AN ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' LISTENING SKILLS ACCORDING TO TEACHER FEEDBACK

ÖĞRETMENLERİN GERİ BİLDİRİMLERİNE GÖRE OKUL MÜDÜRLERİNİN DİNLEME BECERİLERİNİN ANALİZİ

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ABSTRACT: This study investigates school principals' listening skills according to teacher feedback in terms of a number of variables. The study is conducted according to a general survey model. The sample of consists of 477 elementary, general and vocational secondary school teachers working in Konya, Turkey, in the 2007–2008 education year. The sample was selected by the random sampling method. In summary, it can be seen that school principals have sufficient listening skills in the perception of teachers participating in the study. The study results reveal that teachers' feedback concerning their principals' listening skills differs in terms of the variables of the school at which they work, their educational level, their professional experience, the length of time they have worked with the principals and the number of teachers at the school, but teachers' feedback concerning their principals' listening skills do differ according to the principals' major.

Key Words: listening skills, school principals, teacher feedback

ÖZET: Araştırmada; öğretmenlerin geri bildirimlerine göre, okul müdürlerinin dinleme becerileri öğretmenlerin sahip oldukları bazı değişkenler bakımından incelenmiştir. Araştırma genel tarama modelindedir. Araştırmanın evrenini, 2007–2008 öğretim yılında Konya, Türkiye'de görev yapan 23287 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın örneklemi ise, evrenden tesadüfî örnekleme yöntemi ile seçilen 477 ilköğretim, genel ve mesleki ortaöğretim öğretmeninden oluşmaktadır. Araştırma sonucunda; öğretmenlerin çalıştıkları okul, öğrenim durumları, mesleki kıdemleri, müdürleri ile birlikte çalışma süreleri ve okuldaki öğretmen sayısı değişkenleri bakımından müdürlerinin dinleme becerileri ile ilgili geri bildirimlerinin farklılaştığı, ancak müdürlerin sahip oldukları branş değişkenine göre öğretmenlerin müdürleri ile ilgili geri bildirimlerinin farklılaşmadığı tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: dinleme becerileri, okul müdürü, öğretmenlerin geri bildirimi

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important dimensions of leadership, in terms of efficiency, is communication. The idea that leadership is innate and cannot be learned has lost its validity and has given way to the idea that leadership and communication can be learned (Molen & Hoogland, 2005). Administrators spend around 70% of their time on communication. Ralph Nichols summarizes the amount of time the administrator spends on sub-dimensions of communication as follows: 9% of their time on writing; 16% on reading; 30% on speaking; and 45% on listening (Hodgetts, 1999).

The first learned, and the most frequently used, skill among the four sub-dimensions of language use is listening. This is followed by speaking, reading and writing (Lundsteen 1989; Gilbert 1997). Listening is defined in the Turkish dictionary of the Turkish Language Institution as lending an ear to hear (TDK, 1998). Studies show a significant relationship between listening habits and communication skills. The first step to becoming an efficient communicator is to be a good listener, given that the strongest aspect of communication is listening. Listening can also be defined as perceiving and understanding a message sent via speaking or reading, and is, at the same time, one of the ways of learning performed for a definite purpose (Sypher, Bostrom & Seibert, 1989; Rhodes, 1993; Koç & Müftüoğlu, 1998; Whitaker, Whitaker & Lumpa, 2000)

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Listening skills need to be improved for effective listening. This development begins in the family in early life and continues for the whole life. Some of the behaviors determined for this purpose are as follows:

- Directing attention to the speaker.
- Concentrating attention on the subject being talked, told or read about.
- Being able to maintain attention during talking, telling and reading. Eliciting and recording significant ideas from what is being listened to.
- Finding and recording words that may come to mean different things among what is being listened to.
- Finding and recording things that are irrelevant to the topic, if there are any, among what is being listened to.
- Finding and recording paradoxes and inconsistencies, if there are any, among what is being listened to.
- Avoiding behaviors such as random talk, warning and whispering; such behaviors may distract the speaker and other listeners.
- Asking for permission to speak, to ask questions and state opinions or counter opinions in regard to the speech.
- Asking questions to the speaker at the end of the speech about moot points or aspects of the speech that are not clear enough (If the speaker gives a break occasionally during the speech and asks if there are any questions so far, these questions can be asked during these breaks). (Koç & Müftüoğlu, 1998)

Effective listening delivers the message to the speaker that "I understand your feelings", those feelings exist and s/he accepts them. This explains the effect of effective listening. The sender is confronted with the responsibility of evaluating whether or not his/her feelings are appropriate. This, in turn, leads to successful problem-solving (Gordon, 2002). Being an effective listener requires the clarification of ambiguities by nodding, taking notes, making comments at appropriate points, giving full attention, blocking out the background noise and taking time to think in a clear mind before giving an answer (Hughes, 2002).

