The relationship between school principals’ leadership styles and collective teacher efficacy

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This study aims to determine the relationship between school administrators’ leadership styles and the collective teacher efficacy based on teachers’ perceptions. In line with this objective, the multifactor leadership style scale and the collective teacher efficacy scale were applied on 223 teachers who were working in the province of Erzurum. Pearson’s Moment Correlation Analysis and Multilinear Regression Analysis techniques were utilized in analyzing the obtained data. It was concluded that there was a significant relationship between school principals’ leadership styles and the collective teacher efficacy. It was also found that the school principals’ transformational, transactional and Laissez-faire leadership styles had the power to predict the collective teacher efficacy at a significant level.

Key words: Leadership, school principal, collective efficacy.

INTRODUCTION

School is the foundation of the educational system. The general aim of the educational activities in the schools is to provide the individuals with experience and prepare them for the future. The effectiveness of the schools, which are at the center of the educational organizations, depends to a great extent on the effectiveness of the administrators who are responsible for conducting school activities and the teaching curriculum. Among the basic duties of the administrators are to channel the school resources to organizational objectives in the most effective manner and enable the teaching curriculum to fulfill its aims by coordinating the school resources. The effectiveness and efficacy of the administrators are closely related with whether or not they have the leadership features and use these features (Bursalioglu, 1979; Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Sisman and Turan, 2004; Sekerci and Aypay, 2009).

Leadership is probably the sole skill that makes ordinary people achieve extraordinary and astonishing things (Kotter, 2007). The effective leadership features exhibited by school administrators significantly affect the school’s functioning and student success.

As leaders, school administrators are expected to have the following features (Turan and Sisman, 2000; Ozden, 2006; Moyles, 2006; Chika and Ebele, 2008; Tahaoglu and Gedikoglu, 2009).

1- The ability to perceive reality and themselves correctly
2- The ability to use their intuition
3- The ability to motivate themselves for change and new learning that is brought by change
4- The ability to endure the constant change and the constant tension that results from the new learning that is brought by constant change
5- The ability and desire to share power and control with their employees
6- The ability and desire to ensure the participation of others
7- The ability to analyze the organizational culture and develop a new organizational culture

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Leadership needs of our schools, which constitute the heart of our educational system, changes according to the distinctive atmosphere of each school. The leadership behaviors expected from the school administrators differ in line with the environment in which each school is located and the student profiles and teacher profiles of each school. A leadership type, which is valid for one school, may not be valid for another school (Ozdemir and Sezgin, 2002; Sisman and Turan, 2004; Celik, 2002). When the studies conducted on the subject are examined, it is observed that leadership has been studied from many different perspectives (DuFour, 2004; Durukan, 2006; Aydogan, 2008; Yukl, 2010; Cerit, 2008; Karadag et al., 2009). Especially, the studies conducted on the transformational leadership showed that this leadership style is an effective leadership style in achieving the organizational objectives. The leaders, who have the transformational leadership features, are able to influence their employees more easily and direct them to fulfill the organizational objectives (Buluc, 2009; Cemaloglu, 2007a; Samier, 2008; Celik, 2000; Sisman, 2002).

Three types of leadership

Laissez-faire leadership

The administrators, who embrace this leadership type, exhibit behaviors that need administrative power the least; leave followers to their own devices; and provide opportunity for the followers to form their objectives, plans and programs in accordance with the resources given to them. They do not defend their power and leave their right to exercise power to their subordinates (Eren, 1989). They abstain from expressing their opinions in important matters. They fail in taking decisions and exercising or postponing the taken decisions. This type of school leaders must be viewed as school administrators that sit in their rooms; that talk with as less students and employees as possible; that do not pay attention to the needs of teachers and developments of students; and that let everything continue as is (Hoy and Miskel, 2012).

Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership style is based upon the traditions and the past. Transactional leaders form their organizational cultures with the existing rules, procedures and norms. The administrators, who exhibit behaviors of transactional leadership type, use their power to reward their employees and give money and status to them to make them exert more effort (Stewart, 2006; Jacky and Coleman, 2007; Oguz, 2011).

