

Centralized Education Systems, Bureaucracy and Leadership

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Abstract

Problem Statement: In centralized, bureaucratically structured education systems, school principals are generally appointed bureaucrats, expected to comply with rules and regulations. Their duties and responsibilities are regulated by legislations. Public school principals, in North Cyprus, too are appointed bureaucrats. Thus, they are expected to exert 'initiation of structure' in their work environment rather than 'consideration'. However, the current trends force them to exert both type of behaviors; while the first requiring them to carry out day to day duties and responsibilities, the latter requiring consideration for human needs and relations.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to survey leadership behaviors (consideration and initiation of structure) of public elementary and secondary school principals as perceived by public school teachers; to investigate the difference between public elementary and secondary school teachers' perceptions of their school principals' leadership behaviors; draw conclusions related to bureaucratic structures of schools and leadership behaviors of school principals; and make recommendations for further studies. The study is unique as it is the first of its kind done in North Cyprus and is expected to initiate studies in the field of educational administration, management and leadership which may lead to changes in the education system towards global needs.

Methods: The study is a mixed research possessing characteristics of both quantitative and qualitative research. It employs The Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) to collect qualitative data.

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Quantitative data is collected by a semi-structured interview with school principals. Five hundred and ninety nine participants (n = 599) took part in the study. Ten public school principals, 2 from each district, were selected randomly to be interviewed.

Conclusions and Recommendations: In a globalized context, education systems are moving more towards flexibility and autonomy, so school principals need to exert both 'initiation of structure' and 'consideration' behaviors. Besides the requirements of their bureaucratic positions, they should address diverse individual interests, needs and wants of the group they are managing. Therefore, a more consultative, participatory and inclusionary leadership is needed to meet the needs of the teachers, parents, learners and the community. Further research may focus on issues such as what public school principals see as major barriers in the operation of their schools and achievement of quality student learning; and the inefficiencies and inadequacies in institutional operations resulting from bureaucracy that may cause teacher job dissatisfaction and low student achievement.

Keywords: centralized education, bureaucracy, leadership, consideration, initiation of structure

The Northern part of Cyprus is divided into five administrative districts – Nicosia (the divided capital city), Kyrenia, Famagusta, Güzelyurt, and İskele. The educational system is centralized; traditional public education system carrying characteristics of a bureaucratic model in which the central office controls the education policy and agenda, the major budgeting process, and dictates what schools should do (Soares & Soares, 2002). It is a top-down and rule driven model in which everyone's job is guaranteed and there is a strong resistance to change (Bennis, 1990; Osborne and Gaebler, 1993). The Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture (MEYC) is responsible for administration of education, enforcement of laws, implementation of policies, preparation of budgets and bills pertaining to education, and construction and maintenance of school buildings at elementary and secondary school levels.

All educational programs (curricula and syllabi) for the elementary and secondary schools are regulated and the textbooks are selected by the Ministry of Education Youth Culture and Sports/ The body responsible for the appointments, secondments, transfers, promotions and discipline of teachers is the Public Services Commission. All public school teachers, working at public primary and secondary schools are civil servants. Since public education is financed by the government, schools cannot accept or collect any external money.

Besides parental and community expectations, bureaucracy is an external factor affecting student and teacher success, teacher job satisfaction and collegiality (Öztürk, 2003; Parker & Bradley, 2000). As defined by Max Weber (1924, in D. Pugh, 1990), bureaucracy indicates legitimate authority within an organization by which the manager and other workers work within a predictable, hierarchical system. The manager's task (in this context, the school principal's task) is to ensure that the organization (the school) operates rationally towards the achievement of set objectives within the set structures (Law and Glower, 2003).

Until the second half of the 20th century, the definitions addressing leadership did not fully account for educational leadership. The school principals were considered to be mere administrators executing functions such as planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting (Gulick and Urwich, 1937). These functions were mainly based on Weber's (1925) concept of bureaucracy. However, Bennis (1990) identifies bureaucracy as the unconscious conspiracy that prevents leaders from leading. The impact of the human relations approach in the second half of the 20th century propelled studies towards 'management versus leadership' (Bass, 1960, 1990, 1997; Blake & Mouton, 1964, 1982, 1994; Fiedler, 1964, 1997; Reddin, 1970; Etzioni, 1975; Vroom, 1988; Bennis, 1885, 1989, 1990).

