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Original Article

Physical educatiion teachers' perceptions of organizational culture and communications in educational institutions

TAMER KARADEMİR[1]; YUNUS EMRE KARAKAYA[2]; YELİZ SIRIN[1]
[1] High School of Physical Education and Sport, University of Sutcu Imam, Kahramanmaras, Turkey
[2] University of Utah, Department of Exercise and Sport Science, Utah, USA. (Visiting Scholar).

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Abstract:
In the present study an attempt was made to determine the perceptions of physical education teachers who work in educational institutions concerning organizational culture and communication. Physical education teachers who work in educational institutions in Turkey constitute the population of the research. The sample group is limited to 564 physical education teachers who participated in the survey. To determine the views of the sample group a questionnaire form developed by the researchers was used. In educational institutions, along with the managers, the physical education teachers are thought to affect the culture of those institutions. A conclusion was reached that the formation of a positive and effective organizational culture in educational institutions provides a positive contribution to all disciplines as well as providing a positive contribution to the physical education class.
Key words: educational institutions, organizational culture, organizational communication, physical education teacher

Introduction

Over the last quarter of the twentieth century, institutions/organizations began to search for ways to attain goals such as the development of their performance, an increase in productivity, ensuring the effectiveness of their administrative activity and maximizing their profits. They sought ways to get ahead of rival institutions/organizations. In addition, they have tried to understand the operational styles of organizations, the main values that dominate organizations, the behavioral attitudes and the concrete realities of that are used in organizations, and to issue regulations when necessary. Such factors brought forward the concept of organizational culture (Guven & Açıkgoz, 2007: 1). McNamara (2007) defines organizational culture as the concrete signs of the members of organizations/institutions, the assumptions, values, norms and behaviors of their members. Alvesson (2002), states that organizational culture is an important issue in administrative practices, as well as in educational theories, and in academic research (Alvesson, 2002). Oudenhoven (2001) defines it as a type of culture shaped by organizational practices in relation to the environment of an organization. Communication serves as a window for the comprehension of deeper levels in organizational culture (Kowalski, 2000).

Organization researchers have focused on the effect of the formal structure of an organization on the communication process. They regard communication as a dependent variable of organizational structure. On the other hand, communication researchers regard communication as an independent variable and examine the models creating organizational structure and shaping interaction. In the field of organizational communication, significant efforts of the field to determine the identity is accompanied by the development oforganizational communication. Organizational communication researchers are still continuing to define the limits and the future of the area (Jensen, 2003). Organizational communication is based on scientific management, human relations approach, human resources management, the systems approach and various approaches as well as cultural perspective (Mumby & Stohl, 1996: 50-72). Organizational communication is a summary of shared values, ideology, information relating to the environment and people, relations of the role (Ellis & Maoz, 2003: 255-272).

Culture and communication has an impact on organizational behavior, and serves as a window to understand the deeper levels of communication organizational culture (Kowalski, 2000). Organizational culture is ensuring communication between the members of an organization. The emergence of an organizational identity happens in parallel with the interpretation of the members of an organization regarding its past, present and future as well as their comprehension of the facts and stories regarding organizational life. Organizational structure is an important channel for enabling new members to be integrated within the organizational culture,

Corresponding Author YUNUS EMRE KARAKAYA, E-mail: yunus.karakaya@utah.edu

and thus it ensures formal and informal communication by and with new members. Formal communication involves job descriptions/definitions and job orientation meetings, and informal communication involves stories and gossip (Kreps, 1986). The validity of organizational culture is made possible only by enabling and ensuring communication. Therefore, there is a close relationship between organizational culture and communication. Through communication, the basic elements of organizational culture, which are values, norms, stories, history and traditions, in other words, the symbolic world of organization, can be interpreted (Celik, 2000). Through communication, the workers in organizations can know what is expected from them and what management and their colleagues think about them. In addition, conveying and receiving knowledge has an important role in terms of administration in organizational life, and an effective communication process plays a role in enabling workers to develop positive attitudes (Orpen, 1997: 519).

