

INNOVATIVE BEHAVIOUR AND PRIMARY SCHOOL SUPERVISORS IN TURKEY

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ABSTRACT: This paper is a brief summary of a study carried out in ten provinces of Turkey for fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Leicester, England. As the title tries to stress, this article concerns primary school supervisors' practical involvement in certain specific innovative behaviours and practices. The entire thesis was submitted in May 1993.

The aim of the study was to attempt to focus on the relationship between educational innovation and primary school supervision in Turkey. The main focus is on the innovative behaviours exhibited by the primary school supervisors. Thus, the experiences of primary school teachers and primary school supervisors about these behaviours are identified.

The findings of the study revealed that the vast majority of the pre-defined would-be innovative behaviours of supervisors had not been adequately exhibited both in quantity and quality, according to the responses of the vast majority of the teachers. However, a substantial proportion of the supervisors reported that they had exhibited those behaviours. The findings also suggested that the "quality control" or "assessment" aspect of the primary school supervision in Turkey was given more weight than the "support" and "advice" aspects of it. However, the results also highlighted that there was a need for shifting of the focus away from monitoring and inspection to support and advice in supervisory activities.

KEY WORDS: Innovation, Supervision, Inspection, Primary School, Innovative Behaviour.

ÖZET: Bu makale, bütünü 1993 yılında Leicester Üniversitesi'nde yapılan doktora çalışmasının bir bölümünü içermektedir. Çalışma, Türkiye'deki ilköğretim denetçilerinin önceden belirlenmiş bazı yenilikçi davranışları denetim uygulamalarında ne derecede gösterdikleri ile ilgilidir.

Çalışmanın amaçlarından birisi, ilköğretim denetçilerimizin uygulamada gösterdikleri yenilikçi davranışların, gerek kendilerine gerekse denetledikleri öğretmenlere sorularak ortaya çıkarılması idi.

Çalışmada yer alan denetçi ve öğretmenlerin eğitim ve öğretim yaşantılarına dayalı olarak vermeleri istenen yanıtlara göre, ilköğretim denetçileri yenilikçi davranışların büyük çoğunluğunu gerek nicelik, gerekse nitelik yönünden göstermemektedirler.

Araştırma bulguları, Türkiye'de uygulanmakta olan ilköğretim denetimlerinde "kalite kontrol" ve "değerlendirme" odaklı etkinliklerin, "rehberlik" ve "yardım" amaçlı etkinliklerden daha ağırlıklı olarak yer aldığını ortaya sermektedir. Ancak, yine araştırma bulgularına göre, olması gereken ise bunun tam tersidir.

ANAHTAR SÖZCÜKLER: Yenilikçi Davranış, Yenilik, Yenileşme, Buluş, Denetim, Teftiş, Denetçi, Müfettiş, İlköğretim, Eğitimsel Yenilik.

1. Introduction

Primary education represents perhaps the most important organized attempt to educate pupils. It is the education which provides the child with basic knowledge about the group life into which he/she has been born and with skills to acquire, extend and, make use of that knowledge to become an active member of the society. However, lack of achievement during the period of primary schooling is an almost certain indication of future trouble for the individual. It is not only crucial to the individual but to society as well.

So, the improvement of the instructional effectiveness of primary schools becomes an important task assigned to all school staff, including administrators, teachers and supervisors. However, it seems that supervisors occupy a different, perhaps the most distinctive place in the educational setting since they can be regarded as mediators between teachers and staff in the administrative structure of the education system.

Turkish primary school supervisors have a range of roles and tasks to perform. These include inspecting teachers, school staff and schools, giving advice and helping them, assessing teachers' and other school staff's performance and even prosecuting criminal investigations of school personnel. Beside these, there is an aspect of their role which is vitally important in the improvement of the instructional effectiveness of primary schools. It is the implementation of educational innovations. Improving the instructional effectiveness of schools requires new adaptations to the changing needs of both individuals and society and this requires the initiation and implementation of educational innovations into practice in primary schools.

Encouraging educational change and innovation is vital if we are to cope with the changes around us. Doing and insisting on the same old things, and using the same

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old ways and techniques will not be enough for a country to be successful for the improvement of her human resources.

It should also be noted here that although the customary practice does not fit, the inclination to use the term "supervision" instead of "inspection" in this study is because of the desire for having a system which stresses the advice and support dimension of the issue as well as its control function. Or, put it another way, this is a preference of having a system which 'supervises', rather than 'inspects'. Although the topic is always open to debate, it can be concluded that the term 'control' is nearer to the term 'inspection' rather than 'supervision' in meaning.

