Diversity leadership skills of school administrators: A scale development study

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The aim of this study is to develop a valid and reliable instrument to determine the level of school administrators' diversity leadership based on teachers' perceptions. For this purpose, an item pool was created which includes 68 questions based on the literature, and data were obtained from 343 teachers. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was applied first, and later confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied for the construct validity. According to EFA results, a scale composed of three sub-dimensions (diversity inclusion and integration, equity, respect for diversity) that explained 67.3% of total variance and 37 items was achieved. Item-total correlations ranged from 0.488 to 0.771, and factor loadings ranged from 0.540 to 0.748. CFA results confirmed a three-factored construct (χ^2/df=2.36, RMSEA=0.063, SRMR=0.036, NNFI=0.99, CFI=0.99, GFI=0.81). For the reliability analysis Cronbach's alpha and Spearman Brown coefficients were used. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was found as 0.98, and Spearman Brown formula split-half reliability coefficient was found as 0.96 for the entire scale. The psychometric properties of the Diversity Leadership Scale (DLS) showed that the scale is a valid and reliable instrument.

Introduction

Today's organisations contain employees with diverse demographic and socio-cultural characteristics. Being able to turn differences between employees into an advantage for an organisation has become an important issue for managers. Although the concepts of managing diversity and leading diversity are related, it can be said that these two concepts are different. *Management* is defined as using the sources and facilities effectively to achieve organisational goals (Erdogan, 2010), whilst *leadership* is a process of influencing, guiding, and motivating group members towards common goals (Thomas, 2004). According to Surgevil (2010), diversity management handles diversities from a managerial perspective, and deals with the management style of organisations and administrators. Hopkins and Hopkins (1999) stated that diversity is not a problem that should be managed. On the contrary, diversity is an opportunity for exploring creativities of individuals who have cultural, racial, and ethnic differences via diversity leadership. Hence, it can be stated that diversity leadership is a broader concept that includes diversity management.

Diversity leadership is defined as "a process of acting respectfully, sensitively, and tolerably against the diversity of individuals with many differences such as gender, language, religion, race, ethnic origin, personality and political view by accepting them as they are, making use of such diversity of individuals in line with the objectives of the organization and directing such people in line with common objectives by holding them together in harmony, thanks to an impartial and fair management mentality" (Polat & Olcum, 2016, p. 72).

Individuals with widening differences in gender, age, and ethnicity have participated in the workforce under the impact of globalisation and economic reasons in recent decades. The members of organisations who come together to achieve organisational goals such as performance, profitability, productivity, and effectiveness want to adapt to their organisations and colleagues, and also, they want to represent their differences (gender, age, disability, etc.) liberally, and hope to respect these differences in the workforce (Survegil & Budak, 2008). When differences are handled at an organisational level, employee differences may help the emergence of new and creative ideas in the direction of different perspectives and opinions. Thus, this may help the productivity of the organisation. Hence, it can be asserted that when individual and socio-cultural differences such as age, gender, religious, language, race, ethnicity, and level of education are managed effectively, this may be a facilitating effect for achieving organisational goals. Showers (2016) stated that organisations which have differences amongst employees perform 35% better than similar but more homogenous organisations. However, employees' job satisfaction and organisational commitment levels may decrease, and social divisions and conflicts may arise when differences are not managed correctly (Hostager & Meuse, 2008).

Dotlich, Cairo and Rhinesmith (2009) stated that leaders' abilities may be inadequate in some conditions, regardless of how empathic and qualified they may be, and asserted that it is necessary to benefit from different ideas and perspectives of stakeholders to understand and analyse these conditions and develop new strategies. This will help diversity of abilities to have positive impacts on the effectiveness of actions, and illustrate that diversity of the group is more important than mastery when finding creative solutions (Lim, 2015). Thus, it can be asserted that diversity in the workforce is an important element for organisations.

