# The Relationship Between Leadership Styles (Autocratic and Democratic) of School Administrators and the Mobbing Teachers Suffer

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**Abstract**

The aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between democratic and autocratic leadership styles of school administrators and mobbing teachers experience as well as determining whether these leadership styles predict the mobbing level teachers suffer. The data in the study were collected from 395 primary school teachers (165 male and 230 female) in central districts of Mersin, Turkey. "Mobbing Scale" was used to determine what extent teachers suffer from mobbing and "Leadership Style Scale" to measure leadership style of school administrators. According to the analysis results, gender accounts for a significant diference in only "interference in private life" of all five dimensions of mobbing while seniority accounts for a significant difference in "barriers about work and career" and "work commitment" dimensions. There is a negative relationship between democratic leadership and all dimensions of mobbing except for work commitment while it is positive with autocratic leadership. Lastly, autocratic and democratic leadership styles of school administrators predict all dimensions of the mobbing teachers suffer except for work commitment.

**Keywords:** leadership styles, autocratic, democratic, mobbing, teacher, school administrator.

## 1. Introduction

It is a fact that non-organisational factors such as social events, technological developments and economic activities have effect on organisational structure and relations. In particular, neoliberal policies adopted and practiced both nationally and globally cause a competitive atmosphere not only within the organization but also inbetween organisations. Because of this, organizations take the other ones as rivals while organizational members might as well see each

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other as opponents. The success in such a climate depends on showing a better performance than the others (colleagues). This situation is expereinced more in private sectors but it also reflects upon public organizations. It is frequently seen that organizational administrators and members apply "mobbing" consciously or unconsciously, overtly or covertly to attain organizational and personal goals.

Mobbing has been a research subject in Europe and USA for years, but, it is a recent issue to be researched in Turkey. According to Tigrel and Kokalan (2009), such a delay in research is because people couldn't express that they were exposed to mobbing though it has always been experienced in Turkey. Sharing such incidents with others is regarded weakness due to the traditional social structure. That's why the sufferers of mobbing have tried to conceal expressing exposure to mobbing.

In this regard, mobbing refers to harassment, intimidation, pressure, force and psychological violence (Yavuz, 2007; Demir, 2009; Tetik, 2010). Tınaz (2006) defines it as disturbing, causing distress and enclosure. Leyman (1996) describes it that the victim constantly and systematically suffers from aggressive, insulting, hostile and unethical behaviors, thus becomes helpless and defenseless. According to Leyman's definition, the frequency and duration of the mobbing behavior is important as well as its nature. Leyman (1996) indicates that such behaviour to be accepted as mobbing must continue at least for six months and once a week. It is aimed through mobbing that the victim will be isolated, eliminated and excluded from the group or organization (Westhues, 2003).

It is stated that the people in management positions are the most frequent mobbing practicers (Yavuz, 2007). It is seen that these people are weakling and jealous, afraid of losing their current positions, and acting according to their motives (Çobanoğlu, 2005). It is alleged that what lies behind their behaviours is that they don't give value to life and differences, their dishonesty and need to give themselves airs (Ocak, 2008). While Leyman (1996) states that people apply mobbing to compensate their deficiencies, Tınaz (2006) describes them as oppressing subordinates in an inferiority complex and ingratiating themselves with their superiors. It is inferred from the statements above that mobbing practicers are the ones who lack self-confidence and protect individual interests and concern.

Mobbing is an attack that aims to destroy one's self-esteem and self-confidence. The mobbing practicers intend to make their targets dependent on themselves (Demir, 2009). In this way, the mobbing victim is made to obey the practicer with no question and agrees on practicer's personality, thoughts and position. Besides that, it is also known that some psychological disorders result in mobbing behaviours. Tutar (2004) states that individuals with obsessive-compulsive disorder are apt to practise mobbing because of their uncontrolled, negative thoughts.

The reasons listed above fall short to explain mobbing. There are also organizational factors leading to mobbing. Mercanlıoğlu (2010) remarks that the organizations with weak organizational culture, autocratic leadership, one-way organizational communication, no team work and where reasons for conflicts are neglected are more like to experience mobbing. It is seen that social atmosphere is convenient enough to initiate mobbing in organizations with a poor management and strict hierarchy (Çalış ve Tokat, 2013). According to Demir (2009), organizational culture and structure triggers mobbing, and thus, during designing management functions, the organization must be purified from factors causing mobbing. Management functions should cover abstract concepts such as vision, mission, organizational culture and climate. For that reason, a human-focused organizational culture is one of the factors to prevent mobbing. On the other hand, Ocak (2008) lists organizational factors that cause moobbing as: poor management, intense stress at workplace, monotony, administrators' denial and disbelief in existence of mobbing in their organizations, unethical practices, changes in organizational structure and lack of emotional intelligence in leaders. As seen, organizational administrators plays an important role in causing or preventing mobbing. The leadership style that organizational administrators adopt will be effective on organizational structrure, relations and communication.