In the literature, there are two main tendencies in perceptions of the place and the role of supervisors in educational systems. As Winkley [1] states clearly, many senior administrative officers feel that the central activity of advisers ought to be what they frequently described as "quality control" and change should begin with a radical tightening up of the advisory branch as an instrument of control. Many administrators have wished to press advisers to concentrate on "assessment" as the spearhead of this task, whereas many advisers would prefer to spend time on what they describe as "innovation".

Eric Bolton, Senior Chief Inspector of HMI (Her Majesty's Inspector) between 1983-1992, stated in an interview in TES [2] that 'Having people around you who are supposed to be experts is one way of getting advice, but my experience is that it had better be linked to inspection in some way if you want people to listen'.

Samuel [3] argues that it is impossible to continue both roles. According to him, local authority inspectors are an integral part of the department which also provides education. And, like all other employees they owe loyalty to their employer. There is of course role conflict.

On the other hand, some people argue that the dual procedures of inspection and advice are complementary aspects of the same process, and therefore they are indivisible. Beth [4], for example, argues that there has been some debate concerning the title 'critical friend'. For her, the question is posed by the sceptics as to whether it is possible to be a friend on the one hand and then to move into the challenging role of questioner.

There is no doubt that a supervisor must know the nature of the existing situation in detail. Obviously, we need to know much about what kind of activities are taking place in schools, especially in classrooms. As is frequently stated, we ought to know what is happening behind the

closed doors. So, some kind of inspection seems inevitable in all school systems. The evaluation of educational programs and assessment of teachers and other school staff -to some extent "quality control"- is an inevitable task which needs to be performed by someone, most obviously by supervisors.

It must be stressed that although it is important to initiate a change or innovation, only initiation of it does not guarantee its accomplishment. Hall et al [5], for example, stated that based on their experiences in the field as practitioners and adoption agents and also their past research efforts, they have found that change or innovation adoption is not accomplished just because a decision maker has announced it. Instead, the various members of a system demonstrate a wide variation in the type and degree of their use of an innovation.

They give reasons for this variation. One reason is that innovation adoption is a process rather than a decision point - a process that each innovation user experiences individually. They state that they have recognised other variables which need to be considered, such as organisational climate, intervention strategies, and characteristics of decision makers. But they stress that regardless of the character of the outside variables what actually happens in the individual application of an innovation is open to tremendous variation.

If we conclude the arguments about the methods or strategies of educational innovations or educational changes mentioned so far, it can be said that since these mentioned methods cannot be seen in their pure forms, and they often merge into one another, one does not need to follow only one single method of innovation at a time in practice. Often several different strategies are used effectively at the same time. What strategy or strategies are used depends on the existing conditions. As Bishop [6] stated, whatever strategy a change agent uses he should make use of all the resources available to him e.g. the spoken word, print, radio, and television for communication; micro-teaching and other techniques for training; observation, evaluative research etc. for feedback. It is these that often decide the fate of an innovation.

In the lights of the arguments mentioned so far, if we consider the place and roles of primary school supervisors in the Turkish educational system, it seems that primary school supervisors occupy perhaps the most suitable position to be a change agent who can initiate and implement educational innovations. Most Turkish primary schools, especially the ones in rural areas, are not in close touch with the outside world, lack appropriate change agents

and have a weak knowledge base about educational innovations. So, in terms of the place they occupy in the hierarchical structure, their roles and duties and with their influences on teachers, innovative primary school supervisors in Turkey can advocate, introduce and implement educational innovations into practice.

2. Method

This study included 178 primary school teachers, 45 primary school supervisors and eight provincial directors of education. These three groups of respondents were given questionnaires. Although the questionnaires included sections in which they have completely identical questions or items, the groups were not given the same questionnaires. However, the contents of the questions, especially the ones in the teachers' and supervisors' questionnaires were almost the same. That is to say, they did not include the same questions, but they required the same sort of information. This was done mainly to make comparisons possible for the groups.

As was stated earlier, for practical reasons, only the results with regard to primary school supervisors' practical involvement in certain specific innovative behaviours and practices as experienced or witnessed, first by the supervisors themselves and, by the teachers are going to be presented and evaluated in this short article.

For the statistical analysis, the numerical findings of the study are analysed to explore the differences between the groups' opinions and attitudes. These differences are examined in terms of their statistical significance. For the entire study three different significance levels ($p < 0.001$, $p < 0.01$, $p < 0.05$) are considered.