Transformational leadership

Transformational leaders are the leaders that are alert for the career development of their subordinates and that direct them to work together on the basis of respect and sharing to fulfill the common objectives of the organization. The only objective of the transformational leadership at school level is to create schools that are appropriate to the requirements of the age. Transformational leadership behaviors have a determining role for schools to adapt to the changing environmental conditions, follow up scientific and technological developments and increase the educational quality (Eraslan, 2004; Adair, 2007). Transformational leadership style provides implementation opportunity for understanding, tolerance, motivation and self-fulfillment at the highest level. Transformational leaders also play the role of a savior for the teachers who are on the verge of leaving their profession. Thanks to this leadership type, teachers love their profession and embrace their organizational and individual aims again (Dunham, 1995; Spillane, 2003; Korkmaz, 2007).

Collective efficacy

In general sense, efficacy is defined as a person’s ability to fulfill the roles that are expected from him/her in adequate quality and quantity (Balci, 2005). The concepts of self-efficacy and collective efficacy are among the concepts that Bandura (1986) asserted in his social cognitive theory (Kurt, 2009). Collective efficacy of teachers signifies their perceptions regarding their skill to work together and their capacity to work.

The conducted studies point out that both self-efficacy perception and collective efficacy perception can increase one’s performance by affecting success expectations and level of motivation (Ross et al., 2004; Ocal and Aydin, 2009; Guo et al., 2010).

School principals have an important share in shaping the collective efficacy of the teachers. By exhibiting their transformational leadership features, they can support the self-efficacy perceptions of the teachers while improving and strengthening their collective efficacy perceptions (Kurt, 2009).

When the related literature is examined, it is understood that the number of studies, which were conducted on the relationships between the behaviors of school administrators and the collective efficacy of the teachers in Turkey, is not adequate. The aim of this study is the determine the level at which school principals’ leadership styles predict the collective efficacy of teachers based upon the relationship which is considered to exist between school principals’ leadership styles and collective teacher efficacy.

METHODOLOGY

Design

This research was devised in the relational design in order to
Table 1. Frequency and percentage distributions regarding the demographic information on the sample group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>223</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.8</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>223</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>223</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Reliability and standard deviations of leadership style and collective teacher efficacy scales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Number of Item</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Sd</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership style scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Transformational Leadership</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Transaction Leadership</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Laissez-Faire Leadership</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>136.7</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective teacher efficacy</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>12.40</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

determine the relationship between school principals’ leadership styles and collective teacher efficacy based on teachers’ perceptions.

Participants

The universe of the research is composed of elementary school teachers who work Erzurum provincial center in the 2011 to 2012 school year. Easily accessible sampling method was used in the research, and 223 elementary school teachers constituted the sample of the research. Demographic information on the sample group is given in Table 1.

Data collection tools

Two data collection tools, namely as multifunction leadership style scale and collective teacher efficacy scale were used in the research. The information regarding these scales is presented as follows.

Collective teacher efficacy scale

The scale, which was developed by Goddard et al. (2000), was translated into Turkish by Kurt (2009), and its validity analysis and reliability analysis were conducted. The scale was graded from completely disagree (1) option to completely agree (6) option. The total variance, which could be explained by the scale, was found as 57.89%, and it was designed as one-dimensional. The reliability of the scale was calculated as .80. The reliability coefficient, which was recalculated for this study, was found as .91.

Multifactor leadership style scale

The scale, which was developed by Bass and Avolio (1990), was translated into Turkish by Akdogan (2002) under three factors, namely as transformational leadership, transactional leadership and Laissez-faire leadership after its explanatory factor analysis had been conducted. The five-point Likert Type scale is composed of a total of 36 items with the following options: Never (1), Rarely (2), Sometimes (3), Often (4) and Always (5). Cronbach’s Alpha value of the calculated internal consistency of the scale was found to be between .70 and .98. The number of items, average scores, standard deviations and reliability coefficients of both scales are presented in Table 2.

FINDINGS

Findings on the relationship between school principals’ leadership styles and collective teacher efficacy

As seen in Table 3, positive and statistically significant relationships were found between collective teacher efficacy perceptions and transformational leadership scores \( r = .25 \), transactional leadership scores \( r = .29 \) and
Transformational leaders can influence teachers' efficacy to a significant level in terms of teachers' organizational health. They increase the collective efficacy by binding the individual ideologies of the followers to the collective identity of the organization. Transformational leaders positively affect teachers' sense of belonging towards the school; teachers improve themselves in occupational terms; the school exhibits more features of a learning organization; the organization is climate friendly; the resources are utilized effectively and productively; the school exhibits more features of a learning organization; teachers are protected against external pressure; teachers' sense of belonging towards the school is strengthened; and their morale is high (Cemaloglu, 2007b).

