Full Length Research Paper

Self-values held by primary and secondary education school principals: A case in Canakkale

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The research aims to describe primary and secondary education school principals' self-values and to check whether or not those values differ significantly on the basis of gender, seniority, marital status and having or not having children. The participants in the research was composed of school principals working in the primary and secondary education schools of the Ministry of Education which were located in the centre of and the central districts of Canakkale in the 2011 to 2012 academic year. The Rokeach Value Scale of 56-value adjectives was used in this research. In the analysis of the data, statistical techniques such as the arithmetic averages ($\overline{x}$), standard deviations, and independent t test were employed for the calculation. According to the findings, the three values that they considered the most important were "being healthy", "national security", and "family security" whereas the ones they considered the least important were "social power", "an exciting life" and "accepting one's share in life". According to the variables of gender, seniority, marital status and having or not having children school principals' self-values differ significantly.

Key words: Self-values, primary education, secondary education, school principal.

INTRODUCTION

Each organization is a structure which is established so as to attain certain goals that individuals cannot achieve on their own. The basic components constituting an organization are the goal, the structure, the process, and the air (Bursalioglu, 2002). Of them, the key element is "the goals" for the formation and working of all the other components. On the foundation of organizational goals, the values originating from inside and outside the organization lie. Indeed, values play important roles not only on the goals dimension but also on the structure, process and air dimensions of the organization (Ercetin, 2000; Hinings et al., 1996; Hoy and Miskel, 2010; Paarlberg and Perry, 2007; Rainey and Steinbauer, 1999).

The modern theory of organization, which defines organizations as open systems, attaches importance to values and values system in organizations (Bursalioglu, 2002). Hence, the values in an organization influence the social values on the one hand, and those values are also the continuation of the social values on the other hand. The fact that the members of an organization come from the surrounding society causes the values of the society to enter the organization (Hoy and Miskel, 2010). Moreover, those values in the organization may be similar to or different from the values of the society.

At the same time, values are the basic constituents of the organizational culture where the individual belongs. The organizational culture is defined as the values, beliefs and attitudes shared by the individuals and groups in the organization (Sabuncuoglu and Tuz, 2003; Sisman, 1994; Turan et al., 2005). Individuals' psychological needs are understood better in an organizational culture where humanistic values are dominant because people consider

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each other's feelings more important in such an organizational culture (Stallard and Pankau, 2008). The values shared by the members of the organization constitute the value system of the organization (Wiener, 1988).

In formal organizations, behaviour is composed not only of structural elements but also of the group's values and the shared inclinations (Hoy and Miskel, 2010). Another source of organizational behaviour in the organizational setting is the individual values. Therefore, they form the basis in introducing ourselves, in judging our own behaviour and other people's behaviours, in comparing us with others, and when we try to convince others (Sagnak, 2005a). The power of individual values is capable of affecting the amount of effort that an individual makes in performing an activity, the amount of time he/she persists in that activity, as well as the individual's choices and responses (İscan, 2007).

Societies, organizations and individuals may also be defined with their value priorities. Yet, a dynamic aspect of values is that they are the structures open to change. Modifications can be made in the value priorities so as to meet the needs of societies, organizations and individuals- which arise through time (Kagitcibasi, 2004).

The research studies (Czerniawski, 2009; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Sargut, 2001) demonstrate that values may differ on the basis of the properties of the national culture in which people live.

What does value mean? What types of values are there? How do the values form in an organization? What is the importance of values in an organization? Attempts are made to answer all these questions on philosophical foundations, and considerable knowledge is produced in this regard. Values are the phenomenon which needs analysis due to the fact that they influence all individual's (mainly the administrators') perception of life, their making sense of life, and their decisions. A review of field literature shows that several definitions are available with regard to the concept of value. Sisman (2002) defines value as the criterion determining what is right, what is wrong and what is good, what is bad. Balci (2005), on the other hand, suggests that value is the ground on which an individual's or an organization's goals lie. When seen from this perspective, values are the indicator of what a culture, a society or an individual prefers or considers important.

