

DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND CEOCRACY

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ABSTRACT

CEO, who is in the top-level administrator position of an organization, has the greatest responsibility in the organization's success or failure. Likewise, it is a common belief that the school's success or failure depends on the effectiveness of the school principal. Ceocracy was a kind of democratic administration form in the ancient Greek city states. In this type of administration all the citizens of the ancient Greek city states could participate directly and actively in governance. This administration form was applied successfully in the city states and application of democratic principles in life satisfied the citizens. The success of the school administrators in a sense depends on the implementation of democratic principles in management. The purpose of this study is to give a general framework about ceocracy as a management approach that is based on people's actively participation in the decision making process, and to discuss on how to use ceocracy in educational organizations. In the light of the reviewed literature, it is clear that ceocracy can be used in the management of educational organizations.

Key Words: Ceocracy, School management, Democracy, Democratic leader.

INTRODUCTION

It is an undeniable fact that the world has turned into a small village. Speed of change has increased and in today's information age ways of access to information, human needs, expectations, demands have begun to change. This changing affects management science, as well. As a result new concepts and terms have emerged in the field of management. One of these concepts is the *Ceocracy*. In fact, the term Ceocracy is a combination of the word Ceo, which means the most competent manager of an organization and democracy, which is a form of administration. Ceocracy was first used by Manville and Ober (2003) to express the human-centered management in an organization.

The democracy concept, which is formed from Greek "demos" people and "Kratos" power words, is considered not only as rule of the people by people, i.e. a type of governance, but also regarded as a life philosophy and life style (Biesta, 2006: 106; Uygun, 1996: 1; Perry, 2004: 85). From this perspective, in societies where individual differences, human rights, fundamental rights and freedoms are respected, it is natural that the concept of democracy is felt in all areas of life.

Democracy as a respected system, deeply affects the structure of societies, since it presents the opportunity to put human into the subject position of life, and restructures many areas from economy to law, and from government reorganization to daily life of individuals. This feature has made democracy a goal for many societies (Ozpolat, 2010: 365, 366). Equality, political and social participation, the decisions taken by the free discussion and voting, the tradition of compromise, the exact denial of violence method in the realization of political and social goals, the fundamental value of human as a human being, freedom atmosphere for the

assurance of this value, the belief of free thought and discussions leads to the reality, tolerance to differences, participation and freedom forms the democratic values (Yilman, 2006: 5).

The democracy which has to be perceived as a way of life and principles of it can only be introduced individuals via education effectively. Adopting the basic values of democracy will be possible in schools with a democratic education process and with a democratic educational leadership managing that. In this context, whether the educational administrators' management style in the management of their organizations, obeys democratic principles or not has great importance.

CEOS IN SCHOOLS: SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

CEO (the chief executive officer) is the person at the top of management echelon in an organization. To be a CEO requires to have a vast knowledge and experience; and to take very special decisions accordingly (Gottschalk, 2007: 1). CEO, as the person at the top of the management hierarchy, is the person carrying the full responsibility in success of an institution. Although he/she has more authority than other employees in the organization, this is not enough to control everything in this organization and this may lead to some unintended consequences. Therefore, Porter et al (2004) have pointed out that being a CEO is a very challenging task requiring bravery. Hence the similarities between school principals and CEOs immediately stand out. The school principals are the most competent person in school administration, in the school management structure. Therefore, the success or failure of a school is associated with principal's qualifications and effectiveness.

Both the educational organizations and commercial organizations review their position in a changing world. Organization administrations feel more need to show compliance to democratic principles for motivating employees, for gathering around common goals and for combining differences in a certain harmony. According to Woods (2005: 21) the pushing factors for the organizations to that are the increased global competition, technology, information production and spread and innovations related to communication. Although these rapid developments change roles and responsibilities of CEO they do also change the roles and responsibilities of principal.

According to Bottoms and O'Neill (2001) in the past principals were responsible to take the basic administrative decisions for school building, staff and students. Providing a teacher for each classroom, providing required materials to students' access, progress of students within the system was sufficient to be a good principal. However, the principal's role has changed to a leadership of a democratic education from the administrative responsibility. The responsibilities related to student learning and school development are undertaken by school principals. For this reason, the concept of democratic leadership, heard in many areas, are also used for school administrators now.

