An Evaluation on Principals' Managerial Behaviors:
The Profile of Principal from the Teachers' Point of View

Turgut Karaköse

Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education, Dumlupinar University, Turkey

Abstract: This study aims to reveal the profile of principal from the teachers' point of view by determining the perceptions of teachers about their own principals' managerial behaviors. Data was collected via monograph method (sample case survey method). In this context, teachers were asked to tell about a positive or negative experience of theirs with their principals briefly. In the study, quotations from real experiences of teachers with their own principals were presented, and the principals' managerial behaviors were analyzed and interpreted. At the end of the study, it was understood that most of the teachers mainly spoke about negative managerial behaviors. Participant teachers in the study generally criticized the ethical leadership of their principals, and stated that they weren't satisfied with the principals' ethical behaviors. On the other hand, it was also found that principals performed sufficiently such cultural leadership acts as attending important ceremonies and organizing various sports and cultural meetings.

Key words: Managerial behavior · principals · leadership · school management

INTRODUCTION

Since organizations are made up of individuals with different aims and characteristics, there will always be a need for efficient leaders who can lead them in the way of the organization's aims. This can be explained with one of the most important characteristics of humankind- the need for "leading and being led" [1]. Unless these individuals with different aims and characteristics in the organization are well-led, each will try to realize his own aim, thus causing a chaos in the organization and making the organizational aims difficult to be achieved. Achieving the organizational aims is related closely to the leadership features of the manager, which ascribes huge responsibilities to managers.

When viewed from the point of educational organizations, the same case rules. Schools are made up of individuals with different characteristics (e.g. teachers, students, officials, etc.). The priority task of a principal is to lead the wishes and expectations of his employees who have different aims to the school's common aims. If he is equipped with individual and professional requirements, it will be easier to reach these aims. Indeed, Acikalin's [2] remark- "a school is quality only as good as its principal"- confirms this idea. In other words, to be administered of a school effectively depends highly on the quality of its principal and management concept.

In today's information age, there have been crucial changes in the roles of principals. As one of the major components of the education system, principals have been the subject of numerous studies [3, 4] which have pointed out that they play the first fiddle in the efficiency and productivity of the school. They should, therefore, be aware of the fact that the traditional role of management is no longer valid in modern concept of management, and that they should, from now on, undertake new responsibilities. In the relevant literature, while it used to be stated in the previous years that teachers and principals perform similar tasks (e.g. maintenance of the school building, students' enrolment, discipline works, etc.) later there became some changes in their roles due to the rise in the number and capacity of schools [5-10].

One of the main roles of principals is to perpetuate its school in harmony with its organizational aims. It is the principal who organizes, inspires, leads and inspects his employees so as to realize the aims of the school [11]. In this context, it can be argued that there is a close relation between the success of the organization and the leadership behaviors of its principal. In fact, a study

Corresponding Author: Dr. Turgut Karaköse, Department of Educational Science, Faculty of Education, Dumlupinar University, (Merkez Kampus), Kütahya, 43020, Turkey

by Edmons [12] emphasizes that the success of a school requires a strong leadership in its principal.

This study is important in determining the problems between teachers and principals by means of sample cases acquired from teachers, and suggesting solutions. It is also hoped that the study on how principals are perceived by teachers and the discussion of desired and undesired principals' managerial behaviors will shed light on similar studies in the future. Therefore, the problem sentence of the study can be expressed as "*revealing the profile of principal from the teachers' point of view by determining the perceptions of teachers about their own principals*".

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Objective and model of the study: This study aims to reveal the profile of principal from the teachers' point of view by determining the perceptions of teachers about their own principals' managerial behaviors. To this end, sample case survey model (monograph method) was used while collecting the data. In this context, the subjects were asked to give us briefly a *negative or positive sample case* they had experienced with their principals. The data acquired at the end of the study is hoped to determine principals' managerial behaviors and to contribute to the solution of possible problems between teachers and their principals.

Participants: The population of the study is composed of teachers at state high schools in the city of Kütahya, a province located in the western part of Turkey. Sampling was used since the population was too large. Therefore, high schools of The Ministry of National Education were selected randomly among the lower, middle and upper socio-economical levels through group sampling. Thus, the teachers at these schools became the sampling of the study. The 854 teachers in the sampling were handed out sample case sheets, and 410 of them handed back the forms and their ideas were included into the study. Their personal characteristics are as follows: 37.6% of the subjects were female, whereas 62.4% were male; 33.2% of them had a service period of 1-10 years, whereas 41.5% had 11-20 years and 25.3% had over 21 years of service.