The purpose of diversity leadership is to create a tolerance based climate and mutual understanding between individuals who have demographic, cultural and social differences within the organisation, and increase employee motivation and performance by building a common culture. Educational organisations incorporate much diversity both for teachers and students. Therefore, school administrators' diversity leadership skills (e.g. approach to diversity, justice, equity, empathy, conflict management) are needed to increase harmony and cooperation among teachers. These skills are vital for achieving a school's objectives. Schools aim to prepare students for life towards their interests and abilities, and contribute to their personal development. One of the most important factors in achieving school aims is teacher effectiveness. In this context, increasing teacher motivation and performance by building a positive school climate and culture is quite important. Additionally, with effective guidance, diversity amongst teachers will contribute an extra benefit to students' development. Therefore, it is thought that school administrators' leading of diversity in educational organisations will contribute to school effectiveness. Effective diversity leadership affects communication, performance, productivity (Jehn, Northcraft & Neale, 1999), organisational success (Winston, 2001) and organisational commitment (Jauhari and Singh, 2013) positively. Also, it decreases job absenteeism, job turnover and conflicts (Dreachslin, Weech-Maldonado & Dansky, 2004).

Effective diversity leaders should recognise themselves first, their followers next, be aware of cultural and social differences, raise awareness of this issue, support diversity to avoid static organisational structure, and support the emergence of new diversity leaders in the organisation (Aguirre & Martinez, 2006). Hopkins and Hopkins (1999) listed the characteristics of effective diversity leaders as sensitivity, objectivity, mediation, tolerance, sincerity, instructiveness, care, effective communication, and optimism. Polat and Olcum (2016, p. 72) listed necessary characteristics of an effective diversity leader as justice (equity, objectivity, non-discrimination), ability to manage diversity (respecting differences, accepting differences, awareness and utilisation of differences) integration, mediation, empathy, tolerance, and keeping values. Consequently, it can be said that necessary characteristics of an effective diversity leader may be classified in three main headings, *diversity inclusion and integration, equity,* and *respect for diversity.* The relation between these concepts and diversity leadership is discussed below.

Diversity inclusion and integration

Diversity inclusion aims for both protecting the individual's attributes, and integrating her/him with the organisation by involving her/him in organisational functions and decision-making processes. Inclusion activities play important roles for integrating employees' thinking styles, occupational backgrounds, and skill sets by training, fostering, and promoting (Lim, 2015). Diversity inclusion focuses on employee development, and integrating them with organisational system and processes. Building an inclusive environment that welcomes and develops everyone's contributions is quite important for diversity leaders who aim to develop diversities (Aguirre & Martinez, 2006). Organisations that encourage differences should be aware that each employee has different perspectives. Employees of these organisations should be mentored for developing new strategies, defining their roles in the organisation, and understanding the importance of the diversity for the organisation (Chin, Desormeaux & Sawyer, 2016). If the differences of individuals are welcomed, appreciated, and supported by giving equal opportunity to all, differences can benefit to the organisation (Anderson, 2014). Acts such as building a fair climate that values diversities, giving equal opportunities to individuals, supporting diversities, and meeting the individuals' needs such as self-esteem and belonging can help integration. Diversity inclusion provides benefits for positive relationships among employees, high levels of job satisfaction, high performance, organisational citizenship behaviour, organisational commitment, and creativity (Shore et al., 2010).

Factors like increasing individual awareness, the need for making organisational changes to provide social justice, lack of traditional organisational development practices for supporting and developing workplace diversity, national and international demographic changes, and positive relationships between high morale, productivity and diversity require that organisations should change towards improved integration of differences (Doyle & George, 2008). Integration refers to taking advantage of different individuals' perspectives in organisational decision-making processes. Integration behaviour of the leader ensures the sharing of individuals' information, and increases their motivation by supporting their involving in decision-making and managerial processes. There is a positive relationship

between diversity integration and individual performance (Van de Ven, Rogers, Bechara & Sun, 2008). Consequently, it can be asserted that acts such as accepting and supporting differences, benefiting from diversity, and building a diversity-friendly climate affects organisational commitment, organisational citizenship behaviour, and organisational performance positively by increasing employee motivation.

