2022 academic year, 283 teachers working in İstanbul's Sultanbeyli, Pendik, Maltepe and Kartal districts formed the research sample. Simple random sampling was used when selecting the research sample. According to the results of the research, teachers' willingness to participate in administrative decisions is significantly higher than their level of participation in decisions. In addition, there is a positive correlation between the level of participation in decisions, willingness to participate and school effectiveness. In addition, the level of participation in decisions and willingness to participate partially predicts school effectiveness. As teachers' level of participation and willingness to participate in decisions increases, school effectiveness increases.

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School effectiveness, decision participation, decision making, participatory management.

## 1. Introduction

The realization of an action depends on decision making in organizations. Decision-making is the heart of management (Mintzberg, 2014). Individuals take responsibility for participating in the decision-making process by considering their situation in the organization. It is assumed that participation in the decision-making process is important to make the decisions meaningful to the individual. It is believed that individuals take more responsibility for their actions by participating in the decision-making process (Yavuz, 2004). Therefore, decision-making participation can be defined as "the mental and emotional willingness of individuals in an environment that encourages them to contribute to group goals and share responsibility" (Davis, 1982). According to Başaran (2000), decision involvement is when the employee takes an active role in management decision-making and solving problems that affect them and acts as a problem solver in organizational teams as required by total quality management.

Participation in decision making creates important opportunities for the development of an individual's self-esteem. Thus, it promotes the achievement of organizational goals and contributes to the increase of intra-organizational communication and interaction (Kuruoğlu & Hacıhafızoğlu, 2011). Organizational communication is the most important means of participation in decision making in organizations. According to Bursalioğlu (1998), the more important the decision is to the management, the more important communication is to the organization. Creating communication and interaction environments in organizations can make teachers feel valued by ensuring their participation in management processes. The job satisfaction of teachers who feel valued in the institution also increases. Thus, the participation of teachers in the decision-making process will affect their job satisfaction and make them more productive. This situation may be effective in not transforming schools into effective schools.

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Moreover, since teachers are at the center of education, they can correctly identify the problems, expectations and negative developments in the educational processes. By increasing the performance of teachers who feel valuable and identify with the institution, the quality of education can also increase (Takmaz & Yavuz, 2010). For this reason, it is considered that in an organization that has adopted a participative management approach, educational administrators should effectively create both decision-making and communication networks. Employee participation in the decision-making process clearly and decisively increases productivity. Therefore, the following generalizations can be made regarding teacher participation in the decision-making process in educational organizations (Hoy & Miskel, 2010): The opportunity to contribute to policy making is an important factor in teacher morale and enthusiasm for school.

- Participation in the decision-making process greatly increases teachers' individual job satisfaction.
- Teachers are more likely to prefer principals who involve them in the decision-making process.
- The outcome fails when the quality of decisions is low and not accepted by subordinates.
- Teachers do not want to participate in every decision making and do not have such expectations. Too much involvement with little participation in the decision making process can be detrimental.

The functions and roles of teachers and administrators in the decision-making process should change depending on the problem. Looking at the studies conducted in recent years on leadership, it is better understood that leadership should be viewed from the perspective of equity and inclusion (Riehl, 2000; Szeto, 2020). To build a democratic culture in schools, a culture based on social justice and equal participation should be adopted (Szeto, 2020). reduce cultural and material inequalities. However, it should be understood that the purpose in the decision-making process is not well understood and explained, lack of information, limited time, unexpected results, unprofessional behavior and insufficient recognition of the environmental organization, and failure to establish the right relationships with the environment affect the quality of the decision (Koylu & Gunduz, 2019). For this, managers should try to maintain an education that encourages diversity, equality, active participation and critical thinking (Winton, 2010). Because critical thinking is the ability of managers to identify, analyze and evaluate the necessary information for an action and decision (Özgenel, 2018). Managers can ensure that the decisions they make are effective and efficient by respecting the views of all stakeholders, accepting them as interlocutors and enabling them to be in discussion environments. Education is an investment that is very expensive and where the cost of abandonment is very high. For this reason, efforts to make schools effective are at the forefront of educational plans and programs in all nations of the world (Çelikten, 2001). For schools to be effective, the participation of teachers and other stakeholders in the decisions and practices to be made in the school is also important. If a participatory and democratic culture of sharing is not established in schools, teachers will not be able to participate in decision-making. It should not be forgotten that the participation of the concerned circles in decision making in open systems like school increases efficiency.

