



Reasons for Teachers' Alienation

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the causes of alienation according to the opinions of teachers working at different school types and levels. Phenomenology, one of the qualitative research designs, was used in the study. The study group, on the other hand, consists of 7 teachers selected from different school types and grades in Aydın with the snowball sampling method, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods. A semi-structured "Reasons for teachers' alienation interview form" developed by the researchers was used to obtain the data. The analysis of the data was carried out using content analysis. As a result of the research, the reasons for teachers' alienation were gathered in three categories: factors related to work, institution and communication. According to the findings of the study, teachers; (i) reasons for alienation from work, administrative problem, loss of prestige of the profession, financial problems, program and equipment-material, working conditions, parental indifference and environmental pressures; (ii) the reasons for alienation from the institution, not being able to participate in the decision, negative attitude of the management, terms of appointment of administrators, physical conditions of the school; (iii) sees the reasons for alienation from communication as political and ideological thoughts, personal attitudes and behaviors, not sharing information and grouping. According to the findings, it can be said that in order to minimize alienation in teachers, school administrators should perform their administrative actions more carefully and diligently, be solution-oriented, act impartially, and provide support.

Key Words

Alienation
Teacher alienation
Teacher
Reasons of alienation

About Article

Sending date: 09.03.2023
Acceptance date: 17.04.2023
E-Publication date: 30.04.2023

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Introduction

While alienation is generally defined as the alienation of individuals from each other, from a certain environment or situation, Marx defined alienation as the alienation of the individual from work and withdrawing himself (Saygın, 2019). According to Püsküllüoğlu (2000), alienation is when an individual becomes alienated from the environment, society, himself and others by being dominated by the products he produces (as cited in Fettahlıoğlu, 2006). Alienation can be caused by different factors such as the environment in which one lives, personality traits, and friends with whom a relationship is established (Yücel, 2006). Alienation causes the employee not to take responsibility or avoid taking responsibility in the organization, job dissatisfaction and constant complaints, not wanting to communicate with other employees, fear of innovation, and resistance to change (Bayındır, 2002). This situation prevents them from reaching the goals set by their structures and the happiness of the individuals in the organization.

The most important component of an organization are its members, individuals. Collaboration of these individuals with each other in the realization of the goals and their integration with the organization is one of the most important requirements in ensuring organizational effectiveness (Lepak and Snell, 1998). It is necessary to increase the interest and commitment to organizational goals, to harmonize individual goals with organizational goals, to express opinions and thoughts, and to develop the creativity of members (Altinkurt, 2014). Individuals who make up the organization have different individual characteristics, desires, needs, expectations and goals, which can lead to their indifference to organizational goals and their alienation from the organization (Adrien et al. 2002).

The management structure of the organization created to achieve the determined objectives, physical inadequacies, the relations of the employees with the managers and other employees, the problems they experience, the conflict of their wishes and expectations, the non-inclusion of the employees in the decision by the management, etc. individual and organizational reasons are among the factors that cause alienation (Eryılmaz, 2010). The decrease in job satisfaction and organizational commitment of the employees, the unwillingness to go to work, the desire to leave the job and the feeling of burnout, communication problems lead to the alienation of the individual to his job, the institution he works for, and this situation negatively affects the performance and productivity of the employee. Organizational alienation (Agarwal, 1993), which is the employee's not giving enough importance to his job, the minimum energy expenditure for the realization of the job, and the greater importance of external rewards for the employee (Agarwal, 1993), can occur in the form of alienation of the employees to the organization they work, to each other or to themselves (Darıyemez, 1993).

Alienation also affects educational institutions in different ways. In particular, the qualifications of the school where the teacher, who is an education employee, works, the opportunities provided to the teacher by the management, the value that the teacher attaches to his profession affect the formation of alienation. The bureaucratic and hierarchical structure of the education system prevents or limits the collective decision making and the participation of the teacher in the decision. Restriction of the teacher in educational processes such as lecturing and planning activities causes a feeling of powerlessness in the teacher and can lead to alienation (Yılmaz and Sarpkaya, 2009). Teachers find educational activities meaningless, change their thoughts towards education negatively, feel inadequate, isolate themselves from their environment and friends (Kılıç, 2009), administrative decisions are taken by the central government in order to maintain the current status quo, and teachers are not allowed to step out of their designated roles. Failure to do so brings alienation and organizational alienation (Yapıcı, 2004). In addition, the excessive course load, the intensity of the curriculum, the lack of a positive climate in the school, the crowded classes and the low achievement of the students, the lack of a participatory understanding of the administrative structure, the physical inadequacies of the school, the lack of healthy communication with other teachers can be counted among the other causes of organizational alienation (Kılıçık, 2011). The alienation of teachers from the organization may cause them not to value their professional development and to have creative thinking (Yılmaz and Sarpkaya, 2009).