The research aims

Educational institutions aim to encourage certain behavioral features within certain targets appropriate to individuals so that they can be integrated within society. Therefore, each educational institution has a distinctive organizational culture. The type of culture that educational institutions have and the means of communication between workers are important in terms of nurturing students. With this in mind, the present study aims to determine the views of physical education teachers serving in educational institutions regarding organizational culture and communication, and to examine the form of cultural structures in educational institutions as well as the effects of communication on the emergence of organizational culture. In addition, the research results are expected to provide fresh insights in the field and for those who implement organizational culture.

Method

The research population consists of physical education teachers serving in primary and elementary schools in Turkey. The sample group is limited to 564 physical education teachers who participated in the study.

In order to determine the views of the research group, the content of the survey items developed by Cimen (2009) in his PhD thesis was utilized and the survey form developed by the researchers was applied. The survey form consists of 22 items involving statements regarding organizational culture and communication in educational institutions.

The data obtained from the research group was analyzed using the SPSS 17.0 package program. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was determined as .939. Five grading intervals for the healthy interpretation of the research data were determined as, "*I strongly disagree*" (1.00-1.80), "*I disagree*" (1.81-2.60), "*I partially agree*" (2.61-3.40), "*I agree*" (3.41-4.20) "*I strongly agree*" (4.21-5.00). A t-test was used in comparisons between two independent group averages in order to determine the differentiation level depending on independent variables. One-way variance analysis (ANOVA) was used in the analysis of more than two group averages. Scheffe test was applied in order to determine the reasons for difference between groups. The statistical significance rate was found to be $p<0.05$.

Results

In line with the findings obtained from the research group, results and statistical analyses are presented in following tables.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics regarding the answers of the research group to survey items.

I. No	Statements	n	Mean	SD
1	I can easily consult the school administration for solving the problems regarding my colleagues in school	564	3.13	1.35
2	There is no gossip or rumors between the employees in school.	564	2.30	1.14
3	The problems regarding educational implementations can clearly be stated and discussed in school	564	3.18	1.03
4	There is a contributory perception among employees in school	564	2.90	0.90
5	Employees in school cooperate in developing and evaluating projects and programs.	564	2.81	1.07
6	There is a continuous communication between administrators and teachers in school.	564	3.20	1.09
7	Joint studies are more common in school than individual studies.	564	2.57	1.01
8	The employees in school are rewarded by the school administration on developing distinctive ideas and techniques.	564	2.46	1.10
9	Small problems between employees in school are tolerated.	564	3.28	0.88

10	Employees in school keep up with technological developments and innovations.	564	3.13	1.01
11	There is an unprejudiced communication between school employees.	564	2.80	1.00
12	School administrators support innovations in education.	564	3.35	1.09
13	Empathetic communication is considerably common between school employees.	564	2.90	1.03
14	The administrators in school take the necessary precautions in order to facilitate the cooperation of employees.	564	3.02	1.12
15	The relationships between school employees are based on respect.	564	3.34	1.05
16	School employees accept the responsibilities for students regarding education.	564	3.42	1.02
17	The problems between school employees are mostly solved between employees.	564	3.53	0.88
18	School administrators value the views and ideas of employees.	564	3.14	1.18
19	Basic values and principles in school are conveyed to students through educational activities.	564	3.32	1.14
20	There is no problem in accessing administration regarding any problem in school.	564	3.54	1.27
21	School administrators act fairly in the vocational evaluation of employees.	564	2.98	1.23
22	Activities on special days, appointments and retirements are well organized in school.	564	3.30	1.33

SD: Standart Deviation

According to the arithmetic averages of the statements of the research group, the participants agreed least on the statement, "There is no gossip or rumors between the employees in school" with the average of $\overline{X}$ = 2.30. The highly agreed on the statement, "There is no problem in accessing administration regarding any problem in school" with the average of $\overline{X}$ = 3.54 (Table 1).