Values are classified in very different ways, just as in the way they are defined. Rokeach (1968a, 1968b) divides them into "instrumental" and "objective" values in terms of individual attitudes and behaviours. Objective values may be defined as values referring to the final states of idealized exiestence while the instrumental values can be defined as the values referring to idealized manners of behaviour. Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) and Schwartz (1994), however, group 56 values into 10 different types of values in terms of motivation. The mentioned types of values are: Power, achievement, enjoying life, stimulus, self-inclination, universality, benevolence, traditionalism, adjustment, and safety.

According to Cohen (1985), values are divided into five as internal, external, moral, personal, and knowledge-based values. On the other hand, values can also be classified as social values in social contexts, individual values in individual contexts, and as family values in the context of small groups (Winter et al., 1998).

Begley (2003, p.2), on the other hand, notes that "values may stem from the individual's own psychology as well as from the group, organization and society with which the individual is in interaction". Therefore, it is important to form a balanced relation between individual values, organizational values and social values. It may be said that the individual values of the employees and the organizational values should be compatible in a healthy and effective organization because research concerning the compatibility of values shows that if consistency exists between individual values and organizational values, employees' job satisfaction, their adherence to the job, their interest in the job, and their attitudes towards the job will be influenced by this in a positive way (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998).

Yet, it was found that scientific research studies concerning the compatibility between individual and organizational values yielded differing results. Most of them indicated that the individual values of the employees were compatible with organizational values (Koybasi and Donmez, 2012; Nartgun, 2006; Notman, 2005; Sunley and Locke, 2012; Yilmaz and Balci, 2009). However, Hart and Bredeson (1996), claimed that congruence rarely exits between espoused professional values, organizational values and personal values.

Owing to the fact that it is the duty of the administration to sustain the organization in line with its goals, the value system of the administrators in particular should be consistent with the value system of the organization. Russell (2001) points out that managers' self-values affect organizations in these respects: Principals' self-values influence (1) their perception of the incidents and problems they encounter, (2) their way of resolving problems as well as their decisions, (3) their interpersonal relations, (4) their desire to be successful, (5) the degree of accepting or refusing the organizational pressures and goals, (6) their managerial performances; and (7) their self-values form the foundation for them to suggest the difference between ethical and unethical behaviours.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Organizations of education are the crux of values and of administrative values (Greenfield, 1991). Schools are the fields of learning and living, which are established on the basis of values. Therefore, in an institution of education (Turan and Aktan, 2008), the life of a school bears no importance unless there is integrity between the values of educators and the values of the school (Celik, 2000).

What values educators hold in schools-which make children sociable and prepare them to social life after the family-is important. The people that play key roles in the process of decision making for the solution of problems of any kind such as the formation of culture at the organizational level in schools, establishing the vision of the school, the determination of organizational activities and motivating the teachers are the school principals. Hence, it is important that the self-values of school principals, who both pursue the pre-determined values and create new values and thus help schools to keep standing (Bursalioglu, 2002), should be known.

Moreover, these principals have important roles in instilling in students the values in the school environment (Suh and Traiger, 1999; Veugelers, 2000; Willemse et al., 2005). Thus, it may be stated that school principals' self-values are capable of affecting students' moral development (Alavi and Rahimipoor, 2010) because values lie on the moral dimension of leadership (Day, 2004; Sergiovanni, 2001).

Conducting research studies with regard to values aims to determine the value orientations inherent in humans, and to uncover the interactions of those orientations with their attitudes, social experiences and roles (Mehmedoglu, 2006). An increase is remarkable in recent years in the number of studies concerning values performed by educators. The mentioned some research studies are concerned with teachers' values (Aktepe and Yel, 2009; Cavdar, 2009; Donmez and Comert, 2007; Kusdil and Kagitcibasi, 2000; Tokdemir, 2007; Yilmaz, 2009). However, a review of field literature shows that the number of research studies concerning the self-values held by school principals is small (Alavi and Rahimipoor, 2010; Baloglu and Balgalmis, 2005; Begley and Stefkovich, 2004; Burnitt and Gunter, 2013; Day, 2000; Ercetin, 2000; Gold et al., 2003; Harris and Chapman, 2002; Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000; Notman, 2005).