Various studies (e.g., Weinrauch & Swanda, 1975; Barker, Pearce & Johnson, 1992; Nugent, 1995; Cooper, 1997; Johnson & Bechler, 1998; Wetzels & Ruyter 2000; Jacobs 2005) have been conducted concerning manager effectiveness and listening habits in an organization. Studies indicate a strong, positive relationship between effective listening skills and leadership behavior.

Effective listening is becoming increasingly important as managers realize the significance of strong communication in improving their organizations (Johnson, Pearce, & Tuten, 2003). A major difference between highly effective principals and their less effective colleagues is that successful administrators learn early in their careers that the ability to listen is not just a nice thing to do: it is an essential skill to survive and thrive as principal (McEwan, 2003). Effective listening increases the productivity and satisfaction of an organization's employees. Studies (Sypher, Bostrom & Seibert, 1989; Cooper 1997) have demonstrated that listening reduces misunderstandings in an organization, ensures unity, and that, rather than being a behavioral action it is an action connected with conceiving.

Since leaders have a significant function in the effectiveness of organizations as effective listeners, teachers' feedback is important concerning their school principals' listening habits as leaders of schools. In order to investigate this further, the following research questions were set.

Does teachers' feedback differ according to:

RQ1: The schools they work?
RQ2: Their level of education?
RQ3: Their professional experience?
RQ4: The length of time they worked with the principal?
RQ5: The principals' major?
RQ6: The number of teachers at the school?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Sampling and procedures

The study was conducted according to a general survey model. The study sample consists of 477 randomly selected primary school and general and vocational secondary school teachers employed in Konya, Turkey in the 2007-2008 education year.

The scale used in the study was the Listening Skills Feedback Report (LPFR), developed by Brandt, Brandt, Emmert, & Emmert (1992). Developed to measure people's listening skills, the scale consists of 28 items and six sub-dimensions. "Attention" (give full attention and not preoccupied with other concerns), "empathy" (correctly anticipate where conversation is going), "open mind index" (appear to listen with an open mind free from personal biases) and "response" (prepare or become informed when such preparation or knowledge is necessary) sub-dimensions of the scale contain five items, whereas "memory index" (take notes when notes are appropriate) sub-dimension and "respect index" (keep a confidence) sub-dimension contain four items. The scale was given to 760 people from 22 different sectors before it was given its final form. The scale consists of five degrees, ranging from "almost none" to "always", to measure employees' perceptions of their leaders' listening skills. Item numbers 1, 5, 10 and 15 of the scale are reversely scored. The highest and lowest scores to be obtained from the scale are 140 and 1 respectively.

During the adaptation of the scale, it was first translated into Turkish by English teaching experts. The Turkish text was then retranslated into English, compared with the original text and found to be identical with it. Subsequent to permission being obtained from the Turkish Ministry of National Education, the scale was administered by the researcher to 151 people consisting of teachers and administrators, and the data obtained were analyzed using SPSS 14.0. During the analysis, when the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test was found to be .82 and Bartlett's test was significant, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted. EFA aims to reach a few meaningful structures, which, together, explain these variables from a great number of variables. The basic criterion in evaluation of factor analysis results is factor loading, which can be interpreted as the correlation between variables and factors. A high factor load is an indication that variables can be subsumed under the high factors in question (Büyüköztürk, 2004). If orthogonality exists between the factors of scale, varimax rotation technique is used. On the other hand, if there is a constant relational sequence, oblique rotation technique is generally used (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). In this research, varimax rotation technique was used as the relational level between factors of scale is under .32. Moreover, Croncbach's α and reliability values of the test were calculated, the results of which are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Principle components analysis and Cronbach's α