Data collection/analysis: In this study, information was acquired via monograph method (sample case survey model) to determine the principal profile from the teachers' point of view. Sample case survey models are often used in through-study of such social units as organizations, society, groups and individuals. In these models, the case, individual or subject of the study is defined as presented in their own contexts and as they are. The studies in this model are more detailed and present information closer to reality than those in general survey models; therefore, they are of higher quality. The data in such studies are related only to the unit studies; therefore, they cannot be generalized. However, by increasing the number of the cases studied, generalization can be done [13-18]. Within the context of the study, quotations from the real experiences of the teachers with their own principals were studied and the principals' behaviors were analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, teachers were asked to tell about a *positive or negative experience* of theirs with their principals briefly. However, some teachers didn't accept the sample case sheet and most of the rest didn't fill in the forms for fear that what their statements might cause a negative image about their principals. Therefore, the return of the sample case forms was only 48%. Some of the teachers interviewed face-to-face expressed their worries about the subject as such:

"*… if I mention about a negative or positive experience with my principal, I am worried that this might somehow be learned by the principal. As a matter of fact, a similar event happened before and undesired unrest occurred between teachers and the principal…*"

"*… if I give such a written statement, I will fell as if I am squealing on my principal. Moreover, if he hears about what I will tell you, he will be angry and will never give me peace at work…*"

"*… giving such a written statement is nothing but a complaint letter. Never expect from me to do such a thing. After all, he is my superior…*"

Due to the reasons mentioned above, a great majority of the sample case forms handed out to the participants didn't turn back. The fact that the sample cases would be about the principals caused the teachers to be more discreet and decreased the interest in the sample case study. Considering their previous experiences, it is understood that the worries of the teachers aren't groundless.

When the written texts were analyzed, it was understood that a great majority of the sample cases (64%) were *negative*. Only 36% of the subject gave *positive* statements, which might be considered as a matter of concern for the school management. The distribution of the words used most often are as follows: "justice, tolerance, respect, getting angry, punishment, trust, sincerity, reward, principal's office and compliment". As such, it can be argued that the teachers preferred generally such words as "justice, tolerance and respect"- all of which are about *ethical behaviors* expected from the school management. The teachers expect from their principals to behave frankly, stand by them on good and bad days. There are numerous principals who don't enter the teachers' room for days and build psychological barriers between the teachers and themselves. It is difficult for this type of principals to perform a good leadership for their teachers [19]. Below are some *original sample cases* between teachers and principals:

"… I have been a teacher for ages, but I have never seen my principal come into the teachers' room and have a chat with us sharing our happiness and sorrows…" (Participant number: 21)

"… in my opinion, our principal is only doing his managerial duties; that is, he is only dealing with the physical conditions of our school and carrying out his official stationery works. He never deals with the expectations and problems of his teachers and never visits the teachers' room…" (Participant number: 127)

Depending on the statements of the teachers above, it could be understood that the principals treat bureaucratically to his colleagues, never visit the teachers' room, don't allocate enough time for his teachers and cannot achieve an efficient communication, which shows a contrast with the findings of the research carried out by Pitner [20], who found in his study that principals allocated a lot of time for his colleagues and paid visits to them regularly al school getting busy with their matters. Some other writers studying the principals [3, 4] also emphasized that they should pay regular visits to classrooms and teachers' room instead of sitting in their office.

As in other organizations, schools also have their own cultures. Ever body in school is affected by this culture. In order for the school to achieve its aims, it is important to develop and enhance the school culture. At this point, the cultural leadership of principal looms large. Cultural leadership can be defined as motivating the organization members in accordance with its aims through the values, beliefs and norms shared by the individuals in an organization [21, 22]. The cultural leadership role of principal is about getting cultural values accepted and to perpetuate at school. The teachers involved in the study presented their positive opinions about the principals' cultural leadership behaviors as such:

"… one of our female colleagues died of a terrible illness recently. Our principal offered to attend her funeral collectively although it was in another city, which touched us and made us all proud. After this incidence, all my colleagues felt more respect and love for our principal…" (Participant number: 8)

"… our principal takes us out to dinner at certain times like the teachers' day. He chats with us and tries to find solutions for our problems. I think this is very important…" (Participant number: 34)

Another important finding of the study is that the teachers stated that principals performed such cultural leadership behaviors as attending important ceremonies and organizing various cultural meetings. When the principals organize various activities in certain times like sports and cultural activities, stuff reunions and award ceremonies in order to facilitate cultural values, they might be able to achieve unity at school and more attachment of their teachers to their organization [19]. Cultural activities in the lead of the principal not only enable collective unity but also facilitate the promotion of the organization.