3. Results

This section concerns teachers' and supervisors' responses to the questions on the innovative behaviours and practices of the supervisors. Results are described below for each item.

1- "to arrange meetings with colleagues from other schools to discuss and share new ideas". The first question of this section was designed to obtain information on supervisors' exhibition of the behaviour "to arrange meetings with colleagues from other schools". The data for this question indicates that almost two-thirds of the teachers replied "yes" to the question "did you attend any meeting with your colleagues from other schools arranged by your supervisors for the purpose of discussing and sharing new ideas?" For the supervisors part, more than three-quarters

of supervisors replied "yes" when asked "did you arrange any meeting(s) among the teachers of different primary schools for the purpose of discussing and sharing of new ideas?"

The proportions of the teacher and the supervisor groups were compared through chi-square tests regarding the statement. There was no statistically significant difference between the teacher and the supervisor groups on the above mentioned behaviour.

Thirty-eight per cent of supervisors who organised such meetings stated that they arranged them 2-3 times within the last five years. The second biggest supervisors group (32 per cent) stated that they organised such meetings ten or more times within the last five years. In other words, they roughly organised two meetings in every year. Four supervisors stated that they organised four-six meetings and another four (12 per cent) stated they arranged only one meeting within the last five years. The smallest group of supervisors who stated that they organised seven-nine meetings comprised two supervisors.

For the teachers part, 37 of them (approximately 32% of teachers who attended any such meeting) stated that they attended such meetings organised by their supervisors five or more times within the last five years. In other words, they participated in such meetings an average once in every year. The second biggest group of teachers (28%) of 32 stated that they participated such meetings twice within the same time period. The third group of teachers included 26 teachers (22%). They stated that they participated in such meetings only one time within the last five years. The remaining two groups included 11 (10%) and 10 teachers (9%). These groups stated that they attended such meetings three and four times respectively.

2- "to pair teachers up with a colleague to discuss teaching performances". The second question of the section sought information on the activity of supervisors in pairing teachers with a colleague for the purpose of discussing teaching performances. The data for this question indicates that the vast majority of the teachers replied "no" to the question "did any of your supervisor(s) request you to pair up with one of your colleagues to observe and then discuss together your teaching performances in the classroom?" On the other hand, more than three-quarters of the supervisors reported that they did not pair up teachers for this purpose.

The chi-square test found a statistically significant difference at the 0.001 level between the group responses.

This may suggest inconsistency between the experiences of the teachers and supervisors with regard to this supervisory activity.

However, it may suggest that supervisors who used this technique, did so with only a minority of their teachers. Indeed, when the supervisors who replied 'yes' to the above question were asked "for about how many of these teachers whom you supervised have you done this?", whilst 27 per cent of supervisors reported that they paired 'most of the teachers' up whom they supervised, 36 per cent of the supervisors declared that they paired 'fewer than a quarter of the teachers' for the same purpose.

On the other hand, when the teachers who replied 'yes' to the first part of the question were asked "how many of your supervisors requested this?", 60 per cent of them (however, only six teachers) stated that only one of their supervisors requested this. Interestingly, although only one of these teachers stated that two of his/her supervisors did so, 30 per cent (three teachers) declared that five or more of their supervisors paired the teachers up.

3- "to ask about in-service training needs of teachers". The third question of this section was designed to collect information on supervisors' exhibition of the behaviour of "to ask about in-service training needs of teachers". The findings gathered for this question indicated that whilst 87 per cent of the teachers declared that their in-service training needs were not asked about by their supervisors, 93 per cent of the supervisors reported that they did ask about the in-service training needs of teachers whom they supervised.

The chi-square test found a statistically significant difference at the 0.001 level between the group responses. In other words, the findings suggested that there was substantial discrepancy between the views of the teachers and supervisors with regard to the behaviour of supervisors in "asking about in-service training needs of teachers".

Those supervisors who had replied 'yes' were requested to state the proportion of teachers who they asked about their in-service training needs. 45 per cent of them stated 'most of the teachers'. Furthermore, according to the answers of 12 per cent of those supervisors all of the teachers whom they supervised were asked about their in-service training needs.

For the teachers part, when they were requested to state the number of supervisors who asked about their in-service training needs, the biggest teachers group, 46 per cent of them (eleven in number) reported that "only one of their supervisors" did so. 17 per cent (only four in num-

ber) stated that five or more of their supervisors asked about their training needs.