A. Factor 1: Memory and open-mind index	Factor loadings	Corrected item-total correlation
16. Sincerely listen without going through the motions.	.96	.97
15. Avoid becoming emotional or defensive when encountering a difficult situation.	.95	.87
14. Appear to listen with an open mind free from personal biases.	.93	.92
23. Repeat, paraphrase, or summarize comments to ensure understanding.	.88	.87
26. Avoid emotion-packed (trigger) words, phrases, or clichés.	.87	.90
28. Produce results consistent with agreed-upon instructions or guidelines.	.85	.82
10. Permit proper closure or agreement before going to another topic.	.82	.78
20. Maintain comfortable eye contact with speaker.	.81	.76
13. Encourage others to give views on subjects under discussion.	.80	.82
27. Consider content and logic and is not critical of delivery, appearance, grammar, vocabulary.	.80	.78
9. Take notes when notes are appropriate.	.75	.78
22. Hold outside calls and distractions to a minimum during meetings and conversations.	.74	.69
18. Correctly anticipate where conversation is going.	.73	.67
12. Follow up with prompt actions.	.60	.52
Factor 1 explains 40.79% of the total variance. Eigenvalue is 11.423 and Cronbach's α has been found to be .95.		
B. Factor 2: Respect, empathy, attention index	Factor loadings	Corrected item-total correlation
21. Allow others to finish without interrupting.	.95	.95
8. Keep a confidence.	.93	.93
24. Think about the subject under discussion before responding.	.89	.87
5. Maintain an appropriate balance talking and listening.	.88	.90
7. Prepare or become informed when such preparation or knowledge is necessary.	.87	.77
25. Place self in other's position and understand their concerns and feelings.	.78	.70
1. Take time, have patience, during conversations and meetings.	.78	.80
2. Respect others' ideas and words regardless of our business, social, or economic status.	.76	.74
3. Give full attention and not preoccupied with other concerns.	.79	.80
19. Accurately relate messages to a third party.	.67	.72
Factor 2 explains 36.462% of the total variance. Additionally, Eigenvalue is 10.209 and Cronbach's α has been found as .95. For the whole scale, Cronbach's α has been found to be .92.		

As a result of the EFA, four of the 28 original items - Items 4, 6, 11, 17 - were removed from the scale, as their factor loadings were below .40. It can be seen in Table 1 that factor loadings of the scale are .60 in the first factor and .67 and above in the second factor. EFA was conducted again for the remaining 24 items.

In order to test the factor structure of Turkish form for LPFR, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used after EFA. CFA is an analytical technique used to evaluate how far different variable factors fit the real data on a theoretical base. In CFA, great numbers of fit index have been used to determine the efficiency of the test model (Büyüköztürk et al., 2004). In evaluating the fit index of this scale, criteria such as GFI, AGFI, CFI, NFI, RFI and IFI >.90 and RMSEA <.05 (Hu & Bentler, 1999) were used. The value of K- square is observed to be meaningful when fit indices that were obtained in CFA were analyzed. The values of fit index were found to be RMSEA=0.032, NFI=0.93, CFI=0.95, IFI=0.95, RFI=0.94, GFI=0.93 and AGFI=0.91. These fit index values indicate that the model fits the structure.

Moreover, a t-test was performed to see whether there was a significant difference between the top 27% and bottom 27%. The results are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Item-total correlation and independent samples t-test

Item number	Item-total correlations [1]	Independent samples t-test (lower 27&-upper 27%)[2]
1	.621	-9.25***
2	.353	-9.49***
3	.473	-9.99***
5	.750	-14.97***
7	.774	-10.69***
8	.765	-18.08***
9	.774	-9.66***
10	.442	-9.95***
12	.570	-3.00***
13	.809	-9.51***
14	.760	-3.57***
15	.631	-5.44***
16	.630	-4.99***
18	.661	-3.45***
19	.577	-5.73***
20	.773	-5.66***
21	.736	-17.13***
22	.726	-4.31***
23	.446	-3.20***
24	.690	-12.65***
25	.892	-15.18***
26	.441	-4.06***
27	.620	-4.02***
28	.854	-6.53***

[1]N=152　　[2] n1=n2=41　　　　***p<.001

It can be observed in Table 2 that the scale consists of two factors that account for 77.257% of the total variance. It was also observed that the item-total correlations of all items in the scale vary between .353 and .892, and that the t values between the top 27% and the bottom 27% group were significant (p<.001). As a result, it can be said that the items in the scale are reliable and that they are

intended to measure the same behavior. This result can be taken as an indication that the items distinguish school principals in terms of their listening habits. Taking the split-half test reliability of the LPFR scale, and the expected roles of primary school principals scale (ERPSPS) as a basis, the data concerning the criterion validity of the LPFR scale and factor scores and corrected total scores were calculated, and are given in Table 3.