Equity

An effective leader encourages equity and equality in the organisation (Lim, 2015). Equity refers to not basing preferences for someone over others upon prejudices and stereotypes. Prejudices may cause unfair evaluations and favouritism. Followers' justice perceptions and trust towards leaders decreases if that occurs (Glanz, 2002). If diversities are desired to be used for organisational benefit, leaders should have an objective attitude and not have any prejudices towards followers. Employees have negative emotions when they feel they are not treated fairly (Hopkins and Hopkins, 1999). The aim of diversity leadership is to change beliefs, policies and practices that shape the organisation towards inclusion of diversities and building objectivity (Owen, 2009). Some of the competencies of administrators in needed to achieve equity in an organisation are to create an organisational capacity that can meet the diverse and changing needs of society, can lead the changes that will decrease inequality, can act in the context of human rights, and can provide an effective equality in the improvement and planning activities (Ali, Burns & Grant, 2013). In this context, acts such as providing equal opportunities for individuals, not discriminating among individuals, and being transparent at employee evaluation and distributing sources, express the equity behaviour of a diversity leader. Leaders who do not discriminate for reasons of differences in race, gender, language, religion, and ideology will benefit the creation of a common culture and a positive climate by avoiding inner and outer groups developing in the organization. Otherwise, sub-cultures may arise in an organisation, and conflicts among these may hinder the achieving of organisational goals.

Respect for diversity

Some of the qualities that help sustain an organisation's existence in a changing world are being sensitive and respecting employee differences, and valuing differences highly (Memduhoglu, 2011). Respect for diversity is respecting individuals based on the idea that we are all human beings, handling differences as a natural process. Respect for diversity is also respecting an individual's autonomy. Respect for each individual's differences will allow them to be more autonomous in their behaviours and attitudes (Guven, 2012). Respect is to make people feel valued and being sensitive to their needs. Respect strengthens the relationships, creates positive connections, builds peace among people, and teaches people to respect each other's rights, and this facilitates people living in harmony with one another (Capowski, 1996). Respect for diversity requires tolerance and understanding of differences (Saylık, Polatcan & Saylık, 2016), and empathy for decreasing prejudices (Keenan, Connolly & Stevenson, 2016). As a result, it can be asserted that tolerance, accepting of differences, avoidance of prejudices and stereotypes, sensitivity, and empathy are the foundations of respect for diversity.

As researchers lack good data collection tools for assessing diversity leadership skills, the aim of the study is to develop a valid and reliable scale for use in school contexts, examining principals' diversity leadership levels from the perspectives of teachers. This scale may both contribute to the diversity literature and be used for studies focusing on the professional development of school principals.

Method

Participants

The data were gathered during the 2015-2016 spring term from 343 teachers in the primary and lower-secondary schools of Kocaeli province in Turkey. The scale form was delivered to a total of 500 teachers, and 383 of these returned. Due to coding errors, 40 of returned scales were not evaluated and the data gathered from 343 teachers were analysed. Accoring to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), the number of participants should be five times more than the number of items in the scale. Sample size was evaluated, and researchers decided the sample size was adequate. The participants' teaching experience were between one and 37 years, their ages were between 22 and 59, and the gender division was 157 male and 186 female teachers. The sector division was 95 teachers at primary schools and 248 at lower-secondary schools.

Instrument

Diversity leadership scale (DLS)
This scale was developed for measuring school principals' attitudes towards diversities according to teacher perceptions. In creating the item pool, the researchers drew from the literature and the answers of teachers to open-ended questions in Polat and Olcum's (2016) study on the characteristics of diversity leadership according to teachers' perceptions. Finally, an item pool that consisted of 68 items was gathered. Items were scaled as five points in Likert style*,* namely 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=partially agree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. Items 7, 8, 24, 32, 33, 34, 41, 50, and 57 were reverse-coded and reverse-scored. A draft form was examined by three educational sciences specialists. Three items were eliminated, and five items were corrected based on the suggestions of specialists. Consequently, a pilot form comprising 65 items was achieved.