In previous some research studies (Baloglu and Balgalmis, 2005; Burnitt and Gunter, 2013; Ercetin, 2000; Gold et al., 2003; Harris and Chapman, 2002; Notman, 2005) it was found that "national security", "democracy", "equality", and "family security" were the values that had been considered the most important by school principals. Yet, some former researchers (Begley and Stefkovich, 2004; Day, 2000; Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000) analysed the positive effects of school principals' self-values on academic achievement.

Nowadays, school principals have been facing new challenges in a way making it impossible to implement the previously taken central decisions (Schartz, 2003). Those challenges influence the change. Values are also the elements making the changes difficult in an organization (Amis et al., 2002; Fullan, 2002). Thus, it may be suggested that the values of an organization and of its members should be examined before carrying out changes in the organization. Considering the fact that important changes have been conducted recently in

Turkish education system, revealing the self-values of school principals through such research may gain importance. Hence, the first modification to do in order to facilitate school principals' adjustment to the change can be conducted in terms of their self-values.

This research may enable school principals to gain self-consciousness with regard to what self-values they hold and to perform self-evaluation. Determining school principals' self-values at the organizational level can bring benefits in order for top managers to apply the suitable organizational techniques and in order for school principals to employ the effective motivation methods. On the other hand, this current research can also shed light on other potential research studies that are planned.

The main problem considered in this research is what self-values primary and secondary education school principals who are employed in the body of Turkish Ministry of Education hold. It aims to describe primary and secondary education school principals' self-values and to check whether or not those values differ significantly on the basis of gender, seniority, marital status and having or not having children. Therefore, the answers are sought to the following sub-problems:

1. What are the self-values that are considered as the most important by primary and secondary education school principals?
2. What are the self-values that are considered as the least important by primary and secondary education school principals?
3. Is there any significant difference between primary and secondary education school principals' self-values in terms of gender?
4. Is there any significant difference between primary and secondary education school principals' self-values in terms of seniority?
5. Is there any significant difference between primary and secondary education school principals' self-values in terms of marital status?
6. Is there any significant difference between primary and secondary education school principals' self-values in terms of having children or not?

METHOD

Population and sample

The research population was composed of school principals working in the primary and secondary education schools of the Ministry of Education which were located in the centre of and the central districts of Canakkale in the 2011 to 2012 academic year.

The research employs convenience sampling, which is a non-random sampling method. In convenience sampling method, a scale is applied to people who are in a certain location (Yukselen, 2000). The research sample was composed of 250 primary and secondary education school principals. Totally 260 scales were distributed, and 250 of them were evaluated. The personal traits of the school principals included in the research sample are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distributions regarding the demographic information on the research sample.

Variables		1	2	Total
		Male	**Female**	---
Gender	n	200	50	250
	%	80	20	100
		1-10 year	**11 year and more**	---
Seniority	n	32	218	250
	%	12.8	87.2	100
		Married	**Single**	---
Marital status	n	218	32	250
	%	87.2	12.8	100
		Yes	**No**	---
Having or not having children	n	214	36	250
	%	85.6	14.4	100

Data collection and analysis

The research was performed with 250 school principals participating in the training course held by Province Directorate of National Education in cooperation with Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University. The Rokeach Value Scale (RVS) was used in this research. The RVS contained 18 instrumental and 18 target value adjectives in relation to the individual attitudes and behaviours. This is a 7-pointed likert type scale ranging from -1 (opposite to my value) to 7 (highly important) for each value (Rokeach, 1973). The Turkish form of the RVS, which was translated into Turkish by Bas (2004), was used in this research. In calculations of the research conducted by Baloglu and Balgalmis (2005), the reliability of the RVS items for the 56 value adjectives (Cronbach α=.95) were found to be high. In this study, the reliability of the RVS was found as .94 (Cronbach α).