There is a considerably increased interest in educational leadership since the late 20th century, mainly due to a common belief that the school principals have a significant influence on school performance and student outcomes and teacher job satisfaction. Global changes (social, economical, political, technological) have an undeniable impact on education and schools as organizations (Clarke & Clegg, 1998; Power, 2000; Limerick et al 2002). With current trends 'conservative' bureaucracies (Parker & Bradley, 2000) seem to be inadequate in making decisions in schools dealing first-hand with many multifaceted issues. Even so, educational systems characterized by rigid bureaucracies endeavor to retain significant control over schools. Contemporary practice, thus, requires school principals to act as leaders establishing prescribed structures. In this case it would probably be best to discuss 'leader-managers' (Gardner, 1990), 'bureaucratic leaders' (Sutton, 2001), or leaders 'initiating structure' and 'considering' the needs and wants of the members of the group (Shartle, 1950; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). The leader-manager (Gardner, 1986) or the leader who displays both 'consideration' and 'initiation of structure' behaviors performs both managing and leading functions. 'Initiation of structure' might require the school principal to affirm the values of the group, to distribute tasks among members, manage the group and the work to be done, and to explain required actions. Serving as a representative and a symbol, envisioning the group's goals, motivating members; achieving unity among members; and providing opportunities for the satisfaction of the members' professional needs and wants shows that a leader displays consideration for the members of the group. Çelikten (2003) agrees with this by discussing an ideal school principal as a representative of the education system must have strong moral values, effective interactive communication and time management skills.

The studies carried out by Ohio State Leadership Studies Group in the mid twentieth century differentiate leader behaviors as 'initiation of structure' and 'consideration' (Shartle, 1950; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Klavitter, 1985; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). The term 'consideration' refers to the extent to which a leader exhibits concern for the welfare of the members of the organization; and 'initiation of structure' explains the extent to which a leader pertains structure, initiates activities, organizes them, and defines how the work is to be done. As a part of Ohio Studies a questionnaire (LBDQ-Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire) was developed to measure leaders 'consideration' and 'initiation of structure' behaviors. Although carried

out in mid 20th century, the studies still seem to influence present day studies in the field of management and leadership behaviors of people in administrative positions.

In North Cyprus the appointed school principals are bureaucrats bound by legislations. However, the current trends force them to act as considerate and caring leaders and this requires positive human relations (McGregor, 1960, 1966; Blake and Mouton, 1964, 1982; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Everett, 1987; Fowler, 1991), based on the assumption that human beings by nature are motivated beings, who are structured and controlled. Therefore, it falls under the responsibility of the school principal to structure the human resources and motivate them to perform at their maximum potential for self actualization (Maslow, 1954).

The purpose of the study is to survey leadership behaviors (consideration and initiation of structure) of public elementary and secondary school principals as perceived by public school teachers; to investigate the difference between public elementary and secondary school teachers' perceptions of their school principals' leadership behaviors; with the obtained evidence draw conclusions related to bureaucratic structures of schools and leadership styles of school principals; and make recommendations for further studies.

The unique quality of the study lies in the fact that it is the first of its kind done in North Cyprus and is expected to initiate studies in the field of educational administration, management and leadership which may lead to changes in the education system towards global needs.

The study is carried out in all five districts (Nicosia, Kyrenia, Famagusta, Güzeyurt and İskele) of North Cyprus with the permission of the National Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and with the help of the elementary and secondary school teacher unions.

Based on the review of literature, it is hypothesized that 1) school principals in North Cyprus exert more of 'initiation of structure' behavior because of their bureaucratic positions than 'consideration' behavior; 2) public secondary school principal exert 'initiation of structure' behavior to a greater extent since they have greater duties and responsibilities than public elementary school teachers.

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the perceived leadership behavior of public school principals by public school teachers in North Cyprus?
2. Is there a significant difference between public elementary and secondary school teachers' perceptions of their school principals' leadership behaviors?
3. How do school principals comment on teachers' perceptions of their leadership behaviors?
4. What do public school principals find workable in the presently used system?
5. How would school principals like to manage their school if system permitted?

Method

Research Design

The study is a mixed research possessing characteristics of both quantitative and qualitative research. In the first phase of the study, public school teachers working in elementary and secondary schools in five districts of Northern Cyprus were distributed the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) to collect qualitative data on **teachers' perceptions of their school principals leadership behaviors**. In the qualitative data collection stage of the study, two school principals (an elementary school principal and a secondary school principal) from each district were interviewed in a semi-structured format. School principals were selected randomly but carefully excluding those who had been serving as a school principal for less than two years.