Data analysis
SPSS 15 was used for reliability analysis; *LISREL 8.7* was used for validity analysis. Reliability was tested via Cronbach's alpha and Spearman coefficients; the construct validity of DLS was tested via EFA and CFA. EFA was conducted by using varimax and principal component analysis; χ^2 / *sd*, RMSEA, GFI, NNFI, CFI, and SRMR fit indices were used for evaluation of CFA model.

Results

Validity of DLS

Corrected item-total correlations were calculated before analysing the construct validity of DLS, and corrected item-total correlations of items 7, 8, and 24 were found less than .20. It was decided to eliminate these items, since these items' corrected item-total correlations were below .20 (Buyukozturk, 2007). Therefore, analyses were conducted for 62 items.

Compatibility of data set to factor analysis was tested via Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The value obtained through KMO test was 0.97. Chi-square was calculated as χ^2 (11770.22, $p < 0.01$) as a result of Bartlett's test of sphericity. Having a significant result from Bartlett's test reveals that the data creates a multivariate normal distribution. These results can be interpreted as that data set is appropriate for factor analysis (Cokluk, Sekercioglu & Buyukozturk, 2012).

Item factor loadings of 26 items were under .50 and/or overlapped more than one item following EFAs. 25 items whose item factor loadings were under .50 and/or overlapped more than one dimension were eliminated from the scale. Although item 21 overlapped for two dimensions, researchers decided not to eliminate this item, since item 21 is quite important for the content validity of the scale. EFA was conducted for 37 items again. Analysis results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that all items are gathered around three dimensions whose eigenvalue is higher than one and items do not overlap. These three dimensions explain 67.29% of total variance. According to Buyukozturk (2007), eigenvalues of the dimensions and total variance explained are adequate.

Three dimensional structures obtained with EFA regarding DLS were tested with CFA. According to CFA results, t values of all of the observed variables exceed 2.56; all the items are deemed as significant in .01 level. For this reason, none of the items are eliminated. CFA results show that chi-square (1477.39, $p = .00$) value is significant. It is suggested when chi-square value is significant, the result of $\chi^2/\ df$ should be analysed (Simsek, 2007). The χ^2/df (1477.39 / 626 = 2.36) value is below three. Thus, this is an indicator of excellent fit (Kline, 2005; Sümer, 2000). Other fit indices show good (RMSEA = .063, GFI = .81) and excellent fit (NNFI = .99, CFI = .99; SRMR = .036) (Brown, 2006; Hooper, Coughlan & Mullen, 2008; Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993; Kline, 2005; Sümer, 2000). Thus, it is seen that all fit indices show acceptable fit. These results reveal that a three-factored model of DLS is confirmed. The CFA diagram is shown in Figure 1.

The first dimension achieved with EFA and CFA has 18 items covering statements such as "Our principals strive for building a common culture in school based on the differences of teachers."; "Our principals strive for building a common value system based on the differences of teachers." is named *"diversity inclusion and integration"*. The second dimension

Table 1: EFA results

Item	Diversity inclusion and integration	Equity	Respect for diversity
I35	**.748**	*.255*	*.185*
I31	**.725**	*.304*	*.308*
I11	**.709**	*.090*	*.446*
I29	**.694**	*.406*	*.232*
I30	**.691**	*.354*	*.318*
I51	**.689**	*.272*	*.098*
I25	**.689**	*.393*	*.296*
I18	**.675**	*.346*	*.406*
I58	**.671**	*.361*	*.215*
I28	**.652**	*.398*	*.238*
I43	**.651**	*.535*	*.108*
I26	**.635**	*.448*	*.343*
I12	**.619**	*.308*	*.488*
I47	**.615**	*.257*	*.219*
I64	**.603**	*.361*	*.389*
I16	**.596**	*.421*	*.360*
I21	**.589**	*.483*	*.259*
I15	**.540**	*.434*	*.394*
I42	*.317*	**.730**	*.285*
I49	*.250*	**.724**	*.329*
I53	*.328*	**.686**	*.319*
I40	*.385*	**.676**	*.268*
I59	*.404*	**.657**	*.357*
I63	*.381*	**.653**	*.437*
I46	*.392*	**.643**	*.291*
I44	*.350*	**.634**	*.229*
I22	*.419*	**.624**	*.419*
I36	*.262*	**.621**	*.184*
I37	*.421*	**.620**	*.365*
I65	*.358*	**.598**	*.450*
I52	*.377*	**.597**	*.299*
I4	*.306*	*.398*	**.713**
I5	*.483*	*.275*	**.680**
I3	*.372*	*.365*	**.672**
I6	*.243*	*.490*	**.666**
I9	*.268*	*.500*	**.589**
I2	*.227*	*.397*	**.578**
Eigenvalues	22.17	1.72	1.00
Variances explained (%)	59.92%	4.65%	2.72%
Total variance explained (%)	59.92%	64.57%	67.29%