In addition to the practises of the teachers and the supervisors, the directors were requested to state if any of their primary school supervisors brought any recommendation about in-service training needs of teachers. Interestingly, all of the eight directors of education declared that their supervisors bring recommendations about in-service training needs of teachers. Moreover, half of the directors reported that 'most of the supervisors' did such recommendations. However, while only one director stated that 'only one or two of the supervisors' did so, again one director declared that fewer than a quarter of his/her supervisors brought in-service training recommendations.

4- "to request self-evaluation from teachers". The fourth question of this section elicited information on supervisors' exhibition of the behaviour "to request self evaluation from teachers". The findings gathered for this question indicated that while 93 per cent of the teachers declared that their supervisors did not request them to evaluate themselves orally, 80 per cent of the supervisors reported that they did request the teachers whom they supervised to evaluate themselves orally.

There is a statistically significant difference at the 0.001 probability level between the responses of the teacher and the supervisor groups.

When the supervisors were asked to state the proportion of teachers whom they requested to evaluate themselves orally, while a quarter of supervisors reported that 'most of the teachers' were requested, 31 per cent each reported that 'nearly half of teachers' and 'fewer than a quarter of them' (22 supervisors in total) were so requested.

On the other hand, when teachers were asked to state the number of supervisors who requested teachers to evaluate themselves, the vast majority of those teachers who had had this experience (83 per cent, ten in number) reported that only 'only one of their supervisors' did so. Moreover, the findings also revealed that there was no any single teacher who reported that more than four of his/her supervisors made the same request within the last five years.

5- "to give an example lecture". The fifth question of this section was designed to get information on supervisors' exhibition of the behaviour "to give an example lecture". The findings yielded for this question showed that whilst 82 per cent of the supervisors (37 in number) de-

clared that they did give an example lecture to show how effectively it could be done. almost the same per cent of teachers (145 in number) reported that none of their supervisors did so within the last five years.

When supervisors were asked 'for about how many of these teachers whom you supervised did you give an example lecture?' the largest group, 44 per cent of them, reported that they had done this for 'fewer than a quarter of them'. The percentage of supervisors who stated 'nearly half of teachers' was 17, and the same percentage replied 'most of the teachers'.

On the other hand, when the teachers were asked to state the number of their supervisors who gave example lecture(s), the majority of those who had received any (61 per cent and 19 in number) reported that only one of their supervisors gave an example lecture within the last five years.

6- "to ask ideas and opinions of teachers about educational innovations". When the question "did any of your supervisor(s) ask your ideas and opinions about the implementation process of any specific innovation?" was addressed to the teachers 92 per cent of them replied 'no'. On the other hand, 87 per cent of the supervisors stated that they did ask teachers ideas and opinions on the same topic. The comparison of the groups indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the responses of the two groups.

When those supervisors who had replied positively to the above question were asked about the proportion of teachers whose ideas and opinions were sought, 54 per cent of them reported that they inquired about such ideas and opinions from fewer than a quarter of the teachers. In addition to this, while ten per cent of them reported the proportion 'only one or two of them', five per cent replied that 'all of them' were asked.

More than half of those teachers who had been asked at all (8 out of 14 in number) stated that their opinions were asked by only two of their supervisors within the last five years. What is more, 29 per cent of these teachers were asked by only one of their supervisors.

7- "to organise meetings with teachers about the teaching methods applicable to requiring special attention pupils". When the teachers and the supervisors were asked to state their practices with regard to the behaviour of the supervisors "to organise meetings with teachers about the teaching methods which could be applied to any individual pupil or group of pupils whose learning capaci-

ties and speeds were significantly lower or higher than their schoolmates", whilst 88 per cent of supervisors indicated that they organised such meetings, only 18 per cent of teachers stated so. In other words, 82 per cent of the teachers reported that they had not experienced such meetings organised by their supervisors.

The chi-square test showed that there was inconsistency between the responses of the teachers and supervisors with regard to this question.

When the supervisors were asked about the proportion of teachers who were involved in such meetings organised by them, 37 per cent of those who claimed to organise such meetings supervisors (13 of the supervisors) declared that most of the teachers were involved in this kind of meeting. Not surprisingly, none of the supervisors chose the 'only one or two teachers' item of the alternatives for the proportion of teachers.

8- "to attend workshop sessions with teachers about the implementation of any educational innovation". "Did any of your supervisors attend any workshop sessions with you and your colleagues about the implementation of any innovation?" was the question asked of the teachers. The vast majority of them (91 per cent) replied 'no'. On the other hand, 58 per cent of the supervisors reported that they attended such workshop sessions. This, difference is statistically significant at the 0.001 probability level.