Table 3: LPFR Spearman Brown split-half correlation and ERPSPS criterion validity

LPFR	Reliability analysis-(Spearman-Brown Split-half correlation)	LPFR between ERPSPS criterion validity (Pearson correlation)	Factor1xfactor2 correlation
Factor 1	.78	.57***	
Factor 2	.82	.62***	.87***
Toplam	.84	.68***	

***p<.001

ERPSPS, which was developed by Yavuz (2006), was used to test the criterion validity of the LPFR scale and the correlation was calculated to be .57 (p<.001) for factor 1, .62 (p<.001) for factor 2 and .68 (p<.001) in total. The Spearman-Brown split-half correlation of the LPFR scale appears to be .78 for factor 1, .82 for factor 2 and .84 in total. This can be taken to mean that the scale meets the correlation between the split-half and has, at the same time, criterion validity.

The results of the analysis given in Table 3 indicate that there is a positive and significant correlation (p<.001) between the factor scores of the LPFR scale and factors and corrected-total factor scores (the corrected total score for factor 1 was calculated by subtracting the factor 1 score from the total score, whereas the corrected total score for factor 2 was obtained by subtracting the factor 2 score from the total score).

As a result of the validity and reliability analyses, it has been found that, in the Turkish version of the LPFR scale, the sub-dimension of "memory and open-mind index" consists of 14 items (for example, produce results consistent with agreed-upon instructions or guidelines), and the sub-dimension of "respect, empathy, attention index" consists of 10 items (for example, give full attention and not be preoccupied with other concerns).

3. RESULTS

3.1. Evaluation of school principals with regard to their listening skills

From the outset, a criterion has been defined in order to identify listening skills of school principals on the perception of teachers. For this purpose, the interval coefficient has been calculated as:

$$a = \frac{\text{Maximum point taken from a factor} - \text{minimum point taken from a factor}}{\text{Group number}}$$

Interval coefficient for factor 1 in this study is:

$$\frac{70-14}{5}$$

a=11 (approximately),

Interval coefficient for factor 2 is:

$$\frac{50-10}{5}$$

a =8 calculated.

Table 4: Grouping based on interval coefficients

Factor 1 point interval	Factor 2 point interval	Listening level
14-24	10-17	Very poor
25-35	18-25	Poor
36-46	26-33	Sufficient at middle level
47-57	34-41	Sufficient
58 and +	42 and +	Very sufficient

As can be seen in Table 4, it can be concluded that 24 points and below in factor 1, and 17 points and below in factor 2, are "very poor" with regard to school principals' listening skills. On the other hand, school principals take 58 points and above in factor 1, and 42 points and above in factor 2, as "very sufficient" in regard of listening skills.

Mean ($\overline{X}$) and standard deviation (S) scores of factor 1 and factor 2 in the LPFR scale are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Correlations between $\overline{X}$, S, factor scores, corrected total factor scores of the LPFR scale

LPFR	Item numbers	$\overline{X}$	S
Memory-open-mind index	14	54.61	9.33
Attention-empathy-respect index	10	39.60	6.72
Total	24	94.27	15.58

When the data in Table 5 are evaluated with regard to intervals in Table 4, it can be said that school principals are sufficient listeners in the memory-open-mind index (X = 54.61) sub-dimension of the scale. Similarly, school principals can be said to be sufficient listeners as can be seen in the sub-scale attention-empathy-respect index (X= 39.60).

3.2. Differences in school type and listening skills feedback

Whether teachers' feedback concerning their principals' listening skills differed according to the school they worked or not were analyzed using a t–test, with the results given in Table 6.

Table 6: Differences between listening skills feedback according to types of schools at which teachers work

Listening skills Feedback	Primary School (N=411)		Secondary school (N=66)		t	P
	Mean	Std.Dev.	Mean	Std.Dev		
Memory-open-mind Index	55.024	9.169	52.030	10.124	2.243*	.028
Attention-empathy-respect index	39.735	6.717	38.718	6.887	1.101	.274

P*<0.05

According to the teachers' feedback, principals' listening skills differ according to the school at which they work in the sub-dimension of memory-open-mind index (t=2.243, p<.05), but it does not differ in the sub-dimension of the attention-empathy-respect index (t=1.101, p>.05). Thus, it can be said that primary school teachers consider their principals to be better listeners than secondary school teachers do in the sub-dimension of memory-open-mind index.

3.3. Level of education and listening skills feedback

Whether there was a difference between teachers' feedback concerning their principals' listening skills according to their level of education was analyzed using the F test and the results are given in Table 7.

Table 7: Differences between listening skills feedback according to the educational level of teachers

Listening skills feedback	Undergraduate (N=60)		Graduate (N=394)		Postgraduate (N=23)		F	P
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Memory-open-mind index	56.583	8.768	54.431	9.108	52.695	13.471	1.904	.001
Attention-empathy-respect index	40.683	5.975	39.522	6.666	38.217	9.204	1.290	.015

It is evident from Table 6 that, according to their level of education, teachers' feedback concerning their principals' listening skills differs both in the memory-open-mind index (F=1.904, P<.05) and attention-empathy-respect index sub-dimensions of the LPFR scale. From the results of this analysis, it appears that, as the teachers' level of education increases, the feedback about their principals' listening skills become negative.