Sample

This study aimed at reaching all the public elementary and secondary school teachers in all five districts of North Cyprus. However, because of a large number of elementary schools (87 schools and 1100 teachers), those to be included in the study were randomly selected and all teachers working in these randomly selected schools were distributed the questionnaire. However, due to a smaller number of secondary schools containing a larger number of teachers (26 schools – excluding the technical vocational schools, 1300 teachers) all schools were reached and the randomly selected teachers from each department were given the questionnaire.

Three hundred and fifty eight (358) teachers working in 21 randomly selected public elementary schools and 452 randomly selected teachers working in 26 secondary schools were sent the questionnaires (810 teachers in total). The return rate from the public elementary schools is 77% (274/358) and the return rate from public secondary schools is 72% (425/452). The total number of participants in the study is 599 ($n = 599$), comprised of 46% public elementary school teachers and 54% public secondary school teachers. One fourth of the teachers working in the public sector were reached.

For qualitative data collection, from each district, one public elementary school principal and one public secondary school principal from each district were invited to a semi-structured interview. The participants were selected randomly by only taking their years of service into consideration. These school principals were interviewed on their opinions of their leadership behaviors, how the centralized, bureaucratic education system affects them as school principals, and the system permitting, what they would like to implement in their schools.

The Instrument

The study employed Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) to measure teachers' perception of their school principals 'consideration' and 'initiation of structure' behaviors. The instrument consists of 15 items measuring 'consideration' behavior, 15 items measuring 'initiation of structure' behaviors and 10 items 'conditions for administration'. Although this instrument measures three different

variables affecting leadership behavior, means and standard deviations are taken excluding the effect of 'conditions for administration' on 'consideration' and 'initiation of structure'.

The instrument is proven to be reliable and has been used since the mid 20th century. However, since it was translated into Turkish and was being used in a different culture at a different span of time, reliability tests were conducted before employing the instrument. The internal consistency estimate was calculated and the alpha value for both 'consideration' and 'initiation of structure' behaviors were found to be 0.95 which was above the value of 0.70 suggested by Nunnally (1978).

The semi-structured interview was designed and organized by the researcher and held in a comfortable environment allowing all participants to sit and contribute freely. A series of open ended questions and prompts was developed based on the literature on school leadership and centralized education systems and analysis of results of the quantitative research. Participants were asked a series of questions designed to give an opportunity to explore aspects related to leader behaviors and centralized, bureaucratic education systems. Questions and prompts included:

- **School principals in North Cyprus are perceived to display high 'consideration' and high 'initiation of structure' behaviors. How do you think a school principal manages this?**
Prompt: How do you find time to delegate work, comply with daily routines and yet be able to consider group members' needs and wants?
- **Secondary school teachers perceive their school principals to display significantly higher 'initiation of structure' and 'consideration' behaviors. Why do you think this is?**
Prompt: Why do you think secondary school principals were perceived to be more considerate and more structured than elementary school principals?
- **What is your opinion on the advantages and disadvantages of the centralized, bureaucratic education system utilized in North Cyprus?**
Prompt: Within the education system in North Cyprus, what do you think works well and what do you think hinders effectiveness of a school principal?
- **How would you like to manage your school?**
Prompt: What would you like to do differently if the system permitted?

Data was collected by using a tape recorder and recording the interview. Data was then analyzed using a content analysis approach. The data was arranged into segments of material based on an organizing system derived from the issues raised in the semi-structured, open ended interview questions. A careful analysis of the transcribed interview texts revealed the possibility of identification of categories in responses. The categories then were separated into key concepts that were recorded on cards. This helped identification of tentative themes. Then, words used in certain contexts helped placing phrases into theme typologies. Finally, each typology was examined and propositions were generated.

A written consent of the participants was taken to reveal the results and findings of the qualitative phase. Upon the consent of school principals to reveal the findings, KTÖS (Cyprus Turkish Teachers' Union) and KTOÖS (Cyprus Turkish Secondary School Teachers' Union) were contacted to establish the validity of the conclusions drawn by the school principals. They stressed a strong support for what had been stated. These procedures were followed to support the credibility, dependability and authenticity of the study (Bryman, 2004).

Data Analysis

The returned questionnaires were tabulated for frequencies of perceived leadership behavior of school principals. In order to answer the first research question, the mean scores were taken for both leadership styles and were compared to reveal the difference between perceived 'consideration' and 'initiation of structure' behaviors of public school principals to see how public school principals are perceived to behave in general.