Nearly half of supervisors who claimed to organise such sessions stated that they did attend these sessions with 'fewer than a quarter of the teachers'. Furthermore, while 42 per cent of them (eight in number) divided into two groups, half to state 'most of the teachers' and the other half 'nearly half of the teachers', only one supervisor declared that he/she attended such workshop sessions with all of the teachers he/she supervised.

When the teachers were asked about the number of supervisors who attended such sessions, the largest group, 44 per cent of them (seven in number) claimed that only one of their supervisors attended these sessions. According to the responses of 31 per cent of the teachers only two of their supervisors attended such sessions, while 19 per cent declared that three of their supervisors did so. Only one teacher stated that five or more of his/her supervisors attended these sessions within the last five years.

9- "to bring leaflets or any printed resources related to teaching learning activities in primary schools". The questions designed to collect information about the

above mentioned behaviours of supervisors revealed that although 60 per cent of supervisors claimed that they did this, 87 per cent of teachers reported that they did not see their supervisors bringing newly published documents related to teaching and learning activities in primary schools. When the teacher and the supervisor groups were compared according to their responses to the above question, the comparison suggested that there was a significant difference at the 0.001 probability level between the teacher and the supervisor groups.

The inconsistency between the groups continued on the findings about the proportion of teachers who were given, and about the number of supervisors who brought, those newly published documents. While more than 80 per cent of supervisors who said they had provided such documents (60 per cent of all teachers) claimed that at least more than "fewer than a quarter of teachers" were given those documents, all of the teachers who said they had received such documents (who were only 13 per cent of all) reported that, at most, only two of their supervisors provided documents. So, it can generally be concluded that there is inconsistency here between the groups as well.

10 - 'to offer proposals for the in-service training needs of teachers'. The offers made by supervisors for the in-service training of teachers were examined through the tenth questions of the teacher's and supervisor's questionnaires. Thus, while supervisors were asked if they offered any kind of proposals for in-service training of teachers, the teachers were requested to state whether any of their supervisors made such an offer to them. The findings revealed that although the vast majority of the supervisors (89 per cent) claimed that they did make such offers, almost the same per cent of teachers claimed that their supervisors did not make any kind of in-service training proposals.

Again, the findings suggested a statistically significant inconsistency between the responses of the teachers and supervisors.

When supervisors who claimed to have made such offers were requested to state the proportion of teachers to whom they made them, while 44 per cent of them claimed that they did this to "fewer than a quarter of teachers", a substantial number (31 per cent) reported that they did this for more than half of teachers (i.e. 'most of them' or 'all of them').

11- "to have pre-observation conferences". The eleventh and the following two questions were designed to

ask information about the general plan and program of each supervision visit paid by the primary school supervisors. In this first of the three, the responses of both the teacher and the supervisor groups were collected to show whether supervisors did conduct pre-observation conferences with the teachers before the actual observation of them in their classrooms. As was the case for most of the previous questions mentioned so far, the teacher and the supervisor groups revealed conflicting responses yet again. Thus, although 83 per cent of the supervisors claimed that they did pre-observation conferences with the teachers whom they were going to observe in their classrooms, the vast majority of the teachers (89 per cent) reported just the opposite by responding 'no' to the question "did any of your supervisor(s) have a pre-observation conference about the observation(s) which you were going to face in your classroom?".

According to the responses given by the supervisors, 38 per cent of them (14 in number) held pre-observation conferences with fewer than a quarter of teachers. Similarly, while 27 per cent of these supervisors claimed that they did so with most of the teachers, 11 per cent (four supervisor) claimed that they did it with all of the teachers whom they were going to observe in their classrooms.

On the other hand, nearly half of the teachers who had pre-observation conferences (nine in number) reported that only one of his/her supervisors held such conferences. Only two teachers claimed that 'five or more of their supervisors' arranged such conferences within the last five years.

12- "to have post-observation conferences". As opposed to the previous one this question was designed to collect information about the post-observation conference practices of the supervisors. The findings for this question were striking. Thus, literally all of the supervisors stated that they held post-observation conferences with the teachers after the classroom observation of them. It should be noted that this is the first question on which there was only unanimity. On the other hand, even more interestingly, although 61 per cent of the teachers responded in the way that their supervisors did, there were still quite a substantial percentage of teachers (39 per cent) who claimed that their supervisors 'did not' hold any observation after their classroom observations. The difference between the responses of the two groups was still statistically significant at the 0.001 probability level.