A manager is the one who facilitates participation into decision making, and the success of the organization is directly related to the decision of the manager [23, 24]. The decisions within the organization should be applied. They will, otherwise, only remain as goodwill attempts and will have no effect on the efficiency of the organization [25]. In this context, it can be argued that there is a close relation between the decision making and decision application strategies of a principal and the efficiency of the school. Some of the teachers stated that their principals didn't seek their opinion while decision making. Some of their opinions are as follows:

"… our principal come up with some questions in teachers' meetings and ask for our opinions about them. However, he never takes them into account and does as he wishes, which discourages us…" (Participant number: 259)

"… our principal let us use the equipment of the school limitedly in the name of protecting it. In other words, he is afraid of yielding the services for the use of students and teachers. Moreover, he never seeks for our opinions in managerial matters at school…" (Participant number: 91)

English and Hill [26] state that consulting the opinions of teachers in any matter while having a decision will only increase the level of success in that decision. For this reason, principals had better consult their teachers and share the managerial power with them [2, 1, 27]. This participation will also strengthen the ties of the staff with the organization and will increase their self-confidence and motivation.

In order to secure efficiency in educational organizations, it is important that teachers be motivated and encouraged. Their motivation, efficiency and satisfaction are primarily under the responsibility of principals. Valuing a teacher's personality, securing a good relationship among the staff members will not only keep him motivated but also raise his efficiency. Some of the teachers' opinions confirming this opinion are as follows:

"… the fact that I strive hard for the success of my students is known by both the students and the school management. Therefore, my principal gave some compliments to me in the teachers' meeting, which made me really proud and encouraged me to work harder…" (Participant number: 393)

"… it is a well-known fact at school that I have a good relation with my students and I really treat them with love and tolerance. Naturally, in turn, this positive atmosphere in the classroom has a positive effect on the success of my students. In this context, my principal always presents me as an example to my colleagues. This makes me proud and increases my job-satisfaction…" (Participant number: 5)

As seen above, teachers stated that their principals treated them with tolerance and honored them when necessary and thus increased their job satisfaction. People like being honored and appreciated for what they have achieved and this makes them feel special [28]. Therefore, principals never neglect rewarding. Even a simple "Thank you" might sometimes encourage a teacher to work harder and increase his willingness and morale. An organization should perform ethical behaviors in order to be strong and efficient, and in addition, to have a reputation in the society [29, 30]. Schools also have some responsibilities in the society. In this context, the success

of a school can be said to have a close relation with the ethical leadership of its principal. Therefore, they should be role models for their staff with their ethical behaviors. Some of these ethic principles at and outside the school are as follows: being honest and objective, showing respect to individuals, being tolerant and fair towards the staff [31, 32]. A great majority of the teachers in this study had criticisms for the ethical leadership of their principals, and expressed their uneasiness about the unethical behaviors of their principals. Some of their opinions are as follows:

"… our principal prefers rewarding not the ones who work hard and become successful but those who seems closer to him. He treats the staff accordingly…" (Participant number: 14)
"… I am really disappointed that our principal is not fair in rewarding, which affects my studies and performance negatively. Moreover, he never treats his staff justly, reprimands them and never pleases his staff…" (Participant number: 376)

From the statements above, it can be seen that the principals don't treat justly to their staff, has some moral deficiencies and sometimes hurt them. Ethical leaders, on the other hand, should always act upon the ethic principles in personal and professional life [33]. When principals exhibit ethical behaviors in and outside of school, not only the opinions about the organization in the society will be positive, but also lead the staff to act accordingly. Therefore, principals should perform their professional responsibilities with honesty, should be tolerant and fair to their staff, and should always abstain from such unethical behaviors as being disrespectful and breaking a promise.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the fact that the sample cases to be given by teachers will be about their principals made them discreet about the matter and decreased the interest in the study. On the other hand, it was seen that a great majority of the participant teachers (64%) mentioned about *negative* sample cases about their principals. In addition, it was also understood that the junior teachers refrained from making negative statements about their principals while the senior ones were blunter and open in their criticism.

When the sample cases were analyzed, it was determined that teachers used such words as "justice, tolerance, respect, trust and sincerity" – all of which are about the ethical behaviors of managers- very often in

their statements. A great number of the participant teachers criticized the ethical leadership of their principals and expressed their uneasiness about it. When principals show ethical behaviors in and outside the school, their staff will be motivated to do the same accordingly. Therefore, they should be careful in performing their professional responsibilities honestly, be fair and tolerant to their staff and respect the individual rights of their staff.

On the other hand, the teachers revealed that their principals treat them bureaucratically, don't allocate enough time for them and don't ask their opinion while decision making. When the participation of the staff in decision making is secured, their ties with the organization will be stronger and the decisions will be applied more easily. Therefore, principals should act upon the principle of "involving the staff into decision making".