Therefore, this research will try to determine how effective the participation of teachers in administrative decisions is in increasing the effectiveness of educational organizations and possible problems that can be experienced in organizations where there is no participatory management approach. In this direction, the aim of the research is to reveal to what extent the participation levels and willingness of teachers working in educational organizations affect school effectiveness. In addition to this main purpose, the research sought answers to the following questions:

- 1) What is the level of participation and willingness of teachers working in schools in administrative decisions?
- 2) Is there a significant difference between teachers' participation in administrative decisions and their willingness to participate?
- 3) Is there a gender difference in the level of participation and willingness of teachers in administrative decisions?
- 4) Do teachers' participation levels and willingness in administrative decisions significantly predict the effectiveness of the school?

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Research Model

In the study, the predictive survey model was used to reveal whether teachers' participation in administrative decisions and their willingness to predict the effectiveness of the school. The predictive model is used to determine the variables that are effective in the emergence of this result by predicting the possible consequences that may arise in the future (Creswell, 2012).

### 2.2. Research Sample

The research sample composed of of 283 teachers working in 28 primary and secondary schools in the Sultanbeyli, Pendik, Maltepe and Kartal district of Istanbul in the 2021-2022 academic year. The research sample composed of of 283 teachers working in 28 primary and secondary schools in the Sultanbeyli, Pendik, Maltepe and Kartal district of Istanbul in the 2021-2022 academic year. Of the participants, 175 were women and 108 were man. When we look at the distribution of the participants according to their percentages, it is seen that 61.8% are women and 38.2% are men. Of the 283 teachers who participated in the research, 172 were from primary school teaching, 28 were from physical science, 59 were from social sciences and 24 were from applied fields. When we look at the percentages, 61% are primary school teachers, 10% are from physical science, 21% are from the field of social sciences, and 8% are teachers from applied fields. Of the 283 teachers participating in the research, 113 has 1-5 years, 76 6-10 years, 50 11-15 years, 22 16-20 years and 22 have 21 years or more seniority years. When we look at their percentage ratios, 40% consist of teachers with seniority of 1-5 years, 27% of 6-10 years, 18% of 11-15 years, 8% of 16-20 years, 7% of 21 years and older.

### 2.3. Data Collection Tools and Analysis Procedures

Three data collection tools were used in this study. The first of the data collection tools is the Personal Information Form. In this form, information about the gender, professional seniority, and branches was collected. The second data collection tool was obtained with the "Decision participation scale" developed by Köklü (1994) to measure teachers' level of participation ve importance of participation in decision making. In the third, the 8-item School Effectiveness Index, developed by Wayne K. Hoy (2009). The eight-item index evaluates the effectiveness of a school in terms of product quantity and quality, efficiency, adaptability and flexibility. Many different studies and applications have been made regarding the validity and reliability of the scale (Mott, 1972; Miskel, et al., 1979; Hoy & Feguson, 1985; Hoy & Miskel, 1991, Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991). The scale was adapted to Turkish by Şenel (2015).

The decision participation scale consists of 17 administrative decision items. In order to determine the level of participation of the teachers in the decisions and how important they find the decisions taken, "How much do you agree with the decisions of the principals on this issue and how important do you find?" was asked. The rating of the average scores (between 1 and 4), obtained following the four-point rating scale used in the survey , was divided into four equal parts and the scores obtained were classified as follows:

**Table 1.** Scale Options and Score Ranges

<i>Level of Participation</i>	<i>Willigness to Participate</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Score Range</i>
None	Not at all important	1	1.00-1.75
A little	Slightly important	2	1.76-2.50
Usually	Quite important	3	2.51-3.25
Completely	Very important	4	3.26-4.00

The rating of the average scores (between 1 and 5), obtained following the five-point rating scale used in the School Effectiveness Index, was divided into five equal parts and the scores obtained were classified as follows:

**Table 2.** *Scale Options and Score Ranges*

<i>Level of Participation</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Score Range</i>
Never Agree	1	1.00-1.80
I do not agree	2	1.81-2.60
I partially agree	3	2.61-3.40
Mostly Agree	4	3.41-4.20
I totally agree	5	4.21-5.00

In the scales, the interval width between 1 and 5 was determined as 0.8. For the school effectiveness index scale, the propositions of "I Strongly Disagree," "Disagree", "Partly Agree", "Mostly Agree" and "Completely Agree" were used.