The alienation of the teacher from work negatively affects the organization and work life (Elma, 2003). The alienation of the teacher from work occurs in the form of finding his work boring and meaningless, not taking pleasure, not being interested anymore, alienating from the education-teaching

process and not adding anything from himself (Eryılmaz and Burgaz, 2011). In addition, inadequate teachers' salaries, meeting the needs only at a minimum level, the decrease in the importance given to the teacher by the society and the loss of reputation are among the factors that affect the alienation of the teacher from work (Kılıç, 2009). On the other hand, the lack of a fair division of labor among teachers, disagreements and conflicts with the administrator or other teachers due to reasons such as the nature of the work, working time, excessive workload, whether the work is done with love, the attitude of the management, and the inability to interfere with the audit results (Kösterelioğlu, 2011). Among the other reasons for alienation from work are the inability to establish healthy communication, monotony (Şimşek et al., 2006). Not being able to identify successful and unsuccessful teachers effectively, not providing sufficient material support and not being appreciated by the school administration can also be counted among the reasons for alienation from work (Şirin, 2009).

The teacher spends most of his day at school. It is possible to come across different groups and formations among teachers at school. The quality of the group members at the school shapes the personal characteristics of the teacher in the group and has a decisive effect on their economic and social satisfaction (Ertürk, 2013). The teacher is the most important factor for the school to reach the determined goals and be successful (Eryılmaz, 2010). School administrators' adopting a strict and resistant to change management style, not giving importance to the views and thoughts of the teacher individually or as a group, not taking into account the personality traits and not establishing healthy communication, highlighting the individual or group differences among teachers cause alienation in communication.

There are various studies on teacher alienation. The teacher experiences alienation in different ways, changes from situation to situation and develops in the process (Brooks, Hughes and Brooks, 2008), the teacher demands more autonomy and participation in decisions from the management in order to prevent alienation (Cox and Wood, 2009), emphasizes the environment in which the teacher works (Brooks, Hughes and Brooks, 2008; Vavrus, 1987), there are studies suggesting that job satisfaction and work environment are effective on alienation (Thompson and Wendt, 2010).

Schools have an important place in the context of developing society and individuals and shaping the future (Taymaz, 2011). Any negative organizational behavior in schools does not only reveal a negative outcome for itself, but may affect the society from different aspects in the long run (Bursalıoğlu, 2010). In this context, a participatory, fair and egalitarian management approach should be established in order to minimize alienation, which has negative consequences both individually and organizationally in schools. In this study, the views of teachers working at different school types and levels on the causes of alienation were investigated.

Method

The teacher experiencing alienation has negative feelings towards his profession, the institution he works for, his environment, himself, and the world, and causes him to feel inadequate. It is important that this feeling is understandable in order to take the necessary measures to prevent this (Şimşek et al., 2012). In this study, the views of teachers working at different school types and levels on the causes of alienation were investigated. Phenomenology, one of the qualitative research designs, was used in the study. The phenomenological approach, which focuses on the phenomena that we are aware of but do not have a deep and detailed understanding of, and which means making sense of the lived experience, is preferred in order to provide a conceptual basis against methodology deficiencies and application problems, and to present general and practical information on the subject (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016).

Scientific studies aiming to reveal the event and perceptions in their natural environment with a holistic and realistic perspective by using different data collection techniques such as observation, interview and document analysis constitute qualitative research (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). A semi-structured "Reasons for teachers' alienation interview form" developed by the researchers was used to collect the data. Semi-structured interview, as it contains a certain level of flexibility and standardization, eliminates the limitations of the questionnaires and provides comprehensive information on a specific subject (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In this study, teachers who experienced alienation were interviewed using a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers.