Table 2. The analysis results of the views of the research group according to the gender variable (t-test).

I. No	Gender	n	Mean	SD	t-Value	p-Value
4	Male	426	2.84	0.96	-3.328	0.001*
	Females	138	3.08	0.65		
8	Male	426	2.35	1.03	-4.045	0.000*
	Females	138	2.82	1.24		
10	Male	426	3.07	1.08	-3.331	0.001*
	Females	138	3.34	0.76		
12	Male	426	3.22	1.12	-5.463	0.000*
	Females	138	3.73	0.89		
15	Male	426	3.25	1.05	-3.459	0.001*
	Females	138	3.60	1.01		
16	Male	426	3.29	1.08	-6.665	0.000*
	Females	138	3.82	0.70		
19	Male	426	3.26	1.19	-2.588	0.010*
	Females	138	3.52	0.92		
22	Male	426	3.15	1.38	-5.713	0.000*
	Females	138	3.78	1.02		

*p<0.05 SD: Standart Deviation

Statistically significant differences were determined in the answers given to the 4th, 8th, 10th, 12th, 15th, 16th, 19th and 22nd items according to gender variable (Table 2).

Statistically significant differences were determined in the answers of the research group given to the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 10th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 18th and 21st items according to the period of service variable (Table 3).

Table 3. The analysis results of the views of the research group according to the period of service variable (ANOVA).

I. No	The period of service in the institution	n	Mean	SD	F	p-Value	Scheffe Test (Difference)
2	1-3 years	204	2.32	1.08	3.488	0.016*	3-4
	4-6 years	169	2.24	1.31			
	7-9 years	69	2.68	1.30			
	10 years and over	122	2.14	0.79			
4	1-3 years	204	2.97	0.84	6.263	0.000*	2-3
	4-6 years	169	3.07	0.90			2-4
	7-9 years	69	2.65	0.76			
	10 years and over	122	2.70	1.00			
6	1-3 years	204	3.19	1.21	5.310	0.001*	2-4
	4-6 years	169	3.40	1.05			
	7-9 years	69	3.27	0.61			
	10 years and over	122	2.89	1.10			
10	1-3 years	204	3.04	1.24	5.453	0.001*	1-2
	4-6 years	169	3.38	0.85			2-4
	7-9 years	69	3.14	0.73			
	10 years and over	122	2.94	.86			
11	1-3 years	204	2.73	1.13	12.650	.000*	1-2
	4-6 years	169	3.17	0.96			2-3
	7-9 years	69	2.59	0.81			2-4
	10 years and over	122	2.54	0.75			
13	1-3 years	204	3.09	1.13	14.002	0.000*	1-3
	4-6 years	169	3.09	1.01			1-4
	7-9 years	69	2.68	0.89			2-3
	10 years and over	122	2.45	0.73			2-4
14	1-3 years	204	3.12	1.28	4.604	0.003*	2-4
	4-6 years	169	3.17	1.04			
	7-9 years	69	2.76	0.97			
	10 years and over	122	2.78	0.93			
18	1-3 years	204	3.44	1.22	19.298	0.000*	1-3
	4-6 years	169	3.36	1.12			1-4
	7-9 years	69	2.65	0.87			2-3
	10 years and over	122	2.63	1.11			2-4
21	1-3 years	204	3.14	1.31	3.627	0.013*	1-3
	4-6 years	169	3.04	1.30			
	7-9 years	69	2.65	0.96			
	10 years and over	122	2.83	1.07			