involving 13 items such as "Our principals do not show favouritism to teachers because of their different ideologies."; "Our principals treat equally during their interaction with the teachers who have different characteristics" is named *"equity"*. The third dimension has six items covering such statements like "Our principals do not pressure on teachers because of their differences.", "Our principals accept interpersonal differences as normal." and is named *"respect for diversity"*.
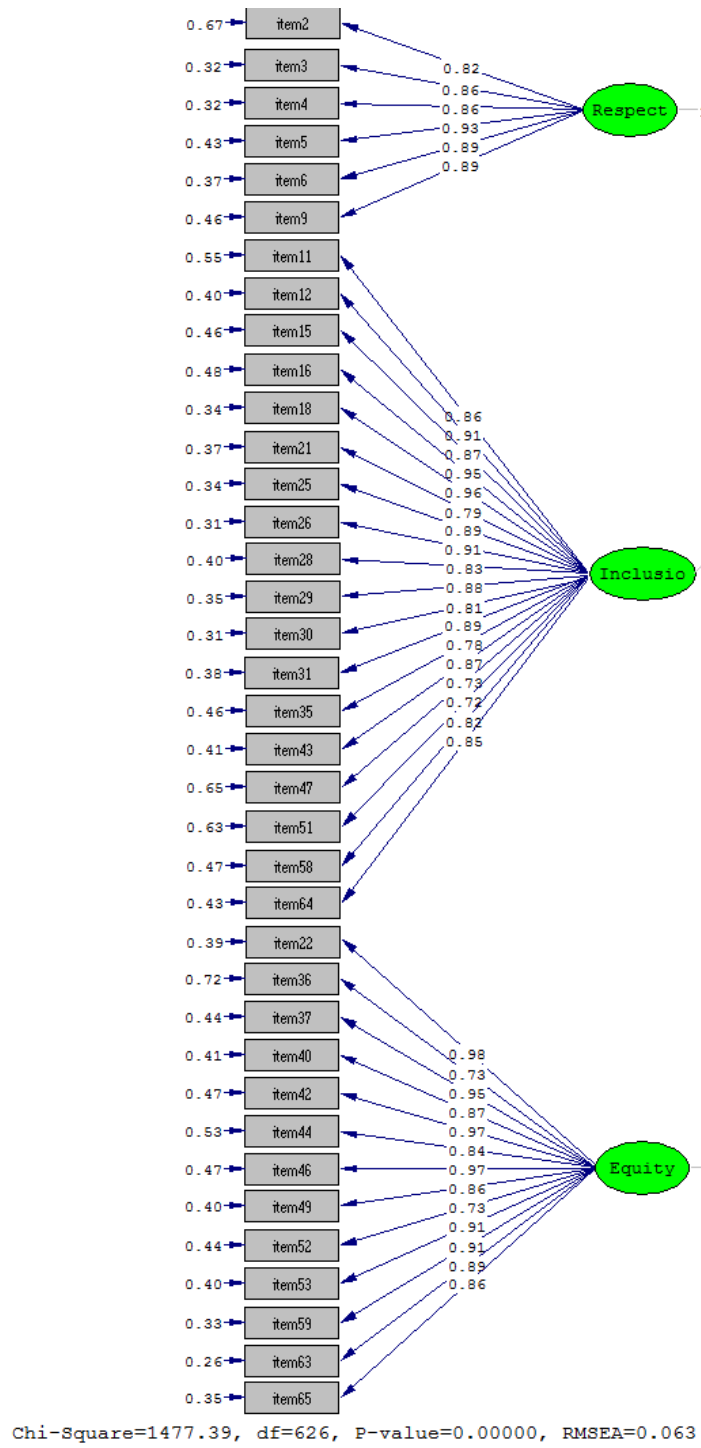
Figure 1: CFA diagram