Before moving on to statistical analysis in the research, demographic variables were grouped and then the measurement tool applied to teacher candidates was scored with the methods described above. For the normality assumption of the data obtained, the skewness, kurtosis and reliability values of the scales were examined and shown in Table 3.

**Table3.** *Kurtosis and Skewness and Cronbach Alpha Values of the Scales*

	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha a</i>
Level of Participation	-.053	-.794	.933
Willigness to Participate	-.525	.154	.886
School Effectiveness	-.400	.180	.860

As seen in Table 3, the skewness (-.053, -.525, -.400) and kurtosis (-.797, .154, .180) values of the scales are within the limits of  $\pm 1$ . Therefore, it can be said that the data show a normal distribution. Since the reliability coefficients of the scales were found to be .70 and above, it was understood that they were reliable and useful.

In the analysis of the data obtained from the variables, independent groups t-test, correlation and regression analyzes were performed. As a result of the multiple regression analysis, Cohen's (2013)  $f^2$  criterion was used to calculate the effect size (" $.02 \leq f^2 < .13$  low effect;  $.13 \leq f^2 < .26$  medium effect;  $.26 \leq f^2$  large effect" (Cohen, 2013)).

### 3. Findings

In comparing teachers' views on the level of participation in administrative decisions in their schools and their views on the importance of participating in administrative decisions, the results of the t-test for the corresponding measures of difference between them are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** *The Results of the Related Group t-Test Performed to Determine Whether There is a Difference Between the Level of Participation Scale and the Importance of Participation scale*

<i>Groups</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>Sh</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>p</i>
Level of Participation	2,59	283	,73	,043	-14,25	282	,000
Willigness to Participate	3,15	283	,51	,030			

As shown in Table 4, the difference between the arithmetic means was found to be significant by the t-test for the compared groups. This test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between the means of the level of involvement and the importance of involvement of the experimental groups ( $t = -14.25$ ,  $p < .001$ ). According to teachers' opinions, the importance of participating in administrative decisions ( $X = 3.15$ ) is higher than participation in administrative decisions ( $x = 2.59$ ). Based on these findings, teachers think that it is very important to participate in administrative decisions. This is important to justify the participatory management approach. It can be said that citizens want to have a say in the institution in which they work. The following table shows the difference between the level of participation of teachers in the administrative decisions in their schools when compared by gender variable.

**Table 5.** *The Results of the Independent Group T-Test to Determine Whether the Level of Participation Scale Scores Differ According to the Gender Variable*

Scores	Groups	N	M	sd	Sh	t	sd	p
Level of Participation	Female	175	2,58	,713	,054	-,455	281	,65
	Male	108	2,62	,758	,073			

According to table 5, the difference between the arithmetic means of the groups was not found to be significant due to the independent group t-test to determine whether the scores of the participation level differ according to the gender variable ( $t = -,455$ ;  $p > .05$ ). The fact that the average scores of men and women are close to each other can be taken as an indicator of their equality in education.

The table of the difference between them is given below by comparing the teachers' opinions on how important they consider participating in the administrative decisions taken in their schools according to the gender variable.

**Table 6.** *The Results of the Independent Group T-Test to Determine Whether Participation Significance Scale Scores Differ According to Gender Variable*

Scores	Groups	N	M	sd	Sh	t	sd	p
Willingness to participate	Female	175	3,19	,482	,036	1,581	281	,11
	Male	108	3,09	,555	,053			

According to Table 6, the difference between the arithmetic means of the groups was not found to be significant as a result of the independent group t-test to determine whether the scores of willingness to participate differ according to the gender variable ( $t = 1,58$ ;  $p > .05$ ). Based on these findings, it can be said that women are slightly more willing to participate in managerial decisions than men. The fact that women have a say in the administration may mean that they wish to create a more democratic environment in the institution.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation values, which were made to determine the relationships between the level of participation in decisions, willingness to participate and school effectiveness, are given in Table 7.

**Table 7.** *Relationship Between Variables*

	Mean	sd	1	2	3
1-Level of Participation	2,59	,729	1		
2-Willingness to Participate	3,15	,513	.475**	1	
3-School Effectiveness	3,91	,583	.241**	.166**	1

N=392; \*\*p<.01

According to Table 7, between teachers' level of participation and willingness ( $R = .475$ ;  $p < .01$ ), level of participation and school effectiveness ( $R = .241$ ;  $p < .01$ ), and willingness to participate and school effectiveness ( $R = .166$ ;  $p < .01$ ) a positive relationship was determined. The results of the simple regression analysis regarding the prediction of school effectiveness by the level of participation of teachers in administrative decisions are given in Table 8.