*p<0.05 SD: Standart Deviation

Discussion

The results about the frequency in PA showed that institutionalized elderly were highly inactive. The views stated by the research group regarding the 4th, 8th, 10th, 12th, 15th, 16th, 19th and 22nd items determine statistically significant difference in terms of gender variable (Table 2). In the 8th statement, the average of the views of males was X= 2.35+1.03, while the one for females was X= 2.82+1.24, this indicates that the views of males were more negative than those of the females. This difference is thought to result from the fact that females give more importance to fulfilling their duties than males in educational institutions and therefore create more distinctive ideas. Males agreed less on the 15th statement than did the females (X= 3.25+1.05 and X= 3.60+1.01, respectively), which resulted from the fact that teachers and administrators serving in those educational institutions were in general male and therefore their dialogue and interaction with the administration was high. Çimen (2009) obtained parallel results in his study and determined a statistically significant difference between the views of the participants regarding some survey items according to the gender variable. In addition, Bilir et al. (2003) determined significant differences in terms of the gender variable.

Statistically significant difference was found in the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 10th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 18th and 21st items according to the period of service variable in the research group (Table 3). The difference in the answers to the 4th statement was observed to result from the group with 4-6 years of service (X= 3.07+.90). The teachers with fewer years of service were evaluated as those who adopted a more participatory attitude, and an increase in the period of service resulted in negative perceptions towards organizational culture and communication. In

addition, this result is thought to be caused by the individual expectations of teachers. Şimşek (2003) determined a high positive relationship between the communicative skills of school administrators and school culture and the teacher seniority varied according to the period of service in schools. Differing from the results of the present study, Sonmez (2006) reported no significant difference in perceptions towards organizational culture according to vocational seniority. In addition, Terzi (2005) reported that teachers with 10 years of service and over were more duty-oriented in their schools.

The research group expressed their views as, "I don't agree" to the statement, "There is no gossip or there are no rumors between employees in school" (Item No:2) with the average of X= 2.30+1.14, which indicates the views of teachers regarding the presence of bad communication between employees in the institutions where the teachers serve, that they do not support the decisions of school due to the absence of a democratic management by school administrators. In parallel with the present research results, Cansu (2006) determined the rate of agreement with the statement, "Open and transparent performance of every implementation in the workplace enables a decrease in gossip and rumors" as 29% and the rate to disagree as 50%. Employees stated that the practices of the administration were not open and transparent, and the informal communication in the organization was realized in the form of gossip and rumors.

The research group expressed their views as. "I don't agree" to the statement, "The employees in school are rewarded by the school administration on developing distinctive ideas and techniques" (Item No:8) with the average of X= 2.46+1.10. In their study, Bilir and etc. (2003) determined similar results and reported that the employees did not receive moral or material reward or tolerance, changes and innovation were not easily accepted and the employees were under strict control. Differing from the results of the present study, Çimen (2009) reported that the participants expressed their views as, "I partially agree" to the statement, "Our school rewards its employees for trying new ideas and techniques."

It was observed that the administrators and teachers serving in educational institutions are not informed about organizational culture. One of the reasons for failure in educational institution/institutions is the absence of an organizational culture in that/those institution(s). If the employees in those institutions hold views reflecting a weak culture in organizational activities and in a healthy communication, the presence of an effective organizational culture cannot be suggested in those educational institutions. Therefore, each educational institution should have a culture within the frame of its own norms, and adopt this culture in a way that fulfills its responsibilities and duties towards its employees. In conclusion, teachers, as well as administrators, shape and affect organizational culture in educational institutions. Physical education teachers also affect organizational culture. Creating an effective and positive organizational culture makes positive contributions to all of the lessons and to the effective conduct of physical education lessons.

Suggestions

In line with this, the following suggestions can be made for work in the field and educational institutions:

- Administrators should adopt a flexible and transparent administrative perception to ensure a contributory perception in institutions,
- Administrators in educational institutions should reward teachers for developing distinctive ideas and techniques,
- Administrators should establish an unprejudiced communication and perform an empathic communication in order to increase the performances of teachers in institutions,
- A fair and transparent evaluation of employees should be conducted by the administration in institutions.

Note: This research was presented orally at the 12th International Sports Sciences Congress organized by Pamukkale University on December 12- 14, 2012.

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