Study Group

The study group of the research consists of 7 participants selected from teachers working in different school types and levels in Aydın. Snowball or chain sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used to determine the study group. According to Patton (1987), snowball sampling is a method that provides new information to be obtained by asking who else to interview and who has the most knowledge on this subject (Yılmaz and Şimşek, 2016). In this method, as the process progresses, the names obtained continue to grow like a snowball, and after a certain period of time, certain names always come to the fore, and the number of individuals to be interviewed and the number of situations to be dealt with begins to decrease (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). Demographic information about the study group is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

		f	%
Gender	Female	4	57
	Male	3	43
Total		7	100
Type of School Worked	Kindergarten	1	14
	Primary school	2	29
	Secondary school	3	43
	High school	1	14
Total		7	100
Working Time in the Same School	2-5 years	1	14
	6-10 years	3	43
	11-15 years	2	29
	16 years and above	1	14
Total		7	100
Professional seniority	5-10 years	1	14
	11-20 years	2	29
	21-30 years	3	43
	31 years and over	1	14
Total		7	100
Age	25-35 years	1	14
	36-45 years	3	29
	46-55 years	2	43
	56 years and older	1	14
Total		7	100

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that the study group consists of 7 participant teachers, 4 of whom are female and 3 are male. Among the participants, there is 1 person with 2-5 years working time, 3 people with 6-10 years, 2 people with 11-15 years and 1 person with 16 years and above, and 1 person with 5-10 years in terms of professional seniority, 2 people 11-20 years old, 3 people 21-30 years old and 1 person who is 31 years and above, when evaluated in terms of age, 1 person in the 25-35 age range, 3 people in the 36-45 age range, 46-55 age range There is 1 person aged 2 and 56 years and older.

Data Collection Tool

It is important to examine the data to be obtained in depth and to deliver the necessary details to the reader in an accurate, realistic and reliable manner (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In this context, data collection was carried out with a semi-structured "*The reasons for teachers' alienation interview form*" developed by the researchers. The reason for choosing a semi-structured interview form is that it is aimed to obtain the same type of information from different people, provided that they focus on similar topics (Patton, 1987). In semi-structured interviews, the researchers ask questions about the pre-decided topic and these issues, and additional questions are asked when adequate answers are not received. As

the questions are obligatory to serve the purpose of the problem, the place of the questions can be changed, omitted or their details can be entered when necessary (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016).

8 questions were included in the "*reasons of alienation of teachers interview form*" developed by the researchers. The questions in the semi-structured "*reasons of teachers' alienation interview form*" were created in the light of the data obtained from the literature review. The semi-structured interview form created was presented to the opinion of four field experts and was arranged according to their feedback. The pilot application of the semi-structured interview form was carried out with three teachers and its final form was given. Then the interviews were held. The data were obtained from the volunteer teachers working in different types and levels in Aydın province in the 2022-2023 academic year through interviews held at the time and place they are available. During the interviews, which lasted for an average of 40 minutes, recordings were taken, and the answers of two people who did not accept the recording were taken as notes. The obtained data were analyzed by transferring them to the text.

Data Analysis

The obtained data were analyzed by "*content analysis*". Content analysis is a method based on the analysis of quantitative and recorded data and drawing conclusions from it, with coding created by considering certain rules (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). With the use of content analysis, the researcher presents the data more scientifically by making a systematic and objective interpretation (Koçak and Arun, 2006). Codes were extracted from the data obtained by examining the literature, similar expressions were determined and categorized. In addition, direct quotations are included in order to reflect the participant's views in the most accurate way.

While the use of data diversity is accepted as an important element for validity, the objective observation of the researched phenomenon as it is by the researcher also creates validity in qualitative research. Reliability, on the other hand, includes being clear and understandable in qualitative research (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). According to Silverman (2006), reliability can be increased by pre-testing the interview questions, informing the interviewer, and coding the answers given to the questions (as cited in Uğurlu et al., 2012). The answers given to the questions in the semi-structured interview form were analyzed by content analysis, categories and codes were created, and the codes and categories that emerged as a result of the analysis of the data were consulted by two experts on qualitative research. The obtained data were analyzed and coded, and the consistency between the coders was calculated using the formula of Miles and Huberman (1994). As a result of this calculation, it was determined that the consistency between the encoders was 86%. The fact that the result obtained was over 80% showed that the analysis was consistent. In addition to the interview, observation and document analysis were made to eliminate the weaknesses caused by a single data collection tool and to increase its internal validity, and it was supported by the answers of the participants. The teachers in the study group were named as P1, P2, P3...P7.

Findings

The reasons for the alienation of the gathering were investigated through interviews with teachers working in different school types and levels, using the semi-interview formula obtained by the researchers, and they were analyzed and categorized with the content analysis obtained. The business obtained regarding the reasons for the alienation of the teachers took place in 3 main categories as the reasons related to the institution and communication.