Demonstrating an effective management and creating a vision shared by all individuals in the school is only possible when the school administrators take decisions on democratic principles. Otherwise, the implementation of the decisions taken in solving the problems become difficult and the school administrator's leadership will be questionable.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CEOCRACY ON EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Ceocracy is acceptance of human-centered management approach in a company management. Individuals have begun to ask the same freedoms, rights and responsibilities they have outside of the work environment for also their business environment. This has revealed the fact that employees of an organization should be regarded as citizens. People come to their works not just with their knowledge and skills but also with their emotions and social needs. Therefore, modern managers are obliged to manage the organization in a

framework of values of democracy. Thus, an efficient work space can be created where employees feel themselves as part of the organization in a free and equal environment with a reduced hierarchy (Manville and Ober, 2003: 24- 25). This status mentioned by Manville and Ober is also true in the school environment. A more democratic attitude is expected from teachers, students, school staff, parents and educational administrators.

Leaders have to make many decisions and choices in daily tasks. These choices may not always such choices between good and evil. Sometimes they have to choose one of the two bad options. Since these difficult situations faced by the leaders are not stated clearly in laws, policies or guidelines to make a choice is difficult. Even if the educational leader does his/her best, he or she can still be criticized for the decisions made (Duignan, 2006: 78). At this point, the democratization of educational administration becomes more important. If the school administrator takes others' views in a democratic manner in the decision making process, this would be a rather robust management style.

Implementation of the Ceocracy in school management will be possible when the school principal takes the principles of democracy in the management processes. a democratic leader makes all of the decisions based on people, makes everyone feel as a part of the school itself, gives responsibility to parents, teachers and students to form the education in the school, offers equal opportunities to everyone.

It's very hard for antidemocratic organizations to be effective in today's competitive environment. Some kind of measures should be taken since the management have failed to influence human resources, achieve organizational objectives. These measures include making the organizational structure appropriate for team work, effective use of information technologies, shared leadership and participation of staff into decision-making process. This new organizational structure is more plain and open for innovations (Lawler, 2001: 16–17). According to Lawler (2001) for organizations to be more effective, their managers should exhibit democratic leadership behaviors.

Woods (2005: 58-59) summarizes the necessary behaviors for a democratic school leader as follows:

- 1) Creating an environment where employees can express their thoughts in a comfortable way,
- 2) Considering the ideas of employees,
- 3) Encouraging staff for innovation startups, responsibility and risk-taking issues,
- 4) Rejecting the wrong approach which accuses employees, students and parents,
- 5) Creating a cooperative culture, where the responsibility is shared, supporting in difficult times when the things go wrong.

Creation of a collaborative culture within the organization, where the responsibility is shared, will enhance the solidarity between the organizations' employees. Acceptance of success or failure as a responsibility of everyone will create a certain harmony within the organization. And this will provide a positive impact on employee motivation.

As understood, certain conditions must be fulfilled in order to implement a democratic management approach educational organizations as implemented in the ancient Greek city-states where all of the citizens participate administration actively. The most important of them is the simplification of organizational structure, as bureaucracy-free as possible. The second important requirement is to state a democratic leadership behavior in administration. Educational organizations, where the democratic principles are adopted by all members within the organization and have become a way of life, will be more successful.

DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL AND ITS MANAGEMENT

Schools are a part of their society. It's not possible to consider an isolated school from society. According to public opinion of many scientists studied in education field, the social mission of the school is to sustain culture

by transferring it to new generations, and to form the manpower required by the society. The school differentiates the individuals from other people by developing their individual abilities and talents, while making them more social.

Democratic education can be presented through the schools, adopting democratic education method. At the end of a democratic education process, it is expected for individuals:

- To be tolerant,
- Know their responsibilities,
- To respect different opinions,
- To be compatible,
- Ability to work in teams,
- To participate in decision-making processes,
- Obey to the decisions made by the majority (Dewey 1944: 8).

According to Birzea (2000) school is a small representation of the society. Birzae summarizes the duties of a democratic school in Figure 1. According to this, school should perform integration and social cohesion, evoke desire in individuals for change and development, provide opportunities for learning and personal development, create a safe and supportive learning environment. It should remain faithful to basic democratic principles such as equality, respect for human rights and freedom, while carrying out its duties.