In order to answer the second research question, the mean scores of the 'consideration' and 'initiation of structure' behaviors of public school principals as perceived by public elementary and secondary school teachers were calculated separately to collect evidence on how elementary and secondary school principals are perceived to behave by teachers.

To be able to comment on some of the findings, 5 elementary school principals and 5 secondary school principals were interviewed, what they said was recorded, categorized, coded, labeled and put under themes.

Findings and Results

1) Perceived Leadership Behaviors of Public Elementary and Secondary School Principals

As summarized in table 1, public elementary and public secondary school principals in North Cyprus, on a five Likert scaled instrument are perceived to demonstrate high 'consideration' ($M = 2.25$; $SD = .81$), high 'initiation of structure' ($M = 2.10$; $SD = .72$) and a high concern for administrative work ($M = 2.14$; $SD = .69$).

Table 1

Perceived Leadership Behaviors of Public Elementary and Secondary School Principals

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Consideration	2.25	.81
Initiation of Structure	2.10	.72
Administration	2.14	.69

As tested by Pearson's Paired Sample *t*-test, and as illustrated in table 2, the correlation coefficient .783** between the two perceived behaviors 'consideration' and 'initiation of structure' is significant. Because of a positive mean difference of .15 points to the advantage of 'consideration' behavior ($t = 7.49$; $p = .000$; $p < .01$), it may be stated that the public elementary and secondary schools in North Cyprus are perceived to display 'consideration' behavior to a significantly greater degree than 'initiation of structure' contradictory to the assumption that they would be perceived to exert high 'initiation of structure' behavior as appointed bureaucrats.

Table 2

t – test Results of Correlation Between Perceived 'Consideration' and 'Initiation of Structure Behaviors

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>Pearson</i> <i>Correlation</i>	<i>P</i>
Consideration minus Initiation of Structure	.15	.51	7.49	.783**	.000

**Correlation is significant at .01

2) How do school principals comment on teachers' perceptions of their leadership behaviors?

During the semi-structured interview the participating public school principals were informed of the findings and were asked to comment on how they found time to initiate structure, comply with daily routines and yet consider needs and wants of the members of the group. What they said about initiating structure can be categorized under two themes: a) the nature of the teaching job and b) division of labor:

It was agreed that the group members view themselves as public servants who are aware of the requirements their job. They do not need to be told what is to be done and how it should be done. This attitude makes the school principal's job easier. Barnett, Barnett, McCormic & Connors' (2000) also discuss that teachers view themselves as a professional work force and consider themselves to be autonomous when teaching job is concerned. Another factor helping the school principal in 'initiation of structure' is that they share the work load with deputy principals, department heads or workshop leaders and this helps the work flow smoothly. As Weber (1924) and Pugh (1990) put it bureaucratic structures establish a predictable hierarchical system with clear cut job descriptions so that everyone is clearly aware of his/her duties and responsibilities. This allows stability and a unified focus (Newstrom & Davis, 1993) within the work environment.

When school principals were asked to comment on their 'consideration' behavior, they focused on three main themes: a) job security of teachers; b) collegiality; and c) nature of relationships on the island. They said that since teachers have a strong job security, no one feels threatened. Thus, there is no antagonism, striving for position or unfriendliness. This creates a positive and compromising culture within the organization. Job security is important in the sense that, when there is no danger of losing the job, the work environment is not very challenging so individuals do not need to strive for being better than the others (Bennis, 1990; Osborne & Gaebler, 1993).

The school principals also mentioned a strong collegial relationship among the members of the group. Teachers have the pleasure of sharing materials, teaching and learning ideas and experiences, creating cooperative decision. The school principal only acts as an agent when channels are blocked or creates meeting opportunities for teachers to get together to discuss professional issues. In this respect, Fitzgerald (2006) stresses the importance of peer relationships by saying that the middle managers (such as school principal) as agents between teachers and higher bodies focus on immediate issues and their ability to influence or motivate others comes from their peer relationships.

'Consideration' behavior of school principals is affected by the size of the community school principals function in therefore, the participating school principals think that in a small community such as North Cyprus, teachers have positive and friendly relationships reflected in their work environment. In small societies which are closely knitted school principals tend to display higher 'consideration' behavior than in larger societies (Sancar, 2008).