Mobbing process has serious effects and results on individuals. There is no doubt that mobbing victims are the most negatively influenced people of this process. It may cause various results from organizational alienation to suicide. Tınaz (2006) puts emphasis on economic, social and medical dimensions of mobbing. An individual who leaves his work because of mobbing gets into poor economic conditions, is excluded from workplace, loses his professional identity and all

these also result in loss of prestige both in family and social environment. Negative reflections of the all are seen in one's psychological and physical health. According to Ocak (2008), a mobbing victim feels dashed, shunned, humiliated and stressful, and as a result of this, experiences psychological disorders such as loneliness, loss of self-confidence, hopelessness, helplessness, inferiority, short temper and social isolation. Besides, mobbing victim goes through burnout and alienation as a considerable level if he does not leave his work (Brudnik-Dabrowska, 2014). Aggreeing all the listed above, Dabu and Draghici (2013) point out that all these may lead the victim into suicide.

It is essential to take organizational dimension in effects of mobbing as well as in its causes. Tınaz (2006) puts forward that mobbing has psychological and economic costs for the organizations.disagreements and conflicts between organizational members, negative organizational climate, weakness in organizational culture, lack of trust, poor respect and reluctance of workers are of the psychological costs. On the other hand, economic costs can be listed as increase in sick leave, qualified staff's leave of employment, and because of this, increase in cost of new employment and their training, decline in performance, low quality of work, compensation given to victims, unemployment cost, court expenses and early retirement. Considering that the qualified staff in critical positions may leave their job, it might as well be seen that economic loss of the organizaiton is quite high (Sloan et al., 2010). Ocak (2008) states that, as mobbing causes a stressful climate within the organization, teamwork will get worse, organizational trust will get lower, and organizaitonal conflict will inevitably occur. Tetik (2010) indicates that mobbing will have negative impacts on organizaitons since it reduces workers' efficiency, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and trust level. It is obvious that mobbing leads into considerable negative results for both individuals and organization. Noticing this and taking precautionary measures or preventing it primarily depends on organizaitonal administrators. Therefore, the leadership style of organizational administrators at this stage gets important.

Many definitions of leadership have been offered, but none of them accepted by all researchers. However, we aimed by determining leadership styles to determine the behavioural tendencies and focus of administrators. Benfari (1999) indicates six main factors for a successful management. Psychological style is related to personal attitude of the administrator and it is difficult to change as it is long termed. Therefore, instead of changing it, adaptation or guidance can work by determining weak and strong sides. Second factor is the needs. Individuals' needs influence their personality. Third one is power. Concept of power, influencing other people, shows relations in life. Some people prefer influencing others in a positive way while some others prefer negative ways. The values are the fifth. It is about whether the conflicts will be taken in a win-lose or win-win strategy. The fifth is values. It is about determining ideals and beliefs and guiding them. Culture, social institutions and personal experiences affect the formation of values. The last factor is stress. Stress is the reaction to pressure. Stress reactions are indicators of how the conflict is being dealt with. Experiences through life and individual differences determine how we react to internal and external stress factors. It is important to try to understand and overcome the problem in its own course instead of staying away individually from the problem like "fight or flight".

Williams (1999) states that working styles of leaders appear on a bipolar continuum: from "developmental" styles to "controlling" styles. Encouragement, participation in relations, supporting change, expanding freedom area and creating space for individual choices, and behaving flexibly and adaptively are seen in developmental styles. Common benefits and efforts like discussion, debate, evaluation of change, cooperation and rearrangement are important in these styles. As approached to controlling styles, these behaviours tend to appear: giving instruction and controlling, one-way thinking, trying to preserve the existing situation, forming a disciplinarian and structured work environment, trying to doing things accurately, caring about consistency between works and willing to work alone. There is a dualist approach such as right-wrong or good-bad to a great extent in this style.

There are various kinds of leadership styles in administrational area, however, in this study, democratic and autocratic leadership were discussed. According to Williams' (1999) categorization, autocratic leaders show "controlling" behaviours while democratic leaders exhibit "developmental" behaviours. Autocratic leaders make the employee do their job without right to choose; whereas, democratic leaders try to have the work done by giving them right to choose, and also give importance to increasing sharing and willingness in mutual respect by considering organizational

communication and group dynamics (Ferguson, 2011). In other words, democratic leaders try to form an organizational power by providing an atmosphere the employees can share their feelings, ideas and experiences and showing they value everyone's ideas (Brookfield, 2010). However, autocratic leaders would like to maintain the strict hierarchial structure of the organization and prioritize the work rather than human relations. Uysal and Yavuz (2013) point out that mobbing is observed more in organizations of hierarchial and autocratic structure.