3.4. Length of time in post and listening skills feedback

Whether teachers' feedback about their principals' listening skills differed according to their professional experience was tested using the F test and the results are given in Table 8.

Table 8: Differences between listening skills feedback according to professional experience of teachers

Listening skills feedback	0-9 Years (N=216)		10-19 years (N=148)		20 years + (N=113)		F	P
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Memory-open-mind index	52.958	10.164	55.331	18.312	56.858	8.376	7.290	.001
Attention-empathy-respect index	38.313	7.287	40.270	5.686	41.223	6.431	8.125	.000

According to Table 7, teachers' feedback about their principals' listening skills differs in the sub-dimensions of the memory-open-mind index (F=7.290, P<.05) and the attention-empathy-respect index (F=8.125, P<.05). From the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that, as teachers' professional experience increases, they are listened to better by their principals.

3.5. Length of time with principal and listening skills feedback

Whether there was a difference between teachers' feedback about the principals' listening skills, according to the length of time they worked together or not was tested with the F test and the results are given in Table 9.

Table 9: Differences between listening skills feedback according to the length of time with principal

Listening skills feedback	0-2 years (N=265)		3-5 years (N=160)		6-8 years (N=34)		9 years + (N=18)		F	P
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Memory-open-mind index	53.452	9.907	55.612	8.648	57.147	7.636	58.166	6.723	3.745	.011
Attention-empathy-respect index	37.782	7.170	40.442	6.187	40.294	5.739	43.055	4.079	3.876	.009

The results of the analysis reveal that principals' listening skills vary according to the length of time they work with the teachers in the sub-dimensions of the memory-open-mind index ($F=3.745$, $P<.05$) and the attention-empathy-respect index ($F=3.876$, $P<.05$). The results indicate that, as the time the teachers have worked with the principals increases, the principals listen to them more.

3.6. Major of the principal and listening skills feedback

The principals' listening skills towards teachers with whom they work were analyzed using the F test and the results are given in Table 10.

Table 10: Differences between listening skills feedback according to the major of principals

Listening skills feedback	(N=171) Elementary and kindergarten		11-20 (N=158) Social sciences		21-30 (N=83) Math and Science		31-40 (N=41) Spor and art		41 + (N=24) Technical branches		F	P
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Memory-open-mind index	55.602	8.744	55.120	9.485	52.939	9.218	51.975	10.013	54.625	10.700	2.102	.080
Attention-empathy-respect index	40.230	6.512	39.751	6.721	38.913	6.868	37.897	7.329	39.375	6.690	1.235	.295

According to the teachers' feedback, the results of the analysis reveal that the variable of major (field of study) does not cause the principals' listening skills to differ in either the memory-open-mind index ($F=2.102$, $P>.05$) sub-dimension and in the attention-empathy-respect index ($F=1.235$, $P>.05$) sub-dimension.

3.7. Number of teachers in school and listening skills feedback

Whether there was a difference between the number of teachers in the school and the principals' listening to the teachers was tested using the F test and the results are given in Table 11.

Table 11: Differences between listening skills feedback according to the number of teachers working at the school

Listening skills Feedback	0-10 (N=43)		11-20 (N=83)		21-30 (N=79)		31-40 (N=119)		41 + (N=153)		F	P
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Memory-open-mind index	51.790	9.649	50.216	10.076	54.987	8.550	55.294	9.121	57.085	8.412	9.031	.000
Attention-empathy-respect index	37.833	7.091	36.604	7.074	39.746	6.432	40.109	6.852	41.261	5.874	7.589	.000

The results of the analysis indicate that, in terms of the variable of the number of teachers working at the school, teachers' opinions about their principals' listening skills differ in the memory-open-mind index (F=9.031, P<.05) and attention-empathy-respect index (F=7.589, P<.05) sub-dimensions of the LPFR scale. In general, the results indicate that, as the number of teachers at the school increases, the principals listen to them better.

4. DISCUSSION

In summary, it can be seen that school principals have sufficient listening skills in the perception of teachers participating in the study. Principals should be good listeners in this regard (Bechler, 1995; Tracey & Hinkin, 1998; Ozgen & Dogan, 2001). It can be said that school principals have the necessary listening skills that a principal should have in this context. On the contrary, no matter how good a listener a school principal may be, it has been found that they do not listen to teachers in an equal level.