The data were analysed through the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software. For the implementation of data acquired from the research, descriptive statistical techniques was used for the frequency, and percentage. In the analysis of the data, statistical techniques such as arithmetic averages ($\bar{X}$), and standard deviations were employed for the calculation of the most and least preferred self-values of the school principals. In addition to that, the independent t test was used so as to see whether or not the values of the school principals differed significantly on the basis of gender, seniority, marital status and having or not having children. In the statistical analyses, significance level has been taken as .05.

FINDING

This part presents the findings obtained in line with the purpose of the research and based on the sub-problems of the research.

The self-values most preferred by primary and secondary education school principals

The ten self-values considered the most important by

Table 2. Self-values considered as the most important by school principals.

Self-values	$\bar{x}$	SD
1.Being healthy	6.34	0.65
2.National security	6.00	0.63
3.Family security	5.90	0.70
4.Setting one's own target	5.70	0.92
5.Responsibility	5.42	0.78
6.Be successful	5.38	0.73
7.Equality	5.37	0.48
8.Keeping one's word	5.34	0.79
9.Being obedient	5.32	0.75
10.Real friendship	5.12	0.33

primary and secondary education school principals are shown in Table 2.

As is observed in Table 2, the three most important self-values are "being healthy" ($\bar{x}$=6.34, SD=0.65), "national security" ($\bar{x}$=6.00, SD=0.63), and "family security" ($\bar{x}$= 5.90, SD=0.70). According to Table 2, the other self-values that school principals consider the most important are "setting one's own target" ($\bar{x}$=5.70, SD=0.92), "responsibility" ($\bar{x}$=5.42, SD=0.78), "be successful" ($\bar{x}$=5.38, SD=0.73), "equality" ($\bar{x}$=5.37, SD=0.48), "keeping one's word" ($\bar{x}$=5.34, SD=0.79), "being obedient" ($\bar{x}$=5.32, SD=0.75), and "real friendship" ($\bar{x}$= 5.12, SD=0.33).

Table 3. Self-values considered as the least important by school principals.

Self-values	$\bar{x}$	SD
1.Social power	0.97	1.46
2.An exciting life	1.31	1.03
3.Accepting one's share in life	1.40	0.91
4.A variable life	1.50	0.87
5.Authority	1.72	0.67
6.Enjoyment	2.10	1.13
7.Courage	2.52	0.50
8.Being competent	2.54	0.49
9.Being wealthy	2.55	0.50
10.The sense of belonging	2.74	0.66

Table 4. The different of school principals' self-values on the basis of gender.

Self-values	Gender	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	t	df	p
Preserving the general impression	Female	50	3.76	1.00	2.03	248	0.04*
	Male	200	4.05	0.87			
Real friendship	Female	50	5.32	0.47	-4.90	248	0.00*
	Male	200	5.07	0.26			
Benevolence	Female	50	4.16	1.11	-2.31	248	0.02*
	Male	200	3.77	1.03			

p*< .05

The self-values least preferred by primary and secondary education school principals

The ten self-values considered the least important by primary and secondary education school principals are shown in Table 3.

Accordingly, the first three of them are "social power" ($\bar{x}$=0.97, SD=1.46)-which means having control over others- "an exciting life" ($\bar{x}$=1.31, SD=1.03), and "accepting one's share in life" ($\bar{x}$=1.40, SD=0.91) respectively. The other least important self-values are "a variable life" ($\bar{x}$=1.50, SD=0.87), "authority" ($\bar{x}$=1.72, SD=0.67), "enjoyment" ($\bar{x}$=2.10, SD=1.13), "courage" ($\bar{x}$=2.52, SD=0.50), "being competent" ($\bar{x}$=2.54, SD=0.49), "being wealthy" ($\bar{x}$=2.55, SD=0.50), and "the sense of belonging" ($\bar{x}$=2.74, SD=0.66).