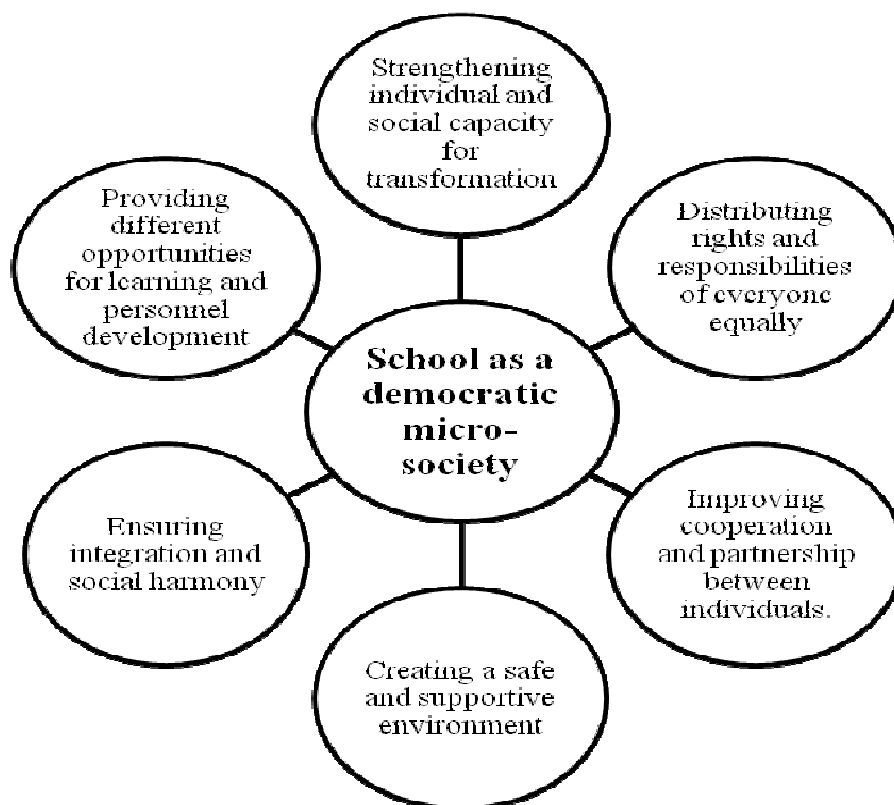


Figure 1: Duties of a Democratic School

Source: Birzea, C. (2000) *Education for Democratic Citizenship: A Lifelong Learning Perspective*. Strasbourg: Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC)

A school having a democratic education system trains students as decent individuals who (Elias, 2009: 834):

- Listens and communicates correctly and carefully,
- Recognizes his/her strengths,
- Is tolerant to different groups, believes
- Considers other people's opinions and feelings,
- Respects people,
- Selects appropriate targets for himself/herself,
- Makes smart decisions and solves problems effectively,
- Cooperates,
- Can lead people effectively,
- Has ability to solve disputes in a peaceful manner,
- Is constructive and establishes ethical relations,
- Asks for help when it is necessary

In terms of management, a democratic school should pay attention to participation of all associates to the important decisions. According to Bellingham (2003: 6), to create a democratic climate in the organization, the school leaders should; be consistent, create trust, think in a long-term manner, be fair, respect for different thoughts, ensure the solidarity, share the power, be honest, give value to people and consider the issues in a broader perspective. It is clear that school administrators have a greater responsibility in creation of a democratic climate in schools. Democratic attitudes of school administrators will create a sense of confidence in school staff and students. This will increase the power of school administrator on influencing and binding people around a specific purpose.

According to Harber and Trafford (1999), to make students reflect their opinions on issues which are related to them should be seen as the basic starting point. The research results, regarding that the effective schools are formed due to a more democratic management approach and seeing the globalized democratization as a political tool, have the effect on this development.

Manville and Ober (2003:35) state that effective business leaders get their success from the skills they have presented on motivating and organizing the employees. Because motivating and organizing people is a very difficult task. People are not a commercial commodity; they depend vitally on the organizational and social structures they have lived in. In the today's competitive environment, to understand the feelings and human values is required to motivate people.

HUMAN-CENTERED MANAGEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Educational leaders have to manage materials and human resources effectively and efficiently to accomplish organizational goals. Management of human resources has a greater importance than the management of material resources. Logic and objectivity stands out in management of material resources, and it's easier to decide. But since the human behavior can be based on beliefs, personality traits, perceptions, attitudes, values, expectations, fears, love or hate, they are difficult to predict. What educational leaders need to do is to try to figure out the real reason behind the behavior and to recognize their staff (Combs, Miser, and Whitaker, 1999: 17). A school principal would have taken an important step to become a successful leader when he/she tries to recognize and understand personnel. Because when the school leaders recognize his/her friends on the course, recognizing their behavior becomes easier and decisions on task distribution become more accurate.