This study reveals the principals' listening skills in conjunction with the feedback of the teachers who work with them. When the results of the study are examined, teachers' views about their principals' listening skills differ in the memory-open-mind index sub-dimension of the LPFR scale, according to the type of school at which they work. Furthermore, as the teachers' level of education increases, their views about the principals' listening skills become negative. The results of the study conducted by Yavuz (2006) indicated that, as the teachers' level of education increased, so did their role expectations from the school principals. When the fact that the educational level of secondary school teachers is higher than that of the primary school teachers is taken into consideration, it can be argued that teachers with a higher level of education found their principals' listening skills inefficient. Drawing the conclusion from the study that secondary school principals listen to their teachers than primary school teachers would be incomplete, therefore. Instead, it would be better to consider the teachers' expectations.

This study determined that, generally, principals listen better to teachers with longer professional experience. According to the results of the study conducted by Cerit (2005), teachers with experience of 21 years or more consider their principals to be more servant leaders than teachers with less professional experience (one of the sub-dimensions of the servant leadership is listening). When the results of the two studies are considered together, it may be the case that teachers regarding their principals as servant leaders might assume that they are better listened than others. The role that the teachers attach to their principals, and the way the principals meet these roles, seems to overlap, therefore. Moreover, principals' listening to teachers with longer professional experience can be taken as an indication of the fact that they attach importance to their experience.

The study indicates that, as the time teachers and school principals work together increases, teachers' feedback concerning their principals' listening skills becomes more positive. The increase in time spent together seems to contribute to their listening to each other better. Hence, the practice of appointing principals who have worked for five years in one school to another school, which was implemented once in the past, may lead to negative results. The appointment of teachers and principals to different schools should not, therefore, be considered unless there is a need, and the necessary arrangements should be made that will enable teachers and principals to work together for longer periods of time.

According to teachers' feedback, principals' listening skills do not vary depending on their fields of study (their majors). This result is in parallel with the result of Yavuz (2006)'s study. This study also indicated that the roles that teachers expected from their principals, and the extent to which these expectations were met, did not show variation according to the principals' fields of study. When these results are taken into consideration, it can be said that the variable of major (field of study/major) does not have a determining effect on principals' listening skills.

The result of the study indicates that Turkish teachers' opinions of their principals' listening skills become more positive as the number of teachers in their school increases. In recent past in Turkey, an examination was given to teachers who wanted to be appointed as school principals and those who were successful in this examination attended an in-service training program. A second examination was then given and candidates receiving high scores were appointed to schools with high numbers of students and teachers. Thus, principals with high numbers of teachers may be more efficient than other principals.

Increasing numbers of organizations have been removing administrative hierarchies, substituting this with a working model based on teamwork. Thus, alternative coordination and control mechanisms replace traditional bureaucratic structures (Cascio, 1995). Having received management and leadership courses in in-service training program, these principals may have advanced managerial skills and adopted the modern approach of participatory management. The pre-condition for principals to establish teamwork in school and benefit from common sense involves listening to teachers and spending an effort to understand them.

5. IMPLICATIONS / CONCLUSIONS

In summary, it can be seen that school principals have sufficient listening skills in the perception of teachers participating in the study. On the other hand, school principals should not only be good listeners, but also they should also reserve and create an equal time for listening to teachers with different traits at school in this context. In the present study, it has been found out that, according to teachers' feedback, primary school principals are better listeners compared with secondary school principals. A further study that explores the possible reasons for this difference in listening habits would be beneficial. As teachers' level of education increases, so do their expectations and their negative feedback about their principals' listening skills. The expectations of teachers with a higher level of education from their principals should be investigated and their demands should be taken into consideration by principals. The study has also shown that teachers with longer professional experience are better listened to by their principals. Teachers at the beginning of their career may need to be better listened to by their principals. Thus, if principals took this fact into consideration, it could be useful in increasing teachers' motivation in the early years of their career. The longer the time teachers and principals work together, the more positive teachers' feedback about their principals' listening skills is. It would be beneficial, therefore, to take some measures to extend the time teachers and principals work together. According to the results of the study, it can be said that principals working in schools with large numbers of teachers are better listeners than others. Consequently, the sensitivity shown in appointing principals to these schools should also be shown in the appointment of principals to other schools.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Liderliğin en önemli yeterlik boyutlarından birisi de iletişimdir. Liderliğin doğuştan geldiği ve öğrenilemeyeceği fikri geçerliliğini kaybetmiş, yerini liderliğin ve iletişimin öğrenilebileceği fikrine bırakmıştır (Molen ve Hoogland, 2005). Yöneticiler zamanlarının yaklaşık olarak %70'ini iletişimde harcarlar. Ralph Nichols, yöneticinin iletişiminin alt fonksiyonlarında harcadığı zamanı şöyle özetlemektedir. Yöneticiler zamanının %9'unu yazarak, %16'sını okuyarak, %30'ini konuşarak ve %45'ini de dinleyerek harcadıklarını belirtmektedir (Hodgetts, 1999, s. 473).