Reliability of DLS

Reliability of the DLS was tested via Cronbach's alpha and Spearman Brown coefficients. Cronbach's alpha value is .98, and Spearman Brown coefficient is .96 for the entire scale. Cronbach's alpha value is found .96, Spearman Brown coefficient is found .95 for diversity inclusion and integration sub-dimension; Cronbach's alpha value is found .95, Spearman Brown coefficient is found .94 for equity sub-dimension; Cronbach's alpha value is found .91, Spearman Brown coefficient is found .91 for respect for diversity sub-dimension. These findings show that DLS is a reliable data collection tool. An English translation of the DLS suggested by the authors is given in Appendix I.

Discussion

Leading consultants, academics, and leaders assert that differences must be handled with an approach that values diversity. A well-managed and diverse workforce has some potential competitive advantages (Cox & Blake, 1991), and research suggests that there are positive effects of diversity for organisations. Under certain conditions, highly diverse teams outperform less diverse groups, particularly with regard to the creativity and satisfaction of employees (Fujimoto, Härtel & Härtel, 2004; Stahl, Maznevski, Voigt & Jonsen, 2010). Diversities have a great potential for creating new viewpoints, and keeping alive the problem-solving abilities required by complex and dynamic work environments (Schermerhon et al., 2000). To sum up, organisations must value diversity highly, in order to minimise the negative outputs and maximise the benefits of workforce diversity (Ely & Thomas, 2001). Diversity in the workforce increases organisational effectiveness and enhances productivity. Hence, it can be asserted that diversity is beneficial for organisations (Thomas & Ely, 1996). Diversity also increases learning abilities of students (Nieto & Bode, 2010). Thus, for both business managers and school principals managing diversity, their display of diversity leadership behaviours and measuring these behaviours via valid and reliable data collection tools are quite important. Therefore, the aim of this study is to develop a valid and reliable data collection tool for examining school principals' diversity leadership levels, according to the perception of teachers. For this purpose, the validity of DLS was tested via content validity, and the reliability was tested via Cronbach's alpha and Spearman Brown coefficients.

Firstly, EFA was applied to the data set for validity analysis. According to EFA results, three sub-dimensions and 37 items that explain 67.29% of total variance are discerned. The first sub-dimension is named *diversity inclusion and integration*, the second is *equity*, and the third is *respect for diversity,* based on the content of the items and theoretical framework. The model obtained with EFA was tested with CFA, with results showing that the fit indices of three-factored model are adequate. Hence the CFA model is confirmed.

Reliability results show that Cronbach's alpha and Spearman Brown coefficients both for the entire scale and sub-dimensions are acceptable. In the light of validity and reliability analyses conducted, it is seen that DLS has acceptable psychometric properties. DLS consists of three sub-dimensions, *diversity inclusion and integration, equity,* and *respect for diversity.* Dimensions are not graded and evaluated separately. It is accepted that the level

of displaying diversity leadership behaviour increases as the score from the scale increases. As a result, it is possible to suggest that the questionnaire is a valid and reliable data collection tool for examining the perceptions of teachers in Turkey about the level of school principals' diversity leadership in their schools. Thus, it is asserted that DLS can be used for the studies about diversity and diversity management in schools.