It is known that most of the mobbing practicers are organizaitonal administrators (Dick ve Wagner, 2001; Ocak, 2008). This fact requires the relationship between leadership styles and mobbing to be examined. There are a number of researches studying this relationship. Cemaloğlu (2007) studied the relationship between transformational-transactional leadership and mobbing. He found a negative relation between both leadership styles and mobbing in his study. According to this, as the school administrators exhibit transformational leadership behaviours, there is a considerable decrease in mobbing. Daşçı and Cemaoğlu (2015) revealed similar findings. Kul (2010) examined the relationship between leadership styles and mobbing, organizational commitment and job satisfaction in his master's thesis. What he found in his study supports the findings of former researchers. In the study titled"A Story to Tell: Bullying and Mobbing in the Workplace", Sloan and his friends (2010) suggest a theoretical framework anout mobbing's reasons and results underlining the importance of administrative leadership in preventing mobbing. Shahbazi, Naami and Aligholizadeh (2013) exmined the relationship between paternalistic leadership and mobbing. Paternalistic leadership was taken in three dimensions: benevolent, moral and autocratic leadership. It was found that there is a negative relation between benevolent-moral leadership and mobbing but a positive relation between autocratic leadership and mobbing. Cerit (2013) also studied the relationship paternalistic leadership and mobbing. In the study that paternalistic leadership was taken in one dimension, it was found that there is a decrease in mobbing as school administrators show paternalistic leadership behaviours more. LAstly, Ertüreten, Cemalciler and Aycan (2013) studied the relationship between transformational, transactional, autocratic and paternalistic leadership and mobbing. Acording to their research results, there is a negative relation between transformational, transactional and paternalistic leadership and mobbing while it is positive between autocratic leadership and mobbing.

As seen in the studies mentioned above, though the relationship between various leadership styles and mobbing has been examined, there is no research that studies both democratic and autocratic leadership's relationship with mobbing, and also their predictive power on mobbing. Therefore, it is expected that this study will make an important contribution to the literature.

### Aim of the study

The main aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between democratic and autocratic leadership styles of school administrators and mobbing teachers experience as well as determining whether these leadership styles predict the mobbing level teachers suffer. Regarding the aim, answers to the questions below were sought:

According to the views of teachers working in public schools in central districts of Mersin, Turkey;

1. Is there a significant difference in mobbing teachers experience in terms of gender?
2. Is there a significant difference in mobbing teachers experience in terms of seniority?
3. Is there a significant relationship between leadership styles (democratic and autocratic) of school administrators and mobbing teachers experience?
4. To what extent do leadership styles (democratic and autocratic) of school administrators predict the mobbing teachers experience?

### 2. Method
### Research model

General survey model was used in this study. Survey models aim to give reply to the questions "what, where, when, what degree, how and how often" and describe a case as it is (Büyüköztürk et al., 2009). This study is descriptive as mobbing level that teachers experience and schoole administrators' leadership style were determined according to views of teachers. In addition, it is also a relational study because the relationship between leadership style that shool administrators adopt and mobbing level that teachers suffer was examined.

### *Population and sample of the study*

The population of the study consists of 6,125 teachers working in public primary and secondary schools in central districts (Akdeniz, Toroslar, Yenisehir and Mezitli) of Mersin (Mersin Provincial Directorate of National Education, 2015). There are 395 teachers (165 male and 230 female) in the sample formed by unproportional sampling. According to figuring out the size of the sample from a population of which number of members is known (Saunders et al., 2009), the sample of the study is of 95 % confidence level, which is considered to be high enough. Detailed information about the sample is given in Table 1:

**Table 1.** Distribution of teachers according to gender and seniority

|  |  | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 165 | 41,8 |
|  | Female | 230 | 58,2 |
|  | *Total* | *395* | *100* |
| Seniority | 0−5 year | 55 | 14 |
|  | 6−10 year | 63 | 16 |
|  | 11−15 year | 87 | 22 |
|  | 16−20 year | 75 | 19 |
|  | 21 year or over | 115 | 29 |
|  | *Total* | *395* | *100* |

### Data collection tools

Data collection tool is comprised of three parts. Personal information about the participant (gender and seniority) is in the first part; "Mobbing Scale" (Laleoğlu and Özmete, 2013) to determine what extent teachers suffer from mobbing in the scond part; and "Leadership Style Scale" (Taş, Çelik and Tomul, 2007) to to measure leadership style of school administrators in the third part.

*Mobbing Scale*

It is developed by Aiello, Deitinger, Nardella and Bonafede (2008), and adapted into Turkish by Laleoğlu and Özmete (2013). The original version consists of four dimensions (relations, threatening and harassment, barriers about work and career, and work commitment) and 48 items. It was translated into Turkish and practised to test its language validity. After factor analysis to test its construct validity, 10 items were omitted as they had negative values and reduced reliability of the scale. While it has four dimensions in original version, items gather in five dimension after factor analysis of Turkish version. These are "relations with colleagues" (17 items), "threatening and harassment" (7 items), "barriers about work and career" (8 items), "interference in private life" (4 items) and "work commitment" (2 items). Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the whole scale was calculated as .94 while it is .96 for relations with colleagues, .90 for threatening and harassment, .90 for barriers about work and career, .86 for interference in private life and .93 for work commitment. These values are seen to show consistency with the original version. In this study, Cronbach Alpha coefficient for internal consistency reliability was found .92 for the scale while it is .90 for relations with colleagues, .80 for threatening and harassment, .88 for barriers about work and career, .75 for interference in private life and .77 for work commitment.