Dili kullanma yeteneğinin dört alt boyutu içerisinde ilk öğrenilen ve en çok kullanılanı dinleme becerisidir. Dinleme becerisini konuşma, okuma ve yazma izlemektedir (Lundsteen, 1989; Gilbert, 1997). Dinleme, Türkçe sözlükte; işitmek için kulak vermek olarak tanımlanmıştır (TDK, 1998). Araştırmalar dinleme alışkanlıkları ve iletişim becerileri arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olduğunu göstermektedir. Etkili iletişimci olmanın ilk adımı iyi bir dinleyici olmaktan geçer. İletişimin en güçlü yönü dinlemedir. Dinleme, konuşma ya da okunma yoluyla gönderilen bir bildirimin algılanıp kavranmasıdır. Dinleme aynı zamanda öğrenme yollarından biridir ve belli bir amaç için yapılır (Sypher, Bostrom & Seibert, 1989; Rhodes, 1993; Koç & Müftüoğlu, 1998; Whitaker, Whitaker & Lumpa, 2000).

Etkili dinlemeyi öğrenmek için, dinleme beceri ve yetisini geliştirmek gerekir. Bu gelişim daha küçük yaşlarda ailede başlar ve yaşam boyu devam eder. Bunun için belirlenebilen kimi davranışlar şunlardır (Koç, Müftüoğlu, 1998):
• Dikkati konuşan kişiye yöneltme,
• Dikkati konuşulan, anlatılan ya da okunan konu üzerinde toplama,
• Dikkati konuşma, anlatma, okunma süresince sürdürebilme,
• Dinlediklerinin içinden önemli düşünceleri seçip not alma,
• Dinledikleri içinden farklı anlamlara gelebilecek sözleri bulup not etme,
• Dinledikleri içinde, varsa konuyla ilgili olmayan sözleri bulup not etme,
• Dinledikleri içinde, eğer varsa çelişki ve tutarsızlıkları bulup not etme,
• Konuşmacının ve diğer dinleyicilerin dikkatini dağıtacak gereksiz konuşmalarla uyarılarda bulunma, fısıldaşma gibi davranışlardan kaçınma,
• Konuşmayla ilgili soru yöneltmede, görüş ya da karşı görüş bildirmede önceden söz isteme,
• Konuşmanın bitiminde konunun anlaşılmayan ya da yeterince açıklığa kavuşmayan yönleriyle ilgili olarak konuşmacıya soru ya da sorular yöneltme.

Etkin dinleme, duyguların doğru ya da yanlış olduğu konusundaki değerlendirmeyi, anlaşmazlığı ya da anlaşmayı değil, "duygularını anlıyorum" u, duyguların var olduğunu ve anlatana onları kabul ettiğini iletir. İnsanların oldukça seyrek karşılaştıkları bu tür kabul, çok yatıştırıcı olabilir. Bu durum, etkin dinlemenin etkisini açıklar. Gönderen, duygularının uygun olup olmadığını değerlendirme sorumluluğuyla baş başa bırakılır. Bu, sonuç getiren bir sorun çözmeye götürür (Gordon, 2002, s. 69). Etkin bir dinleyici olmak, baş sallayarak, notlar alarak, uygun zamanda yorumlar yaparak, bütün dikkatini vererek, ortamda olan ilgisiz sesleri ayıklayarak, açık bir zihinle cevap vermeden önce düşünmeye zaman ayırarak belirsiz durumları soru sormak suretiyle açıklığa kavuşturmayı gerektirir (Hughes, 2002)..

Dinleme alışkanlıkları ile örgüt ve yönetici etkiliği ile ilgili pek çok araştırma yapılmıştır. Yapılan araştırmalar etkili dinleme becerisi ile liderlik davranışı arasında güçlü pozitif bir ilişki olduğunu göstermektedir (Weinrauch & Swanda, 1975; Barker, Pearce & Johnson, 1992; Nugent, 1995; Cooper, 1997; Johnson & Bechler, 1998; Wetzels & Ruyter 2000; Jacobs 2005).