In this study, the validity and reliability of DLS was done on a sample that consisted of teachers who were working at primary and lower-secondary schools in Kocaeli district, Turkey. This can be considered as a limitation of this research. Therefore, it can be suggested that further studies related with the validity and reliability of DLS can be conducted on different samples (different grades, regions, countries, industries, etc.). On the other hand, DLS measures diversity leadership skills of school administrators according to teachers' views. Further studies could be conducted on developing the diversity leadership skills of school administrators according to other stakeholders in the school community, such as parents and students, or the DLS form used in this study could be adapted for other stakeholders, and reliability and validity of DLS could be further tested with the data gathered from these samples. As the schools in this study were not chosen according to any particular criteria, it may be suggested that the reliability and validity of DLS can be tested in different cultures, or in different schools/organisations, where differences may be felt more intensively or less intensively compared with the sample used in the present study.

Acknowledgment

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Appendix: An English version of the Diversity Leadership Scale

Note: The validity and reliability of DLS was conducted in Turkish. The English version suggested by the authors requires further analysis.
1 = I strongly disagree; 2 = I disagree; 3 = I partially agree; 4 = I agree; 5 = I strongly agree

Diversity inclusion and integration	11	Our principals try to gain information about teachers' different aspects for benefiting from their differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	12	Our principals try to understand teachers' emotions and thoughts about their differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	15	Our principals contribute to effective communication among different groups of teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
	16	Our principals create an environment that teachers declare their ideas clearly associated with their differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	18	Our principals try to understand the reasons for teachers' behaviours caused by their differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	21	Our principals try to ensure that teachers accept each other's differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	25	Our principals try to meet teachers' expectations about their differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	26	Our principals are sensitive to the expectations of teachers based on their differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	28	Our principals are careful about the differences that teachers are sensitive to.	1	2	3	4	5
	29	Our principals try to build a common culture within the school by starting from teacher differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	30	Our principals try to ensure that the parties understand each other during conflicts among teachers with different qualifications.	1	2	3	4	5
	31	Our principals help teachers in improving their different aspects.	1	2	3	4	5
	35	Our principals support teachers in improving their personal values based on their differences.	1	2	3	4	5

	43	Our principals try to help teachers in protecting their various cultural values.	1	2	3	4	5
	47	Our principals try to turn conflicts arising from teachers' differences into a school benefit.	1	2	3	4	5
	51	Our principals try to raise awareness about the differences of teachers in school.	1	2	3	4	5
	58	Our principals strive for building a common value system based on the differences of teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
	64	Our principals consider the views of teachers about their differences while solving the problems.	1	2	3	4	5
Equity	22	Our principals treat teachers equally while applying punishments and sanctions.	1	2	3	4	5
	36	Our principals do not evaluate teachers with their physical appearances, skin colour, hair colour, clothing style, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
	37	Our principals treat equally when distributing rewards and achievements without negatively assessing teachers' differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	40	Our principals ensure that all teachers benefit from school facilities equally, unaffected by their differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	42	Our principals do not show favouritism to teachers because of their different characteristics.	1	2	3	4	5
	44	Our principals are equally distant from the teachers of different ethnic backgrounds.	1	2	3	4	5
	46	Our principals do not show favouritism to teachers because of their different ideologies.	1	2	3	4	5
	49	Our principals do not discriminate against teachers because of their differences related to religious/sectarian beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5
	52	Our principals take performance criteria into consideration instead of teachers' differences when evaluating performance.	1	2	3	4	5
	53	Our principals do not discriminate against teachers because of their social status differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	59	Our principals treat equally during their interaction with the teachers who have different characteristics.	1	2	3	4	5
	63	Our principals do not approach teachers with prejudice because of their differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	65	Our principals do not judge teachers because of their differences.	1	2	3	4	5
Respect for diversity	2	Our principals do not discriminate based on the sex of teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
	3	Our principals accept interpersonal differences as normal.	1	2	3	4	5
	4	Our principals show respect for teachers' diversity.	1	2	3	4	5
	5	Our principals approach teachers' problems about their differences by trying to put themselves in their place.	1	2	3	4	5
	6	Our principals do not exclude teachers because of their differences.	1	2	3	4	5
	9	Our principals do not put pressure on teachers because of their differences.	1	2	3	4	5

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