*Leadership Style Scale*

It was developed by Tas, Celik and Tomul (2007) and aimed to measure leadership style of school administrators with 59 items. The researchers benefited from opinions of professors in the field for content validity. Coefficient of internal consistency of the scale was found.87 and it has five dimensions: Autocratic leadership (10 items), democratic leadership (13 items), laissez-faire leadership (11 items), transformational leadership (15 items) and transactional leadership (10 items). Coefficient of internal consistency of the scale was .87 while it is .70 for autocratic leadership, .87 for democratic leadership, .61 for laissez-faire leadership, .91 for transformational leadership and .55 for transactional leadership. In this study, only autocratic and democratic leadership dimensions were used in line with the aim of the study and the other dimensions were

neglected. Internal consistency coefficient for these two dimensions were calculated as .70 while it is .78 for autocratic leadership and .94 for democratic leadership.

These are 5-point Likert type scales. The items were evaluated from 1 to 5 and each interval is valued as: 1,00-1,79 (Never), 1,80-2,59 (Rarely), 2,60-3,39 (Sometimes), 3,40-4,19 (Usually) and 4,20-5,00 (Always).

**Data analysis**

20.0 version of SPSS software was used in analysis of the data. Essential statistical operations were done in regard to the aims of the study by entering the obtained data into the software program. T-Test was done to determine whether there is a significant difference in mobbing level teachers suffer according to their gender. In order to determine whether the parametric test can be used or not, it was determined whether the dependent variable is normally distributed in each condition of the independent variable. For this purpose, the size of the sample, normality tests and the standard values of the skewness of the data were taken together. It was inferred from data analysis that the number of units per each condition of the independent variable was n> 30, that dependent variable of mobbing had a normal distribution, and that t-test was appropriate to be employed as the other factors were found to be in the range of -3 and +3 in the standard values of the skewness (Büyüköztürk, 2005; Klein et al., 2000).

One-way variance analysis (ANOVA) was done to determine whether there is a significant difference in mobbing level teachers suffer according to their seniority. Correlation analysis was done to determine whether there is a significant relationship between leadership styles of school administrators and mobbing level teachers experience. As a last, multiple regression analysis was done to reveal to what degree leadership styles of school administrators predict the mobbing level teachers suffer. The results were interpreted and discussed in line with these analyses. In the study, 0.05 and 0.01 were taken as significance level.

**Findings**

The findings are given in this part in accordance with aims of the study.

***Findings about teachers' opinions as to mobbing level they suffer according to their gender and senority***

**Table 2.** t-test about mobbing level teachers suffer according to their gender

| Mobbing | Gender | N | $\overline{\text{X}}$ | Sd | t | p |
|---------|--------|---|------|-----|---|---|
| Relations with Colleagues | Male | 165 | 1,32 | ,41 | 1,846 | ,066 |
| | Female | 230 | 1,25 | ,36 | | |
| Threat and Harassment | Male | 165 | 1,07 | ,27 | 1,045 | ,297 |
| | Female | 230 | 1,05 | ,15 | | |
| Barriers about work and career | Male | 165 | 1,39 | ,52 | -,180 | ,857 |
| | Female | 230 | 1,40 | ,57 | | |
| Interference in Private Life | Male | 165 | 1,27 | ,42 | 2,011 | ,045* |
| | Female | 230 | 1,18 | ,39 | | |
| Work commitment | Male | 165 | 2,24 | 1,13 | -1,305 | ,193 |
| | Female | 230 | 2,40 | 1,21 | | |

According to Table 2, gender variance makes a significant difference in "interference in private life" dimension (t=2,011; p<.05) while there is no significant diffirence in "relations with colleagues" (t=1,846; p>.05), "threat and harassment" (t=1,045; p>.05), "barriers about work and career" (t=-,180; p>.05) and "work commitment" (t=-1,305; p>.05).

In "interference in private life" dimension, the mean for male teachers' views is $\overline{X}$ =1,27 while it is $\overline{X}$ =1,18 for female teachers. That means there is a slight but significant difference between male and female teachers' views (t=2,011; p<.05). The difference has a small effect size (r²=.01). Male teachers' views about interference in private life account for the difference.