Krames (2003: 102- 103) indicates that managers can make use of the questions below for evaluating the effectiveness within the organization. These questions are as follows:

- 1) How much bureaucracy do you have in your organization? Is this slows down decision-making process?
- 2) How much the managers know employees?
- 3) Does learning and training have a higher priority in the institution?
- 4) Do the institution's values have been clearly stated? Does everyone in the organization is aware of these values and apply them in their lives?
- 5) Do the employees of the institution investigate best practices in other institutions?
- 6) Does anybody in the institution have right to use initiative?

Enabling employees by the leaders to use initiative, is required by the democratic governance concept, it allows employees to participate in the functioning of the organization more effectively. It alleviates the burden of the leader by providing participation in decision-making processes in management.

Participation of others in the management process of educational organizations presents itself in different applications. For example, Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) in UK, which is responsible for the supervision of schools, prepares the audit report taking the opinion of students and parents into account seriously (Döbert et al. 2003: 112). Implementation of performance evaluation is planned in Turkey in near future. Accordingly, it's planned to give right to students and parents to speak in measuring of the quality of education and teacher competence at the school. With the performance evaluation it's aimed for assessment process to be based on multiple data sources (inspector, administrator, teacher, colleague, student, parent), and multiple methods, and to improve the capacity of personnel and institute, and to open the evaluation process to stakeholders. Thus, more participatory and democratic control by making school community members to take place in this process and removing the centralized structure of the evaluation process (EURYDICE, 2008).

Another positive step taken in this field in Turkey is the "Ministry of Education's Democracy Education and School Councils Directive" implemented in 2004. According to the directive, democracy culture is planned to be taught via application by creating student councils in schools. All private and state schools in Turkey, except from high education institutes, must have an elected Representative Council of students which must itself elect the a representative president who will represent the council in the province .The students elect the representative from the students nominated in their own schools. School's student council representative participates in works of the provincial school council. Elected chairman of the provincial school councils participates in Turkey's school council works in the capital city Ankara. The creation of student councils in schools will provide the development of tolerance and pluralism awareness, training of generations which adopt the universal values; give students the culture of voting, being elected; the skills to be participative, be communicative, to adopt democratic leadership and to create the public opinion (MEB, 2004). It can be said that the efforts of the Turkish Ministry of Education will ensure new generations grow up in a more democratic culture, however in training citizens as democratic individuals school administrators and other shareholders have responsibilities, as well.

CONCLUSION

Today the globalization, social, cultural and technological developments are changing the management approach and expectations and demands of the employees. Depending on this, organization's objectives and management approach also varies. This transformation has not changed the idea that the managers are responsible for the success or failure in realizing the goals of organizations. This further increases the importance of being an administrator in an organization.

Administrators have begun to feel the need to adopt the concept of a democratic management with the acceptance of democracy, which is in all areas of human life as welcomed by individuals as a way of life. Employees want to have the democratic rights, which they have in their life such as being valued, participating to decisions, being entitled to vote, also in their workplaces, and demand this from the administration. Consequently, organization managers, as a democratic leader, ought to meet these expectations. Implementation of democratic principles in organization management and putting the human factor forefront revealed the human-based organization management approach.

In the human-based organization management, the managers are the democratic leaders. They behave equally and fairly to all, include employees in the decision-making processes, and make them work in coordination around the common goals. In educational organizations this task belongs to school principals. The principal is actually the CEO of the school. Creation of a democratic climate in school will largely be possible with the efforts of the principal. Individuals grown in a democratic culture will ensure the improvement of the society and provide that the democratic values are a way of life.

A democratic school management will help the formation of a more effective school environment, by setting the common values against the difficulties brought by the transformation process. Therefore, the debates on democratization of school management should be in the forefront of the agenda. However, it is seen that the democratization of school management is not discussed enough (Harber & Trafford, 1999).

As a result, it can be said that the implementation of Democracy in educational organizations depends mostly to democratic attitudes of school leaders and adoption and implementation of democracy as a life philosophy. Others will also support the school administrator who demonstrates a democratic leadership. Participation of stakeholders in school decision-making process is the most important element of human-based management approach. In the formation and full realization of this consciousness, governments' implementation of necessary legal arrangements has great importance.

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