3) Public Elementary School and Secondary School Teachers' Perceptions of School Their School Principals' Behaviors

An independent sample *t*-test was conducted to evaluate the hypothesis that public secondary school principals exert greater 'initiation of structure' as opposed to 'consideration' behavior. The test results were significant. Leven's test results prove that the equality of variance assumption is violated. Public secondary school principals were perceived to demonstrate significantly higher 'consideration' and 'initiation of structure' behavior as opposed to public elementary school teachers. (Consideration MD = -9.85' $t = -10.97$, and $p = .000$; Initiation of Structure MD = -6.99, $t = -8.58$, $p = .000$). Table 3 illustrates the results of the independent sample *t*-test.

Table 3
Difference Between Public Elementary and Secondary School Teachers' Perceptions

	Mean Difference	df	t	Significance p
Consideration	-9.85	596.95	-10.97	.000
Initiation of Structure	-6.99	586.72	-8.58	.000

When school principals were asked what the reason(s) might be that public secondary school principals display significantly higher 'initiation of structure' and 'consideration' behavior than public elementary school principals, after a long discussion, they decided that number of students enrolled in the school, students' needs and academic pressures have a strong effect on how the school principals behave.

First of all, secondary schools have a larger body of students and teachers than elementary schools. This might require more time for organizing and structuring work, monitoring both teachers and students and paper work. As opposed to this, elementary schools have a small number of students enrolled. Classes are run and students are taken care of by just one class teacher. Developmental needs of students are not as great as the secondary level students. Students at secondary school level are adolescents requiring special attention, guidance, and monitoring for their own development and for a safe school environment. They are taught by a group of teachers each teaching a different subject.

Moreover, at secondary school level, the school principals have the pressure of academic achievement on their shoulders because of the university entrance examinations. Students need career counseling and educational counseling. This requires organization of counseling activities and caring for each and every student.

Psychological and motivational theories also discuss the significance of meeting the needs of individual pupils for their self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy development. What school principals need to do is to balance support and discipline and enforce the philosophy of partnership within the schools as 'one for all, all for one'.

4) Public Elementary and Secondary School Principals Comments on Centralized Education and Bureaucracy

The third area discussed during the interview was what school principals found workable related to the bureaucratic education system. A discussion took place on the advantages and disadvantages of the system. The most important agreed advantage of the system is the existence of teacher unions. The unions support the school principals when they resist applying illogical and unreasonable regulations in the system. Secondly, within the system all teachers are civil servants whose jobs and salaries are guaranteed until and after they retire. Thirdly, despite its inadequacies and inefficiencies, the system provides an equal compulsory education opportunity for everyone. The ministry takes care of planning, budgeting, maintenance and supply of all materials and equipment. This save quite a lot of time. Once standard procedures and routines are mastered, it is easy to perform daily tasks.

Roberts (1976) also argues that even in the U.S there is a growing tendency towards a nation-wide system by which problems concerning teacher salaries, curricula, evaluation of students and grading will be addressed. The centralized system will make managerial leadership (Leithwood, 1999) to be practiced efficiently and effectively focusing on functions, task and behaviors of others. It will also ensure that all children will be exposed to the same body of knowledge and skills within a uniform method of exposure. Individual schools and teachers will be monitored and con-

trolled so that they would not go out of direction depending on their and their students' interests. A centralized school system is also a workable system in large countries or low income areas where there is movement from rural to urban areas. A standard curriculum will provide at least some stability for the children on the move. In such systems prescribed duties and responsibilities, policy guides, curriculum manuals, and standardized tests allow easy monitoring and needs assessment of institutions, teachers and pupils.

5) How school principals would like to manage their schools if the system permitted

The last stage of the interview promoted a discussion, the points of which were logically and reasonably put. The question was: How would you like to manage your school or what would you like to do differently if the system permitted? The school principals voiced the need for a school based or at list district based management in some issues because the needs, interests and wants of teachers and students are different in rural and urban areas.

They would also like to be able to implement extracurricular activities to promote discovery learning and learning by doing which is impossible without the approval of the Ministry since it lacks extra budget for such activities. However, in some cases the school-parent associations organize activities to raise money. Their other concern based on student needs is to be able to offer elective courses for the students so that they gain more insight about themselves and the teachers get to know their students better for more effective educational counseling and channeling. To meet teachers' needs, they would also like to offer external in-service training opportunities for professional development or design internal in-service programs through which teachers would share knowledge and experience on teaching and learning.