**Table 3.** One-way variance analysis about mobbing level teachers suffer according to their seniority

| Variances | Groups | n | $\overline{X}$ (mean) | sd | Source of Variance | SS (Sum of Squares) | df (degree of freedom) | MS (Mean Square) | F | P (significance) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Relations with Colleagues | 0-5 year | 55 | 1,30 | ,35 | | | | | | |
| | 6-10 years | 63 | 1,24 | ,38 | | | | | | |
| | 11-15 years | 87 | 1,29 | ,42 | Between-Groups | ,226 | 4 | ,056 | ,377 | ,825 |
| | 16-20 years | 75 | 1,30 | ,39 | Within Group | 58,395 | 390 | ,150 | | |
| | | | | | Total | 58,621 | 394 | | | |
| | 21 years or over | 115 | 1,26 | ,36 | | | | | | |
| | Total | 395 | 1,28 | ,38 | | | | | | |
| Threat and Harassment | 0-5 year | 55 | 1,05 | ,20 | | | | | | |
| | 6-10 years | 63 | 1,04 | ,09 | | | | | | |
| | 11-15 years | 87 | 1,09 | ,32 | Between-Groups | ,110 | 4 | ,028 | ,608 | ,657 |
| | 16-20 years | 75 | 1,06 | ,16 | Within Group | 17,695 | 390 | ,045 | | |
| | | | | | Total | 17,805 | 394 | | | |
| | 21 years or over | 115 | 1,05 | ,18 | | | | | | |
| | Total | 395 | 1,06 | ,21 | | | | | | |
| Barriers about work and career | 0-5 year | 55 | 1,60 | ,66 | | | | | | |
| | 6-10 years | 63 | 1,34 | ,54 | | | | | | |
| | 11-15 years | 87 | 1,36 | ,51 | Between-Groups | 2,883 | 4 | ,721 | 2,390 | ,050* |
| | 16-20 years | 75 | 1,40 | ,51 | Within Group | 117,568 | 390 | ,301 | | |
| | | | | | Total | 120,451 | 394 | | | |
| | 21 years or over | 115 | 1,35 | ,54 | | | | | | |
| | Total | 395 | 1,39 | ,55 | | | | | | |
| Interference in Private Life | 0-5 year | 55 | 1,24 | ,40 | | | | | | |
| | 6-10 years | 63 | 1,21 | ,45 | Between-Groups | ,526 | 4 | ,132 | ,783 | ,537 |
| | 11-15 years | 87 | 1,25 | ,44 | Within Group | 65,578 | 390 | ,168 | | |
| | | | | | Total | 66,105 | 394 | | | |
| | 16-20 years | 75 | 1,25 | ,42 | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 21 years or over | 115 | 1,17 | ,34 | | | | | |
| | Total | 395 | 1,22 | ,41 | | | | | |
| Work commitment | 0-5 year | 55 | 2,26 | 1,12 | Between-Groups Within Group Total | 21,204 527,512 548,716 | 4 390 394 | 5,301 1,353 | 3,919 | ,004** |
| | 6-10 years | 63 | 1,95 | 1,06 | | | | | | |
| | 11-15 years | 87 | 2,27 | 1,16 | | | | | | |
| | 16-20 years | 75 | 2,31 | 1,17 | | | | | | |
| | 21 years or over | 115 | 2,65 | 1,22 | | | | | | |
| | Total | 395 | 2,33 | 1,18 | | | | | | |

Teachers' seniority variance makes a significant difference in "barriers about work and career" ($F_{(4-390)}$= 2,390; p<.05) and "work commitment" ($F_{(4-390)}$=3,919; p<.01) while there is no significant difference in "relations with colleagues" ($F_{(4-390)}$= ,377; p>.05), "threat and harassment" ($F_{(4-390)}$= ,608; p>.05) and "interference in private life" ($F_{(4-390)}$= ,783; p>.05). Tukey HSD test was applied to find the source of difference as Tukey (honestly significant difference) test requires that the sample numbers in groups be equal (Tukey, 1949). The sample numbers in the data of this study are equal.

The difference in "barriers about work and career" dimension is between the teachers in 0-5 years group and 21 years or over group (p<.046). Teachers of 0-5 years ($\overline{X}$=1,60) appear to face more barriers about work and career compared to teachers of 21 years or over. Teachers in 0-5 years group are also the ones to face barriers the most of all groups. However, the difference seems to have a small effect size ($r^2$=.024).

The difference in work commitment dimension is between the teachers in 6-10 years group and 21 years or over group (p<.001). Teachers of 21 years or over ($\overline{X}$=2,65) have higher work commitment than of 6-10 years ($\overline{X}$=1,95). Teachers of 21 years or over indeed have the highest work commitment of all groups. However, the difference is seen to have a small effect size ($r^2$=.039).