**Table 8.** *Level of Teachers' Participation Levels to Predict School Effectiveness*

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	B	Std. Error	( $\beta$ )	t	p
Constant	School Effectiveness	3,417	,125		27,407	,000
Level of Participation		,193	,046	,241	4,158	,000

N=283; R=.241; R<sup>2</sup>=.058; F=17.289; p<.000

According to Table 8, it is seen that teachers' level of participation in decisions significantly predicts school effectiveness ( $p < .01$ ). Teachers' participation levels explain 5.8% of the total variance in school effectiveness ( $R = .241$ ;  $R^2 = .058$ ;  $F = 17.289$ ;  $p < .000$ ). According to the B coefficient, a one-unit increase in teachers' level of participation in decisions provides an increase of .193 units in school effectiveness. In other words, the level of participation of teachers in administrative decisions positively affects school effectiveness. As teachers participate in administrative decisions, the effectiveness of schools increases.

The simple regression analysis results regarding the teachers' willingness to participate in administrative decisions and the predictors of school effectiveness are given in Table 9.

**Table 9.** *Teachers' Willingness to Participate in Decisions that Predict School Effectiveness*

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Dependent Variable</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>(β)</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	School Effectiveness	3,319	,214		15,524	,000
Willingness to Participate		,189	,067	,166	2,830	,005

N=283; R=.166; R<sup>2</sup>=.028; F=8.008; p<.005

According to Table 9, it is seen that teachers' willingness to participate in decisions significantly predicts school effectiveness ( $p < .01$ ). Teachers' willingness to participate explain 2.8% of the total variance in school effectiveness ( $R = .166$ ;  $R^2 = .028$ ;  $F = 8.008$ ;  $p < .01$ ). According to the B coefficient, a one-unit increase in teachers' willingness to participate in decisions provides an increase of .166 units in school effectiveness. In other words, the willingness to participate of teachers in administrative decisions positively affects school effectiveness. As teachers' willingness to participate in administrative decisions increases, the effectiveness of schools increases.

The results of the multiple regression analysis regarding the predictability of the teachers' level of participation in the decisions and their willingness to participate, together with the school effectiveness, are given in Table 10.

**Table 10.** *Level of Participation in Decisions and Willingness to Participate Variables to Predict School Effectiveness*

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Dependent Variable</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>(β)</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	School Effectiveness	3,242	,212		15,306	,000
Level of Participation		,167	,053	,209	3,173	,002
Willingness to Participate		,077	,075	,067	1,022	,308

N=283; R=.248; R<sup>2</sup>=.061; F=9.168; p<.000

According to Table 10, it is seen that teachers' level of participation in decisions and their willingness to participate significantly predict school effectiveness ( $p < .01$ ). Teachers' participation levels and their willingness to participate together explain 6.1% of the total variance in school effectiveness ( $R = .248$ ;  $R^2 = .061$ ;  $F = 9.168$ ;  $p < .000$ ). According to the B coefficient, a one-unit increase in teachers' participation in decisions causes an increase of .167 units in school effectiveness; A one-unit increase in their willingness to participate provides a .077-unit increase in school effectiveness. In other words, teachers' level of participation in decisions and their willingness to participate positively affect school effectiveness. As teachers' participation levels and willingness to participate increase, school effectiveness also increases.