They believe that if they could do all of these, they would better serve the teachers, the community and meet the needs and expectations of students and society. The school principals' responses were more or less expected within the frame work of this study. The superintendents and school principals (middle managers) voiced similar concerns (Finn, Jr., retrieved on 3 May 2012 form www.findarticles.com) as the public school principals in North Cyprus. They believe they can improve public education but politics and bureaucracy hinder their effectiveness; they wish for more freedom of rewarding, hiring and firing teachers; and they complain about inadequate budgeting.

Although the participating school principals speak of the need for renovation and change to the existing system, most teachers and school principals in centralized bureaucratic systems rely on prescribed procedures with the job security in their minds provided by the system. With this feeling of security, they feel no need to do more and doing less than required is not punished., Bush (2003) , on the other hand speaks of modern and post-modern leadership with functions such as building a school vision; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individual support; modeling best practice; creating a productive school culture; fostering participation in decision making. Most of the points put forth by Bush are also articulated by the participating school principals.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Education is a complex issue in a globalized world posing challenges for policy makers and practitioners. This paper endeavors to survey public school teachers' perceptions of the leadership behaviors of their school principals and look into how the bureaucratic centralized education system in North Cyprus affected public school principals' leadership behaviors.

In North Cyprus, public school principals were perceived to display high 'initiation of structure' and high 'consideration' behaviors. They commented that because of the advantages of a centralized system it is not very difficult to build a structure within the organization because most of the work such as policy making, budgeting, maintenance, supply of equipment and materials, is done by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. High 'consideration' behavior might be due to the small size of the community, the nature of the teaching job and the collegiality between the teaching staff.

The school principals also pointed out the disadvantages of the system which mainly block school or districts based decisions that might cater for teacher and student needs. They voice the need for a little flexibility on such issues so that they can focus more on community, teacher and student needs and wants.

There has been a tendency to move towards decentralization of education even though it might result in inequalities allowing the richer areas to advance more whilst less opportunate ones are kept behind. However, in a globalized context, it is undeniable that there is a need for education systems to move more towards flexibility and autonomy. Therefore, a different perspective of school principals' tasks needs to be developed and they need to be viewed as exerting both 'initiation of structure' and 'consideration' behaviors. Besides the requirements of their bureaucratic positions, they should be able to address diverse individual interests, needs and wants of the group they are managing. They should also avoid relying too much on bureaucracy because of the fluidity of theories and practices of changing times. Starratt (2001) advocates a more consultative, participatory and inclusionary leadership, and suggests inclusion of teachers, parents, learners and the community in issues concerning their interests.

Stating briefly, bureaucracy is effective when it helps the functioning of schools but should not serve as a barrier for setting up institutional goals, fostering participation and considering individual interest, needs and wants.

The study is limited in itself as it does not investigate further, what public school principals see as major barriers in the operation of their schools and achievement of quality student learning. It neither questions whether inefficiencies and inadequacies in institutional operations, teacher job satisfaction and student achievement actually result from barriers of bureaucracy or school principals' willingness to contribute to the process, nor does it raise the question whether the public school principals and teachers feel the need for a change in the education system moving more towards decentralization. It might be difficult to argue in favor of or against centralized and decentralized education since each might have its own advantages or drawbacks (Çingir, 2002). Further research may focus on such issues and provide a basis for discussion of the pros and cons of centralized, localized or school based systems.

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Merkeziyetçi Eğitim Sistemleri, Bürokrasi ve Önderlik

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(Özet)

Problem Durumu

Merkeziyetçi eğitim, genellikle birey ve toplum gereksinimleri göz önünde bulundurulurken, tüm ülke çapında, herkese eşit ve ayrımcılık yapmadan verilmeye çalışılan ve bir merkez (genellikle eğitim bankanlıkları) tarafından yönetilen, örgün ve yaygın eğitimi içine alan bir sistemdir. Bu tip sistemelerde, sistemin sağlıklı yürütmesi için bürokratik yapılar büyük önem taşır. Okul müdürlükleri bürokrasinin bir basamağı olup, okul müdürleri genellikle atanmış bürokratlardır. Buldukları makam, görev ve sorumlulukların yerine getirilmesi ve gerekli yazışmalara odaklanmalarını gerektirir. Günlük işlerin yoğunluğundan meslektaşlarına ve onların gereksinimlerine ayıracak zamanı pek kalmayabilir. Ancak günümüz koşullarında, okul müdürlerinin yasalarla belirlenen ve makamlarını bağlayan yetki ve sorumluluklarının yanı sıra, meslektaşlarına ve öğrencilere yönelik de sorumlulukları vardır. Bu çalışma, KKTC’de

bürokratik bir yapıya sahip okul yönetimi bağlamında okul müdürlerinin yapı-iş merkezli (initiating structure) ve insan merkezli (consideration) davranışlarının öğretmenler tarafından algılanması üzerine kurulmuştur.