**Findings about the relationship between leadership styles of school administrators and mobbing level teachers suffer**

**Table 4.** Correlation analysis about the relationship between leadership styles of school administrators and mobbing level teachers suffer

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | $\overline{X}$ | SS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Autocratic | 1 | | | | | | | 2,92 | ,679 |
| Democratic | -,517** | 1 | | | | | | 3,36 | ,824 |
| Relations with Colleagues | ,339** | -,226** | 1 | | | | | 1,28 | ,385 |
| Threat and Harassment | ,160** | -,167** | ,591** | 1 | | | | 1,06 | ,212 |
| Barriers about work and career | ,380** | -,237** | ,573** | ,412** | 1 | | | 1,40 | ,552 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interference in Private Life | ,258** | -,211** | ,583** | ,527** | ,496** | 1 | | 1,22 | ,409 |
| Work commitment | ,054 | ,073 | ,042 | ,040 | ,262** | ,125* | 1 | 2,34 | 1,180 |

In Table 4, results of correlation analysis as to the relationship between leadership styles of school administrators and mobbing level teachers experience can be seen. According to this, there is a positive relationship between autocratic leadership and relations with colleagues (r=.339, p<.01), threat and harassment (r=.160, p<.01), barriers about work and career (r=.380, p<.01) and interference in private life (r=.258, p<.01).

On the other hand, there is a negative relationship between democratic leadership and relations with colleagues (r= -.226, p<.01), threat and harassment (r= -.167, p<.01), barriers about work and career (r= -.237, p<.01) and interference in private life (r= -.211, p<.01).

However, work commitment dimension of mobbing is seen to have no significant relationship with autocratic (r=.054, p>.05) and democratic (r=.073, p>.05) leadership styles.

**Findings about whether leadership styles of school administrators predict the mobbing level teachers suffer**

According to Table 5, it is seen that, though at different levels, autocratic leadership predicts all dimensions of mobbing except for work commitment.

*Relations with Colleagues*

There is a signficant relationship between autocratic leadership and relations with colleagues (R=,339; R²=,115; p<.01). Autocratic leadership accounts for 11,5 % of total variance in relations with colleagues.

*Threat and Harassment*

There is a very low but signficant relationship between autocratic leadership and threat and harassment (R=,160; R²=,025; p<.01). Autocratic leadership accounts for 2,5 % of total variance in threat and harassment.

*Barriers About Work and Career*

There is a signficant relationship between autocratic leadership and barriers about work and career (R=,380; R²=,144; p<.01). Autocratic leadership accounts for 14,4 % of total variance in barriers about work and career. Autocratic leadership is seen to have the highest predictive power on barriers about work and career of all other dimensions of mobbing.

*Interference in Private Life*

There is a low but signficant relationship between autocratic leadership and interference in private life (R=,258; R²=,066; p<.01). Autocratic leadership accounts for 6,6 % of total variance in interference in private life.

*Work Commitment*

There is no signficant relationship between autocratic leadership and work commitment (R=,054; R²=,003; p>.05).

**Table 5.** Multiple regression analysis of whether autocratic leadership styles of school administrators predict the mobbing level teachers suffer

| Mobbing | Relations with Colleagues | | | | Threat and Harassment | | | | Barriers about work and career | | | | Interference in Private Life | | | | Work commitment | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variance | B | SH | β | T | B | SH | β | T | B | SH | β | T | B | SH | β | T | B | SH | β | T |
| Constant | ,718 | ,081 | - | 8,873 | ,916 | ,047 | - | 19,578 | ,495 | ,114 | - | 4,342 | ,767 | ,088 | - | 8,696 | 2,066 | ,263 | - | 7,864 |
| Autocratic | ,192 | ,027 | ,339 | 7,137 | ,050 | ,016 | ,160 | 3,204 | ,309 | ,038 | ,380 | 8,147 | ,155 | ,029 | ,258 | 5,287 | ,094 | ,087 | ,054 | 1,070 |
| | R=,339 | | R²=,115 | | R=,160 | | R²=,025 | | R=,380 | | R²=,144 | | R=,258 | | R²=,066 | | R=,054 | | R²=,003 | |
| | $F_{(1)}=50,939$ | | | | $F_{(1)}=10,268$ | | | | $F_{(1)}=66,379$ | | | | $F_{(1)}=27,951$ | | | | $F_{(1)}=3,378$ | | | |
| | p<.01 | | | | p<.01 | | | | p<.01 | | | | p<.01 | | | | p>.05 | | | |