However, when the leadership styles of the school administrators were examined separately, it was concluded that the transformational leadership style and the Laissez-faire leadership style were single-handedly able to predict the collective efficacy scores of the teachers at a significant level.

**DISCUSSION**

In the research, it was concluded that there was a statistically significant relationship between collective teacher efficacy and school administrators' transformational, transactional and Laissez-faire leadership styles. When the obtained results are examined, it is observed that there are many studies in the literature, which support the results of this study (Spillane, 2003; Caprara et al., 2006; Sekerci and Aypay 2009; Kurt, 2009; Fancera and Bliss, 2011). If the school administrators have transformational leadership efficacies, this will bring along the change, innovation, cooperation, high performance and quality in the school organization as well as an organizational culture (Sergivonni, 1984; Eraslan, 2004; Cybulski et al., 2005). Making emotional and ideological explanations, transformational leaders can increase the collective efficacy by binding the individual identity of the followers to the collective identity of the organization (Stewart, 2006; Kurt, 2009; Lee et al., 2011). It is observed that the school administrators, who exhibit transformational leadership features, positively affect organizational health in the schools where they work; teachers improve themselves in occupational terms; the school exhibits more features of a learning organization; the resources are utilized effectively and productively; the teachers are protected against external pressure; teachers' sense of belonging towards the school is strengthened; and their morale is high (Cemaloglu, 2007b).

When the multi-regression analysis results, which constitute another finding of the research, are examined, it is observed that the three leadership styles of the school administrators jointly predict the collective teacher efficacy at a significant level in terms of teachers' perceptions. However, when the leadership styles of the school administrators were examined separately, it was concluded that the transformational leadership style and the Laissez-faire leadership style were single-handedly able to predict the collective efficacy scores of the teachers at a significant level.

**Table 3. Correlation matrix between leadership styles and collective teacher efficacy.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership styles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Transformational Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Transactional Leadership</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td></td>
<td>.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Laissez-Faire Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective teacher efficacy</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=223, *p<.01.

**Table 4. Multivariate regression matrix between leadership styles and collective teacher efficacy.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership style</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SHa</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>39,448</td>
<td>4,338</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,094</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformational</td>
<td>.161</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.298</td>
<td>3,597</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>1,096</td>
<td>.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laissez-Faire</td>
<td>.748</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>.382</td>
<td>5,871</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=223, R=.46, R^2=.21, F=19.925, p<.01.

Laissez-faire leadership scores [r=.30] among leadership styles sub-dimensions according to teacher perceptions.

**Multi-regression findings on leadership styles and collective teacher efficacy**

As seen in Table 4, the power of scores on the leadership styles (transformational, transactional and Laissez-faire) to jointly predict the collective teacher efficacy score was found to be statistically significant [F(3, 219)=19.925, p<.01]. It was found that the three predictor variable, which were examined in the research, jointly explained 21% of the change in the collective teacher efficacy score [R=.46, R^2=.21] whereas 79% of the change in collective teacher efficacy score could be explained with other variables. Moreover, when the levels of prediction of three independent variables (transformational, transactional and Laissez-faire) were examined separately, it was found that the transformational leadership style and the Laissez-faire leadership style were single-handedly able to predict the collective efficacy scores of the teachers at a significant level.
able to predict the collective efficacy scores of the teachers at a significant level whereas the transactional leadership style did not have the power to explain the collective teacher efficacy single-handedly at a statistically significant level.

In the study conducted by Demir (2008), it was found that the school principals’ transformational leadership styles were able to predict 35% of the collective efficacy of the teachers in accordance with teachers’ perceptions. Furthermore, it was concluded that school principals’ transformational leadership styles had the power to explain the collective efficacy of the teachers at a positive and medium level. In his study, Kurt (2009) found that school administrators’ transformational leadership styles significantly predicted the collective efficacy of the teachers at a medium level.

The school principals must be able to provide suitable environments for the teachers to perform individual and team studies; incorporate the teachers into the decision-making process; and provide the necessary facilities to the employees in terms of the organizational development. The transformational leadership applications of the school principals, in which they rather utilize their informal aspects, are needed for the teachers to feel that they belong to the school and for their work environment to be at a desirable level.

REFERENCES


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