Reasons for teachers' alienation from work

Teachers in the study group stated the reasons for alienation from work as administrative problems, loss of prestige of the profession, financial problems, program and equipment-material, working conditions, parental indifference and environmental pressures. The reasons for teachers' alienation from work are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Reasons for teachers' alienation from work

Category	Code	f	%	Sample Expressions
Work environment	Administrative problem	5	18	P2 'It is very easy to pass the class.'
	Losing the prestige of the profession	6	21	P5 'I don't think my job has any social or status gains, it has no prestige in society, you have no value in the eyes of students and parents'.
	Financial problems	5	18	P5 "Not satisfying economically." P2 "Salary is insufficient, we have a hard time living."
	Program and tools-equipment-material	4	14	P3 'I have difficulties in accessing educational materials, they want the teacher to provide a good education, but they do not provide enough resources.' P2 "The material is insufficient; the administration is not interested."
	Work conditions	3	11	P2 "The entrance hours are very early; we enter classes in the dark."
	Parent indifference and environmental pressures	5	18	P6 'The undisciplined behavior of the students, the carelessness of the administrators, the indifference and ignorance of the parents, and the environmental pressure, alienate everything and everyone'.
Total		28	100	

One of the participating teachers expressed his views on the reasons for alienation from work as follows: "Work is becoming ordinary now, it is only done for money, it is necessary to do the lesson routinely, not to interfere with the rest, I think the important thing is to fill the time, (P1)". The other participant teacher stated as follows: "The undisciplined behavior of the students, the indifference and ignorance of the parents and their involvement in everything alienate me from everything, especially my profession. When the procrastination of the administration, the callousness of the administrators, the inability to solve anything, the constant postponement, the failure to meet the needs and the necessary course materials, there is no love for the profession (P5)". Another participant teacher stated the reasons for alienation from work as follows: "The society's view of education is negative, we are left alone by the administration, the work we do is not seen, it is belittled, everything we do is considered obligatory by the environment and no support is given (P4)".

Reasons for teachers' alienation from the institution

The teachers in the study group stated the reasons for alienation from the institution as not being able to participate in the decision, negative attitude of the management, the conditions of appointment of the administrator, and the physical conditions of the school. The reasons for teachers' alienation from work are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Reasons for teachers' alienation from the institution

Category	Code	f	%	Sample Expressions
Institutional factors	Inability to agree with the decision	6	33	P2 'The administration takes most of the decisions on its own, we know about it later, sometimes the administration sometimes consults the group that is close to it while making the decisions, so I don't think I agree with the decisions'. P6 'I think that some decisions are left to the initiative of certain groups'
	Negative attitude of management	5	28	P6 "The rules are not applied the same for everyone, the administrators have no experience, they come with union guidance, the administrator displays an attitude towards the teachers according to his own political opinion and provides convenience". P3 'I cannot express my thoughts freely in the teachers' room, I feel pressure'.
	Terms of appointment of manager	4	22	P1 'The appointment of the managers without an exam and their lack of merit personally affect me negatively, they have no extra training or any difference from us'.
	Physical conditions of the school	3	17	P3 'It is disturbing that the school is neglected, unhealthy, physically inadequate, it is difficult to go to school'.
Total		18	100	

One of the participant teachers stated the reasons for his alienation from the institution as follows: "*The administrators exhibit arbitrary attitudes, they make things easier for people who have their own opinions, but they treat others negatively, so I want to stay away from school (P1)*". The other participant teacher stated as follows: "*Some decisions are left to the initiative of certain groups, the rules are not applied when there is no one, the administrators are not experienced, they come with the direction of the union, the administrators behave towards the teachers according to their own political views, they make a distinction, they make it easy for them in shifts, programs and other jobs. This situation also causes different kinds of grouping (P4)*". Another participant teacher stated the reasons for alienation from the institution as follows: "*The school is neglected, unsuitable for health, physically inadequate, students have serious behavioral problems, they behave very lowly, some of the families are very low, quarrelsome, and problematic, the canteen is inadequate, there is a serious problem in the management. there is slack (P7)*".