**Table 6.** Multiple regression analysis of whether democratic leadership styles of school administrators predict the mobbing level teachers suffer

| Mobbing | Relations with Colleagues | | | | Threat and Harassment | | | | Barriers about work and career | | | | Interference in Private Life | | | | Work commitment | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variance | B | SH | β | T | B | SH | β | T | B | SH | β | T | B | SH | β | T | B | SH | β | T |
| Constant | 1,635 | ,080 | - | 20,555 | 1,207 | ,044 | - | 27,198 | 1,933 | ,114 | - | 16,998 | 1,574 | ,085 | - | 18,566 | 1,986 | ,249 | - | 7,971 |
| Democratic | -,106 | ,023 | -,226 | -4,592 | -,043 | ,013 | -,167 | -3,363 | -,159 | ,033 | -,237 | -4,828 | -,105 | ,025 | -,211 | -4,278 | ,105 | ,072 | ,073 | 1,461 |
| | R=,226 | | R²=,051 | | R=,167 | | R²=,028 | | R=,237 | | R²=,056 | | R=,211 | | R²=,044 | | R=,073 | | R²=,005 | |
| | $F_{(1)}=21,090$ | | | | $F_{(1)}=11,307$ | | | | $F_{(1)}=23,313$ | | | | $F_{(1)}=18,298$ | | | | $F_{(1)}=2,134$ | | | |
| | p<.01 | | | | p<.01 | | | | p<.01 | | | | p<.01 | | | | p>.05 | | | |

According to Table 6, it is seen that, though at low levels, democratic leadership predicts all dimensions of mobbing except for work commitment.

*Relations with Colleagues*

There is a signficant relationship between democratic leadership and relations with colleagues (R=,226; R²=,051; p<.01). Democratic leadership accounts for 5,1 % of total variance in relations with colleagues.

*Threat and Harassment*

There is a very low but signficant relationship between democratic leadership and threat and harassment (R=,167; R²=,028; p<.01). Democratic leadership accounts for 2,8 % of total variance in threat and harassment.

*Barriers About Work and Career*

There is a signficant relationship between democratic leadership and barriers about work and career (R=,237; R²=,056; p<.01). Democratic leadership accounts for 5,6 % of total variance in barriers about work and career.

*Interference in Private Life*

There is a low but signficant relationship between democratic leadership and interference in private life (R=,211; R²=,044; p<.01). Democratic leadership accounts for 4,4 % of total variance in interference in private life.

*Work Commitment*

There is no signficant relationship between democratic leadership and work commitment (R=,073; R²=,005; p>.05).

### 3. Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the relationship between autocratic and democratic leadership styles of school administrators and the mobbing teachers suffer was examined in different aspects.

In this regard, the answer to the question "Is there a significant difference in mobbing teachers experience in terms of gender?" was found that gender accounts for a significant diference in only "interference in private life" of all five dimensions of mobbing. Male teachers state there is more interference in their private life than the female teachers. It appears interesting though difference inbetween is not so high. It is probable to explain this result through construction process of social gender roles in Turkey, where patriarchy dominates the social structure. Powel and Greenhaus (2010) express that social culture determines the expectations as to in what way men and women as individuals should think and behave, and they add that this structure the society. By this way, boys and girls develop a social gender identity along with gender roles in the social environment they live in (Günay and Bener, 2011). Amaratunga, Haigh and Shanmungan (2006) state in their study that these traditional gender roles specified by the society require the women to engage mostly in domestic responsibilities and to contribute to employment as supplemental labour to men. Employment of women is perceived acceptable only if they are able to perform their traditional gender roles as required. Regarding these roles, educational system has a masculine characteristic. Particularly in a patriarchal society, women undertake domestic works such as houseworks and child care, whereas men has the responsibilities of earning family's keep. Therefore, the man perceived as the householder is accepted as an authority in the family. Based on the role and position of men in the family, women can be thought to perceive their administrators as an authority in their business life and thus not to take their administrators' words and behaviours as an interference in their private life. Similarly at school, female teachers may see such behaviours as what their principals should do normally.

The answer to the second question "Is there a significant difference in mobbing teachers experience in terms of seniority?" was found that seniority accounts for a significant difference in "barriers about work and career" and "work commitment" dimensions of mobbing. In barriers about work and career dimension, teachers of 0–5 years seniority are seen to suffer mobbing more than of 21 years or over seniority. When considered that teachers of 0–5 years seniority experience mobbing the most of all other seniority groups, it can be said that newly appointed teachers are the ones who face barriers most. Teachers suffer inexperience in all aspects in early years of teaching and thus, compared to other senior teachers, they need to show more effort both educational activities and relationships with students and administrators. Moreover, the fact that teachers are inexperienced in their early years of teaching leads them to feel burnout especially when they