Yöneticilerin örgütü geliştirmede güçlü iletişimin önemini fark etmeleri nedeniyle etkili dinlemenin önemi gittikçe artmaktadır (Johnson, Pearce, & Tuten, 2003). Etkili ve etkisiz okul müdürleri arasındaki en temel farklardan bir tanesi de etkili müdürlerin mesleklerinin hemen başında dinlemenin sadece bir nezaket gereği olmadığını, dinlemenin aynı zamanda kendini geliştirmek ve görevini devam ettirebilmek için gerekli bir beceri olduğunu fark etmeleridir (Mc Ewan, 2003, s.7)..
Etkili dinleme, örgütte çalışanların verimliliğini ve memnuniyetini artırır. Araştırmalar dinlemenin

örgütte yanlış anlamaları azalttığını, birliği sağladığını ve davranışsal bir eylemden daha çok kavrama ile ilgili bir eylem olduğunu göstermektedir.

Etkin bir dinleyici olarak liderin, örgütlerin etkiliğinde çok önemli bir fonksiyona sahip olması nedeniyle; okullarının liderleri olarak okul müdürlerinin dinleme becerileri ile ilgili olarak, öğretmenlerin geri bildirimlerine başvurulmuş bu amaçla da aşağıdaki sorulara cevap aranmıştır.

Araştırma soruları;

Öğretmenlerin;

Görev yaptıkları okullara,

Eğitim düzeylerine,

Mesleki kıdemlerine,

Müdürleri ile birlikte çalıştıkları süreye,

Müdürlerinin branşlarına,

Okullarındaki öğretmen sayısına göre müdürlerinin dinleme becerileri ile ilgili geri bildirimleri farklılaşmakta mıdır?

Araştırma genel tarama modelindedir. Araştırmanın evrenini, 2007–2008 öğretim yılında Konya, Türkiye'de görev yapan 23287 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın örneklemi ise, evrenden tesadüfî örnekleme yöntemi ile seçilen 477 ilköğretim, genel ve mesleki ortaöğretim öğretmeninden oluşmaktadır.

Araştırmada kullanılan ölçek, Richard Brandt and Janice Brandt tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Ölçeğin orijinal adı "Listening Skills Feedback Report" (LPFR)" dir. İnsanların dinleme becerilerini ölçmek amacıyla geliştirilen ölçek, 28 madde ve 6 alt boyuttan oluşmaktadır. Ölçek, bu araştırmada kullanılmak amacıyla Türkçe'ye uyarlanmıştır.

Araştırmanın sonucunda; öğretmenlerin algılarına göre okul müdürlerinin yeterli düzeyde dinleme becerisine sahip oldukları görülmektedir. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin geri bildirimlerine göre, ilköğretim okulu müdürlerinin ortaöğretim okulu müdürlerine göre daha iyi dinleyici oldukları belirlenmiştir. Bu durumun nedenleri ile ilgili ileri bir araştırma yapılması yararlı olabilir. Öğretmenlerin eğitim düzeyi arttıkça beklentileri ile birlikte müdürlerinin dinleme becerileri ile ilgili olumsuz geri bildirimleri de artmaktadır. Eğitim düzeyi daha yüksek olan öğretmenlerin müdürlerinden dinleme konusunda beklentilerinin neler olduğu araştırılmalı ve müdürleri tarafından taleplerinin dikkate alınmasının yararlı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Araştırma, mesleki kıdemi daha fazla olan öğretmenlerin müdürleri tarafından daha iyi dinlenildiğini göstermektedir. Mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin ilk yıllarda müdürleri tarafından daha çok dinlenilmeye ihtiyaçları olabilir. Müdürlerin bu durumu gözden kaçırmaması, öğretmenlerin ilk yıllarında görevlerini yerine getirirken motivasyonlarının artması bakımından uygun olabilir. Müdürle öğretmenlerin birlikte çalışma sürelerinin artması, müdürlerin dinleme becerileri ile ilgili öğretmenlerin geri bildirimlerini olumlu yönde etkilemektedir. Bu nedenle; öğretmen ve müdürlerin birlikte çalışma sürelerini uzatacak tedbirler alınmasının yararlı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Araştırma sonucu; öğretmen sayısı fazla olan okulların müdürlerinin diğerlerine göre daha iyi birer dinleyici olduklarını göstermektedir. Bu nedenle, öğretmen sayısı fazla olan okullara müdür görevlendirilirken gösterilen hassasiyetin, öğretmen sayısı daha az olan okullara yapılacak müdür atamalarında da gösterilmesi yararlı olacaktır.