Reasons for teachers' alienation from communication

The teachers in the study group expressed the reasons for alienation from communication as political and ideological thoughts, personal attitudes and behaviors, not sharing information and grouping. The reasons for teachers' alienation from communication are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Reasons for teachers' alienation from communication

Category	Code	f	%	Sample Expressions
	Political and ideological considerations	8	40	<i>P1 'Teachers do not share information with each other, keep distance from each other due to union or political views, and are constantly on the phone to avoid talking'.</i>
Communication factors	Personal attitudes and behaviors	5	30	<i>P5 'There are groups in the teachers' room, sometimes on the basis of branches and sometimes in different ways, they talk among themselves, they ignore your presence or they show verbal allusions and sarcastic behaviors'.</i>
	Not sharing information	5	30	<i>P2 'There are differences of opinion between teachers, sometimes political and sometimes ideological, this can cause grouping, and then everyone is strangers to each other'.</i>
Total		20	100	

One of the participating teachers stated the reasons for his alienation from communication as follows: "*The differences in thought and union among the teachers cause such groupings that they do not even go to common activities with them, so they do not have anything in common to share (P3)*". The other participant teacher stated the reasons for alienation from communication as follows: "*Groups become so evident that information is not shared, you cannot even get an answer to your question, they are constantly on the phone, they ignore your presence or there are sarcastic attitudes (P4)*". Another participant teacher stated that "*The coldness is felt as soon as you enter the teachers' room, you understand that you do not belong there, they are telling (P6)*".

Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

Considering and preventing the phenomenon of alienation in teachers is extremely important in terms of the effectiveness of education-teaching processes and the efficiency of educational organizations. The teacher who experiences alienation cannot act effectively in understanding students and their individual needs better, interpreting their behaviors more accurately, guiding them, setting goals and motivating them to success, and is reluctant and insufficient to create a classroom environment suitable for their emotional and cognitive needs. The failure of the teacher to establish positive relationships with colleagues and school management reduces institutional commitment, prevents the formation of a positive school climate, and decreases communication, cooperation and trust. Teachers have a great role in the realization of the determined goals of educational institutions. Achieving the

goals of the school is possible through teachers who are self-confident, participate in decisions, own their institutions, and are willing to train and develop themselves.

The professional development of the teacher is closely related to the development of a positive attitude towards the teaching profession and the adoption of the profession. Teachers are affected by many factors such as social, psychological, institutional and environmental in their professional life (Mercan, 2006). Many factors such as the qualifications of the institution where the teacher works, the management style adopted by the administrator, job satisfaction, the number of students, and the opportunities provided by the institution affect the alienation of the teacher. While the effectiveness and efficiency of a teacher who is alienated from the profession and the institution decreases in the education-teaching processes, negative behaviors towards the students also emerge (Soysal, 1997). At the same time, it prevents the teacher from being a role model by causing negative attitudes towards the society and the external environment and not being able to establish healthy communication (Kasapoğlu, 2015).

According to the findings of the study, teachers; (i) reasons for alienation from work, administrative problem, loss of prestige of the profession, financial problems, program and equipment-material, working conditions, parental indifference and environmental pressures; (ii) the reasons for alienation from the institution, not being able to participate in the decision, negative attitude of the management, terms of appointment of administrators, physical conditions of the school; (iii) sees the reasons for alienation from communication as political and ideological thoughts, personal attitudes and behaviors, not sharing information and grouping. The findings obtained in the literature and the findings of the study show similarities. A teacher's low wages, not having a positive opinion about his job, not being able to connect with his job or not reflecting himself well cause alienation (Kaya and Serçeoğlu, 2013; Şimşek et al., 2012). Likewise, research has found that there is a negative and significant relationship between the exclusion felt by the teacher at work and psychological well-being (Beydoğan et al., 2016; Yakut, 2016). In addition, it has been found in domestic and international research that there is more alienation in schools where participation in the decision is not ensured, social characteristics are weak and bureaucratic management is dominant (Gündüz, 2011; Tutar, 2010; Yeniceri, 2009; Schlichte et al., 2005; Zielinski and Hoy, 1983).

In order to minimize the alienation of the teacher, it is necessary to increase job satisfaction, ensure their participation in decisions regarding education and training processes, support performance development, reorganize the working environment and implement improvement practices (Elmas-Atay and Gerçek, 2017; Kaya and Serçeoğlu, 2013; Şimşek et al., 2012). To this end; (i) cooperation between teachers should be developed, (ii) different activities such as regular meetings, meals, excursions and picnics should be organized to ensure cohesion and harmony, (iii) teamwork and cooperation between teachers should be encouraged, (iv) teacher success should be positively reinforced, (v) teachers should be encouraged to participate in decisions and their opinions should be given importance by exchanging ideas, (vi) school management should implement mentoring programs especially for new teachers, organize various seminar programs by determining the missing areas of teachers, (vii) different motivations to increase job satisfaction and institutional commitment. tools and reward system should be used effectively and the business environment should be reorganized. It is of great importance for school administrators to act with the concept of justice and equality, to motivate teachers by taking into account their personal characteristics, to communicate effectively and to present a collaborative approach by including the teacher in decision processes.

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