Difference between primary and secondary education school principals' self-values on the basis of gender

School principals' self-values, which differ on the basis of gender, are shown in Table 4. Accordingly, their values differ significantly on gender basis in terms of three self-values (namely, "preserving the general impression", "real friendship", and "benevolence") [t(248)=2.03, p<.05; t(248)=-4.90, p<.05 and t(248)=-2.31, p<.05].

According to Table 4, the self-value of "preserving the general impression" ($\bar{x}$=4.05, SD=0.87) is the one that is considered the most important by male school principals while "real friendship" ($\bar{x}$=5.32, SD=0.47), and "benevolence" ($\bar{x}$=4.16, SD=1.11) are the ones that are considered the most important by female principals.

Difference between primary and secondary education school principals' self-values on the basis of seniority

Table 5 shows school principals' self-values which differ significantly according to seniority. Their values differ significantly according to seniority variable in terms of three self-values (namely, "freedom", "self-respect", and "preserving the general impression") [t(248)=2.21, p<.05; t(248)=2.00, p<.05 and t(248)=-3.36, p<.05]. As is clear from Table 5, the school principals with experience

Table 5. The different of school principals' self-values on the basis of seniority.

Self-values	Seniority	N	x̄	SD	t	df	p
Freedom	1-10 year	32	4.96	0.69	2.21	248	0.02*
	11 year and more	218	4.77	0.43			
Self-respect	1-10 year	32	4.84	0.36	2.00	248	0.04*
	11 year and more	218	4.65	0.52			
Preserving the general impression	1-10 year	32	3.50	0.98	-3.36	248	0.00*
	11 year and more	218	4.06	0.87			

p*< .05

Table 6. The different of school principals' self-values on the basis of marital status.

Self-values	Marital status	N	x̄	SD	t	df	p
Family security	Married	218	5.94	0.69	2.67	248	0.00*
	Single	32	5.59	0.71			
Accepting one's share in life	Married	218	1.44	0.93	2.06	248	0.04*
	Single	32	1.09	0.73			
Enjoying life	Married	218	5.01	1.16	3.94	248	0.00*
	Single	32	4.12	1.32			

p*< .05

Table 7. The different of school principals' self-values on the basis of having or not having children.

Self-values	Having or not having children	N	x̄	SD	t	df	p
Benevolence	Yes	214	3.92	1.07	2.68	248	0.00*
	No	36	3.41	0.90			
Having responsibility	Yes	214	5.47	0.77	2.38	248	0.01*
	No	36	5.13	0.79			

p*< .05

less than 11 years consider "freedom" (x̄=4.96, SD=0.69) and "self-respect" (x̄=4.84, SD=0.36) important whereas those with 11 year or more experience consider "preserving the general impression" important (x̄=4.06, SD=0.87).

Difference between primary and secondary education school principals' self-values on the basis of marital status

Table 6 shows school principals' self-values differ significantly according to marital status in terms of three self-values (namely, "family security", "accepting one's share in life", and "enjoying life") [t(248)=2.67, p< .05; t(248)=2.06, p< .05 and t(248)=3.94, p<.05]. According to Table 6, "family security" (x̄=5.94, SD=0.69), "accepting one's share in life" (x̄=1.44, SD=0.93) and "enjoying life" (x̄=5.01, SD=1.16) are the self-values considered more important by married principals than by single ones.

Difference between primary and secondary education school principals' self-values on the basis of having or not having children

Table 7 shows school principals' self-values which differ significantly according to having or not having children.