#### 4. Conclusion and Discussion

The effectiveness of decision-making processes in organizations depends on rational decision-making. People try to make rational decisions to achieve a specific goal (Hoy & Miskel, 2010). The success of schools is also largely linked to effective decisions (Lunenburg, 2010). Choosing the most appropriate way to solve a problem is decision-making (Can, 2005). To make the right decision, taking the opinions of the stakeholders corresponds to a very critical place. Because there is little doubt that decisions made in groups are effective (Hoy & Miskel, 2010). Teachers are the key stakeholders in the school and should be included in decision-making groups. Involving teachers in the decision-making process will increase the quality, creativity, acceptance, clarity, reasoning, and accuracy of the decisions made (Schoenfeld, 2011). Teachers' participation in administration will enable them to participate actively in all administrative processes and express their views and influence decision-makers (Chen & Tjosvold, 2006, Somach, 2010, Üzümlü & Kurt, 2019). Today, modern administration approaches have begun to adopt a participatory administration approach to make the manager-centred perspective and the right decisions more applicable (Turan, 2020). However, in this study, teachers' level of participation in the administrative decisions taken at their schools was found to be 2.59 and at the level of "Some". Nevertheless, teachers also rated participation in administrative decisions as "quite important" with 3.15. According to these results, teachers think that they do not participate enough in administrative decisions, but that participation in administration is very important. Thus, it may be possible for organizations to transform into democratic institutions. In democratic environments, it is ensured that people act in an organized manner and participate in administrative decisions. People participate in decisions on issues that affect their future due to participation (Çöl, 2004). Thus, it is possible to adopt the decisions made and make them more applicable (Drucker, 1992). In this way, effective implementation and

adoption of the decisions taken will increase efficiency in education and turn into more effective organizations.

A significant difference was found between teachers' level of participation in administrative decisions and their views on the importance of participation in administrative decisions. There are several factors for teachers' low level of participation in decision making. Some negative attitudes and behaviors of principals may be effective here. Leaders should avoid conflict in the decision-making process and see conflict as a means of generating knowledge. The school manager who manages the conflict should deal with the people not according to their seniority but their areas of expertise (Özdemir & Cemaloğlu, 2000). In this way, there is an increase in the level of organizational learning. Thanks to the participation in the decision, organizational learning in organizations are facilitated by the increase in communication and interaction (Chiva & Alegre, 2009; Karabağ-Köse & Güçlü, 2015). In learning-based organizations, since a climate based on trust and cooperation is created, employees express themselves more easily, increasing the culture of sharing (Baydar & Çetin, 2021). Thus, employees can improve their experience by communicating with internal and external stakeholders and ensuring an innovation-oriented system.

It was determined that the level of participation of teachers in decision processes and their willingness to participate significantly predicted school effectiveness. In other words, as the level of participation and willingness of teachers increases, school effectiveness also increases. For this reason, it is necessary to increase the level of participation and willingness of teachers in decisions. With the participation of teachers in administrative decisions, the adoption and applicability of the decisions will increase. In this way, teachers will be able to make their personal development processes continuous and increase their performance in order to contribute to the education process. Also, since teachers are affected by the administrative decisions taken, participation in decision-making processes should be seen as a right. It is critical for the development and democratic organization of democracy and the building of society. For this reason, it should be seen as a requirement of democracy that those affected have a say (right of voice) in the decisions made (Özdemir & Cemaloğlu). Democratic environment not only increases organizational effectiveness and productivity but also helps employees to gain motivation (Çetin, 2009; Gümüş, 2011). Organizational commitment of employees who fulfill their high-sensitivity responsibilities will also increase (Balay, 2000). The commitment of employees who adopt the organisation's ideas and internalize the organization is also high (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Employees with high commitment do not give up to continue their tasks with determination, even if conditions are difficult, and they try to meet the goals of the school (Turan, 2015). Individuals are able to use their potential best and most effectively because of their psychological well-being (Ryff & Singer, 2006). In this way, the quality of education will increase and educational organizations will be able to become effective schools. By enabling teachers to participate in the decision-making process, school management can increase the quality of the decisions made, strengthen the school and environment relations, increase teachers' occupational satisfaction and increase their motivation levels (Grape & Wolf, 2019; Hoy & Miskel, 2010; Schully, Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1995; Somech, 2002; Wadesango, 2012). School managers who adopt a democratic and participatory management approach can create exceptional opportunities in disadvantaged schools and discover innovations for the continuous development of the school (Szeto, 2020). With a participative management approach, managers can involve teachers in the process and ensure their professional satisfaction. For this, the existing decision-making mechanisms of the Ministries of National Education can be reviewed, and the decision-making authority can be mostly freed from centralization and the provincial organizations can take more initiative in decision-making. In this way, provincial and district national education directorates can stretch their education activities according to regional differences and shape their budget and human resources planning according to their regional characteristics. However, it may be possible to configure a system that adopts the culture of democracy and strengthens a participatory management approach. In an environment where a participatory and developmental democratic perspective is adopted in education, the participation of teachers in decisions can be ensured at a higher level and a more fair and egalitarian education environment can be created consistently by applying this system.

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