Araştırma Soruları

Araştırma aşağıdaki sorulara yanıt bulmaya çalışmıştır:

- 1) K.K.T.C. genelinde devlet okullarında görev yapmakta olan okul müdürlerinin önderlik davranışları öğretmenler tarafından nasıl algılanmaktadır?
- 2) İlköğretim ve ortaöğretimde görev yapan öğretmenlerin okul müdürlerinin önderlik davranışlarını algılamaları arasında anlamlı bir fark var mıdır?
- 3) Okul müdürlerinin önderlik davranışlarının öğretmenler tarafından algılanışı ile ilgili yorumları nelerdir?
- 4) Okul müdürlerinin merkeziyetçi eğitim ve bürokratik yapı ile ilgili görüşleri nelerdir?
- 5) Sistem izin verseydi okul müdürleri ne gibi özgün etkinlikler yaparlardı?

Bürokratik bir yapıya sahip olan K.K.T.C.'de okul müdürlerinin daha çok yapı-iş merkezli olması ve iş yoğunluğu nedeni ile orta öğretimde görev yapan okul müdürlerinin her iki tür önderlik davranışlarının algılanmasının ilköğretimde görev yapan müdürlerin liderlik davranışları algılanmasına göre anlamlı olarak daha yüksek olması beklenmektedir.

Araştırmanın Amacı

Hem nicel hem de nitel araştırma özellikleri taşımakta olan bu makalenin amacı, merkeziyetçi bir eğitim sistemine sahip olan Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti'nde (K.K.T.C.) devlet okullarında görev yapan öğretmenlerin, birer bürokrat olan okul müdürlerinin önderlik davranışlarına (yapı - iş merkezli / initiation of structure - insan merkezli / consideration) yönelik algılarını araştırmak; ilköğretim ve orta öğretimde görev yapan öğretmenlerin müdür davranışlarını algılaması arasında anlamlı bir fark olup olmadığına bakmak; ve bürokratik bir yapıya sahip merkeziyetçi eğitim anlayışının okul müdürleri üzerindeki etkisini yorumlamaktır.

Araştırmanın Yöntemi

Devlet okullarında görev yapmakta olan okul müdürlerinin önderlik davranışları Önder Davranışı Betimleme Ölçeği (Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire) ile ölçülmüş; K.K.T.C. genelinde (Lefkoşa, Girne, Gazimağusa, Güzelyurt ve İskele bölgeleri) mesleki ve teknik okullar hariç, devlet ilköğretim ve orta öğretim okullarında görev yapmakta olan 599 (n = 599) öğretmen ve 10 okul müdürü bu araştırmada yer almıştır.

Bu çalışmada, sayılarının çok olması nedeni ile, beş ilçeyi de içine alacak şekilde, ilkokulların %25'i, ve bu okullarda görev yapan öğretmenlerin sayılarının azlığı nedeni ile hepsi katılımcı olarak seçilmiştir. Araştırmanın amaçları doğrultusunda, orta dereceli okulların sayısının azlığı nedeni ile hepsi, ancak çalışan öğretmenlerin

sayısının çok olması nedeni ile bu okullarda görev yapan öğretmenlerin de % 25'i, rastgele seçim yöntemi ile, katılımcı olarak seçilmişlerdir. Rastgele seçilmiş yirmi bir (21) devlet ilkokulunda çalışan üçyüz elli sekiz (358) öğretmen ve yirmi altı (26) orta dereceli okulda görev yapmakta olan rastgele seçilmiş dört yüz elli iki (452) öğretmen bu araştırmada katılımcı olmuş ve hepsine araştırma amaçları için kullanılan ölçekler ulaştırılmıştır (toplam 810 adet). Bu ölçeklerin geri dönüş oranı, ilkokul öğretmenlerinden %77 (274), orta dereceli okul öğretmenlerinden ise % 72 (325) olmuştur. Bu rakamlarla birlikte, bu araştırmaya konu olan ilkokul öğretmenleri beş yüz doksan dokuz (n=599) toplam katılımcının %46'sını oluştururken, orta dereceli okul öğretmenleri bu rakamın %54'ünü oluşturmuşlardır.