Their values differ significantly according to having or not having children in terms of two self-values (that is to say, "benevolence" and "responsibility") [t(248)=2.68, p< .05 and t(248)=2.38, p<.05]. As is clear from Table 7, the school principals with children consider "benevolence" ($\bar{x}$=3.92, SD=1.07) and "responsibility" ($\bar{x}$=5.47, SD=0.77) more important than those with no children do.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The self-values that are considered the most important by the primary and secondary education school principals' were "being healthy", "national security", and "family security". Clearly, the self-values that were considered the most important by the school principals' were related to "security". This situation may stem from the fact that Turkish society strictly adheres to national values andfamily values. Another reason for school principals to attach importance to the values related to security might be that they considered personal tranquility and the continuity of the family and of the society important (Schwartz, 1994). In many pieces of research conducted with educators, it was found that "national security" and "family security" were among the values that had been considered the most important (Aktepe and Yel, 2009; Baloglu and Balgalmis, 2005; Burnitt and Gunter, 2013; Donmez and Comert, 2007; Ercetin, 2000; Gold et al., 2003; Harris and Chapman, 2002; Kusdil and Kagıtcibasi, 2000; Notman, 2005).

On the other hand the values of "setting one's own target", "responsibility", "being successful", "equality", "keeping one's word", "being obedient" and "real friendship" were other values that had been most adopted and considered the most important. This may stem from their adherence to the principles of administration job and from their internalising these principles.

Among the self-values that school principals considered the least important were "an exciting life" and "a variable life". This may be the result of the fact that Turkish society is a society with low tolerance of uncertainty (Sargut, 2001). In a similar vein to the results of this research, some research (Aktepe and Yel, 2009; Baloglu and Balgalmis, 2005; Turan and Aktan, 2008; Yılmaz and Balci, 2009) demonstrated that educators preferred "social power", "enjoyment", "an exciting life", "being rich", and "accepting one's share in life" the least. Yet, differently from this research, some found that educators considered the value of "social power" important (Ercetin, 2000) and some other research studies found that teachers (Donmez and Comert, 2007) considered "nice cars, houses and clothes" moderately important. In research conducted by Weston (1993), it was found that school principals considered "being sensitive to others' needs" and "fine arts" the most important while they considered the value of "appreciating" the least important.

School principals' self-values differ significantly on the basis of gender, seniority, marital status, and having or not having children. It is clear that school principals' self-values differ significantly according to gender variable. Those self-values may be said to be parallel to the gender roles imposed by the society on men and women. It is known that women are more sociable than men in Turkish culture. Research (Donmez and Comert, 2007; Yilmaz, 2009) also shows similarly that female teachers attach more importance to the values of "having my close friends" and "benevolence" more than male teachers do. Powell et al. (1984) found that females were more career versus family oriented than males.

According to the variable of seniority, school principals' self-values differ significantly. This may stem from the change in the form of a decrease in feelings of freedom and self-respect in time in schools, which are the places of bureaucratic work (Zijderveld, 1995), or another reason may be that the individuals of new generation are more self-controlled. Some research (Yilmaz, 2009) showed that teachers with experience less than 5 years found the value of "self-control" significantly important. Some other research, on the other hand, obtained different findings. Accordingly, in the research conducted with school principals and with teachers, the variable of seniority did not cause a significant difference in terms of values that were considered the most important (Aktay, 2008; Tanit, 2007).

On the basis of marital status, school principals' self-values differ significantly in terms of three values. Similarly, some research demonstrated that marital status caused significant differences only in the values of power and traditionalism (Aktay, 2008). Finally, on the basis of having or not having children, the principals' self-values differ significantly. The increase in individuals' roles with becoming a parent and the resultant increase in their responsibilities might have led to this consequence. This may stem from the fact that school principals internalise their parent roles.

School principals may be facilitated to receive training in values education so that they can gain such values as "social justice", "equality", "respect for different cultures", and "universalism"- which have currently become impor-tant in societies- in addition to the national and universal values, and so that they can act as models to both teachers and students in values education. Comparisons can be made in similar research studies by examining the self-values of teachers and of managers/administrators. In this way, the similarities as well as differences between the self-values of teachers and those of school principals can be revealed.

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