cannot get enough guidance they need from their administrators (Inandi, 2009). On the other hand, it is observed that shool administrators exploit these teachers' inexperience rather than guiding and supporting them. Similar results were found in Erdemir (2007) and Sarı and Altun's (2015) studies. They express that school administrators do not help newly appointed teachers but treat them as "administrating prosecutor". There is also a significant difference between teachers of 6–10 years seniority and 21 years or over seniority in terms of work commitment. Teachers of 21 years or over are seen to have work commitment more than of 6–10 years. It is not rational to expect a high level of work commitment from teachers of 6–10 years seniority as they are also in the early years of professional life and might as well face barriers. Durna and Eren (2005) found out in their study conducted with a mixed group of educaion and medical staff that commitment of teachers and medical staff gets higher in direct proportion to their age and seniority. This result parallels with Suliman and Iles' (2000) study. In accordance with age and seniority, compatibility between individual and organizational values improves and the invest people have in their job and organization mounts up. It seems quite natural that people who do not want to give up the investment have high commitment. Gündoğan (2009) also revealed that workers of 0–10 years seniority have weaker emotional commitment than of 21 years or over. Seyhan (2014) showed that workers of 21 years or over seniority have generally higher organizational commitment than other staff. Regarding that seniority improves in line with age in educational organizations, this result is supported by Marshall, Lassk and Moncrief' (2004) findings that age is determinant on work commitment. In contrast to these studies, Topaloğlu, Koç and Yavuz (2008) showed in their study that teachers of 0–5 years seniority have higher organizational commitment than other seniority groups. However, it is also seen in the same study that organizational commitment of teachers start to rise after 16 years, which suports the research results above. With reference to these results in the administrational area, the fact that newly appointed teachers must be supported and motivated by their administrators will result in positive outcomes such as high level of school success, increase in teachers' motivation and decline in misbehaviours of students.

The answer to the third question "Is there a significant relationship between leadership styles (democratic and autocratic) of school administrators and mobbing teachers experience?" was found that a positive relationship is observed between autocratic leadership and all dimensions of mobbing except for work commitment while there is a negative relationship between democratic leadership and all dimensions of mobbing except for work commitment. In other words, teachers state that they suffer mobbing more as their school administrators show autocratic behaviours but they experience mobbing less under democratic leadership. The positive relationship between autocratic leadership and mobbing is particularly supported by the researches in the area (Shahbazi et al., 2013; Ertüreten et al., 2013; O'Moore, Lynch, 2007). It is a fact that administrators who adopt autocratic leadership style try to maintain strict, hierarchial structure of the organization, make decisions by himself and prioritize the work rather than workers. Therefore, it is quite likely that he creates barriers for workers, threatens and harasses them to finish the work, have negative effect on relations between colleagues and interfere in their private life. Vartia (1996) indicates that autocratic leadership causes mobbing and other problems withn the organization while democratic leadership contributes to equality and balance within the organization. It is observed in the study by Vugt and his friends (2004) that, in the organizations where autocratic leadership is exhibited, workers tend to leave their work regardless of all other advantages. On the other hand, Woods (2004) states that democratic leadership encourages workers to participate in decision making, requires respect to others and offers everybody right to actualise their expectations. Telli, Ünsar and Oğuzhan (2012) revealed in their study that autocratic leadership increases burnout and has effect on tendency to leave of employment. School administrators with democratic leadership, on the contrary, helps workers have higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship and contributes to a more positive organizational culture. If the individual feels happy in his organizaiton, turnover, burnout and reluctance to work will be observed less, which will influence the educational organizaitons positively in all aspects.

The answer to the last question "To what extent do leadership styles (democratic and autocratic) of school administrators predict the mobbing teachers experience?" was found that autocratic and democratic leadership styles of school administrators predict all dimensions of the mobbing teachers suffer except for work commitment though at different rates. There is no doubt that there are numerous reasons for the mobbing teachers suffer. Leadership style of the school

administrator is one of them. In this regard, it can be seen that autocratic leadership considerably predicts the dimensions of "barriers about work and career" and "relations with colleagues". That's because workers would like a comfortable, peaceful and secure workplace. In context of autocratic leadership, it is inevitable that the administrator does not trust the workers or participate them in decision making, always watches and inspects them. Such a pressure leads the workers to suffer mobbing though they mostly do not realize it. Hoel and his friends (2010) also revealed that autocratic leadership has a predictive power on mobbing. However, it is seen that democratic leadership does not predict mobbing as high as autocratic leadership. Examining the other leadership styles (transformational and transactional), Daşçı and Cemaloğlu (2015) found out that leadership styles of school administrators are determinant on the mobbing teachers experience. They put emphasis that "a leadership style in which moral values are attached importance" is needed. Therefore, the democratic leadership style examined in this study is of great importance to meet the need mentioned above.

In conclusion, male teachers think that they suffer mobbing more than female teachers. School administrators need to adopt democratic understanding of administration which makes much of human relations. It seems beneficial that school administrators get training about democratic administration at convenience of the ministry and administrators.

It is also understood that teachers suffer mobbing in their early years of teaching. The school administrators, counselors and advisor teachers need to assist them at this period. A programme about this problem can be initiated covering all the school in the country.

As democratic leadership is adopted, mobbing is less observed, and vice versa with autocratic leadership. Therefore, the ministry must provide school administrators with in-service trainings for human-driven understanding of administration.

The relationship between leadership styles (autocratic and democratic) of school administrators and mobbing teachers suffer is examined in this study. The researchers can investigate the relationship between other leadership styles and mobbing. Moreover, the relationship between leadership styles and organizaitonal alienation can be studied.

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