Araştırmanın Bulguları

Bulguların hesaplanması için katılımcılardan dönen ölçeklerde verilen yanıtlar SPSS'e (Sosyal Bilimler için Statistik Programı) programa girilmiş, araştırma sorularından birincisini yanıtlamak için yapı-ış merkezli ve insan merkezli davranışların algılanma orta değerleri alınmış, ikisi arasında anlamlı bir fark olup olmadığını anlamak için bağımlı gruplar için *t* - test (paired sample *t* - test); ikinci soruyu yanıtlamak için ise bağımsız gruplar için *t* - testi uygulanmıştır.

Ölçeklerin Türkçe çevirilerinden kaynaklanacak sorunları görmek açısından, ilk olarak ölçeklerin güvenilirliklerini ölçmek için alfa katsayısı (coefficient alpha) testi uygulanmıştır. Her iki ölçek için de içsel tutarlılık hesaplaması yapılmıştır. Önder Davranışı Betimleme Ölçeğinde (LBDQ) hem 'insan merkezci' hem de 'yapı-ış merkezci' davranış algılamasını ölçen maddeler için alfa değeri .95, ve yönetsel yeterlik algılamasını ölçen maddeler için ise alfa değeri .83 olarak bulunmuştur. Bu değerler Nunnally (1979) tarafından önerilen değerleri karşılamaktadır.

Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Öneriler

Araştırmada elde edilen veriler, konulan birinci hipotezin aksine, K.K.T.C. genelinde okul müdürlerinin hem yapı-ış hem de insan merkezli davranışları yüksek düzeyde gösterdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra veriler ikinci hipotezi doğrulamakta, yani, ilköğretim ve orta öğretim öğretmenlerinin okul müdürlerinin önderlik davranışlarını algılamaları arasında anlamlı bir fark olduğunu sergilemektedir. Orta öğretimde görev yapan öğretmenlerinin her iki davranışını da ilköğretimde görev yapanlara oranla anlamlı olarak daha yüksek düzeyde algılamaktadır. Okul müdürleri bunu, orta öğretimde, okul bazında hem öğretmen hem de öğrenci sayılarının yüksekliğine hem de ergenlik yaşındaki öğrencilerin sorunları ile baş edebilmek ve ayrıca üniversite giriş sınavlarında okul başarısını yüksek tutmak için birlik, beraberlik içinde çalışmanın gerekliliğine bağlamadılar. Kendilerine bürokrasi engeli ile karşılaşmadan okulları bünyesinde ne gibi etkinlikler yapmak istedikleri sorulduğunda, öğrencilerin ve öğretmenlerin gereksinimlerini karşılayacak seçmeli dersler, hizmet içi eğitim programları ve buna benzer şeyler yapmak istediklerini ancak yapamadıklarını dile getirmişlerdir.

Küreselleşen günümüz dünya koşullarında, değişen sosyo-ekonomik, siyasi, ve teknolojik gereksinimler eğitim anlayışının daha esnek ve daha otonom bir yapıda olması gerektiğini göstermektedir. Okullara, temel dersler dışında kalan programları,

bölgesel koşulları ve bireysel özellikleri dikkate alarak kendileri belirleme yetkisi verilmelidir. Okul müdürlerine ise, önderlik görevlerini hakkıyla yerine getirebilmeleri için, bürokratik görev ve sorumlulukların yanı sıra, yönetmekte oldukları grubun gereksinimlerine cevap verebilecekleri ölçüde otonomi verilmeli ve olanaklar yaratılmalıdır.

Bu çalışma, okul müdürlerinin bürokraside ne gibi engellerle karşılaştığı, ve bürokrasinin öğrenci başarısı ve öğretmen iş doyumunu nasıl etkilediği gibi konuları ele almaması açısından bazı sınırlılıklar içermektedir. Gelecekte yapılacak araştırmaların, merkezîyetçi eğitimin bu yönlerini ele alarak, merkezîyetçi, yarı merkezîyetçi, yerel ve/veya yerinden yönetim modellerinin, eğitim-öğretim-öğrenim üzerindeki etkilerini, avantaj ve dezavantajlarını araştırıp, tartışması alanda yararlı olacaktır.

Anahtar sözcükler: merkezîyetçi eğitim, bürokrasi, önderlik, iş merkezli, insan merkezli