The teachers stated that their principals deal sufficiently with cultural leadership behaviors such as attending important ceremonies and organizing various cultural meetings. When principals organize activities in certain times to promote cultural values at school, he might achieve the staff unity and promotion of the school in the neighborhood.

Principals should have human, moral and cultural efficiencies that are the requirements of effective leadership as well as technical abilities. They should always treat their staff sincerely, dealing with their problems and providing guidance for them besides performing their formal responsibilities for them.

REFERENCES

1. Aydin, M., 2000. Educational management. Ankara, Hatiboglu Publications.
2. Acikalin, A., 1998. School administration with institutional and social directions. Ankara, Basak Press.
3. Balci, A., 1999. Training of educational administrators, National Symposium of Turkish Educational System in 21ˢᵗ Century. Ankara, Ankara University E. F. Publications.
4. Ozden, Y., 1998. Transformation in education. Ankara, PEGEM-A Publication.
5. Coulson, A.A., 1980. The role of primary head, (In T. Bush, R. Glather and J. Goodey eds) Approaches to school management, 48, Sheffield City Polytechnic, Sheffield.
6. Campbell, R.J., 1985. Developing the primary school curriculum, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, London.
7. Sergiovanni, T., 2001. The Principalship: A reflective practice perspective. (4th Ed) MA, Alyn Bacon, Boston.
8. Beck, L. G. and J. Murphy, 1993. Understanding the Principalship: Metaphorical themes, 1920s-1990s. New York, Columbia University Teachers College Press.
9. Blase, J. and P. Kirby, 2000. Bringing out the best in teachers: what effective principals do. (2nd Edn.), CA, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks.
10. Karip, E. and K. Koksal, 1999. Training of school administrations. Educational Administration: Theory and Practice, 18: 193-207.
11. Gursel, M., 1995. School management. Konya, Inci Publications.
12. Edmonds, R.R., 1979. Effective schools for the urban poor. Educational Leadership, 37: 15-27.
13. Karasar, N., 1999. Scientific research method. Ankara, Nobel Publications.
14. Hopkins, C.D., 1980. Understanding educational research. A Bell and Howell, Ohio.
15. Nisbet, J., and J. Watt, 1984. Conducting small scale investigations in educational management. London, The Open University.
16. Gucluol, K., 1989. Decision and examples events in educational management. Ankara, Kadioglu Press.
17. Patton, M.O., 1990. Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods. CA: SAGE, New Park.
18. Borg, W.R. and M.D. Gall, 1983. Educational research: An introduction. New York.
19. Celik, V., 2000. School Culture and Management. Ankara, PEGEM-A Publication.
20. Pitner, N., 1981. Hormones and harems: Are the activities of superintending different for a woman? (Collected by P. Schmuck *et al.*), Educational Policy and management: Sex differentials. New York, Academic Press.
21. Beyer, J. M. and L.D. Browning, 1999. Transforming an industry in crisis: Charisma, routinization, and supportive cultural leadership. Leadership Quarterly, 10 (3): 483-520.
22. Hallinger, P., 2004. Meeting the challenges of cultural leadership: The changing role of principals in Thailand. Discourse: Studies in the cultural politics of education, 25 (1): 61-73.
23. Robertson, P. and P. Wohlstetter, 1995. Generating curriculum and instructional through school-based management. Educational Administration Quarterly, 31 (3): 375-405.

24. Drucker, P., 1992. The effective executive. Harper and Row, New York.

25. Karsli, M.D., 2004. Managerial effectiveness. Ankara, PEGEM-A Publication.

26. English, F.W. and J.C. Hill, 1990. Restructuring: The Principal and curriculum change. A report of the NASSP curriculum council, National Association of Secondary School.

27. Brown, M. and B. Boyle, 1999. Commonalities between perception and practice in models of school decision-making in secondary schools. School Leadership and Management, 19 (3): 319-331.

28. Bentley, T., 1999. The art of Motivating people. (Translated by O. Yildirim into Turkish). Istanbul, Hayat Publications.

29. Fulmer, R.M., 2004. The challenge of ethical leadership. Organizational Dynamics, 33 (3): 307–317.

30. Karaköse, T., 2007. Organizations' DNA: Reputation and Management. Ankara, Nobel Press.

31. Howe, E., and J. Kaufman, 1983. Ethics and professional practice, In W. N. Dunn (Ed.), Value, ethics, and practices of policy analysis (pp: 9-31). MA: Lexington, D.C. Heath Company.

32. Smith, R., 1997. Essential ethical considerations in teaching. Education, 117: 17-21.

33. Brown, M.E. and L.K. Trevino, 2006. Ethical leadership: A review and future directions. The Leadership Quarterly, 17: 595–616.