When supervisors were asked about the proportion of teachers with whom they held post-observation conferenc-

es, the largest group (36 per cent) claimed that they held it with 'most of the teachers'. The second largest group (27 per cent) reported that all of the teachers they supervised had post-observation conferences after their classroom observations.

13 - "to have both pre and post-observation conferences". As the last question of the series, this third question asked the teachers and the supervisors about the practice of doing both pre and post observation conferences of primary school supervisors. The findings revealed that although 81 per cent of the supervisors claimed that they performed both of the conferences, 84 per cent of the teachers stated contradictory responses, replying "no" to the question 'did any of your supervisor(s) do both pre-observation and post-observation conferences before and after your classroom observations'. This is a significant difference at the 0.001 probability level between the teacher and the supervisor groups.

According to the responses given by the supervisors, 34 per cent of them (12 in number) held both pre and post observation conferences with fewer than a quarter of teachers. Similarly, while 29 per cent of supervisors who held both conferences claimed that they held it with most of the teachers, 6 per cent (two supervisors) claimed that they did it with all of the teachers whom they supervised.

14- "to bring leaflets or any printed resources about successfully implemented innovations in primary schools". The fourteenth questions of both the teacher's and the supervisor's questionnaires were designed to gather information about the practices of the supervisors on bringing leaflets or any printed resources about successfully implemented innovations in primary schools. The findings revealed that, although more than three-quarters of the supervisors declared that they brought such resources, 91 per cent of the teachers claimed that their supervisors did not bring documents of this kind. So, when the teacher and the supervisor groups were compared according to their responses about their behaviour of the supervisors, there was a significant difference at the 0.001 probability level between the teacher and the supervisor groups.

When supervisors were asked the question 'to how many teachers have you brought such materials?', the largest group, 43 per cent of them reported that 'fewer than a quarter of the teachers' were brought such materials. The percentage of supervisors who stated that 'nearly half of teachers' were brought them was 29. Only one supervisor claimed that he/she brought such materials to all of the teachers he/she supervised.

On the other hand, 69 per cent of the teachers who had received material (11 in number) reported that only one of their supervisors brought such materials. Only one teacher claimed that five or more of his/her supervisors brought him/her such materials within the last five years.

In addition to the above questions, the teachers and the supervisors were asked to state the number of educational innovations for which supervisors informed teachers about their outcomes. While 69 per cent of the teachers stated that their supervisors brought leaflets/documents which contained information about only one innovation, only 11 per cent of the supervisors gave the same response. Moreover, more than half of the supervisors stated that they had given information about two innovations, whereas the percentage of the teachers who responded so was only 25. What is more, while 12 per cent of those supervisors stated that these leaflets included information about four or more innovations, no teacher reported such numbers.

15- "to provide any outside help and/or aid for the improvement of school libraries". School libraries were the topic of the 15th question of both the teacher's and the supervisor's questionnaires. The question which was put to the teachers was "did any of your supervisor(s) get any aid of any person(s) or agency for the improvement of the school library?". Similarly, the supervisors' question read "have you ever recommended or helped teachers and/or school to get any aid or help of any person(s) or agency for the improvement of school libraries?". Findings revealed that while 82 per cent of the supervisors responded "yes" to the above question, 91 per cent of the teachers replied "no" to their question, a difference which is significant at the 0.001 level.

When the supervisors were asked to state the proportion of schools for which they had provided help for their libraries, 32 per cent of these supervisors claimed that they helped 'fewer than a quarter of the schools'. On the other hand, nearly the same percentage of the supervisors (30 per cent) reported that the proportion of those schools was "most of them". It is noteworthy that three of the supervisors claimed that they provided help for the improvement of the libraries of all the schools they supervised.

16- "to attempt to establish communication channels between schools and their local communities". When the supervisors were addressed the question "have you ever made an attempt to have any kind of communication channels (e.g. newspapers, magazines, documents, local radio stations etc.) between schools and their local

communities?", the vast majority of them responded positively. But, on the other hand, when the teachers were asked if any one of their supervisor(s) had made such an attempt, 90 per cent of them responded 'no' (a difference significant at the 0.001 level).

Similarly, it can be seen from the responses of the two groups that the same inconsistency has maintained when 43 per cent of the supervisors claimed that they had made such an attempt more than ten times within the last five years, while 78 per cent (14 in number) of the teachers acknowledging some activity claimed that they witnessed only one or two of their supervisors making such an attempt within the same period of time. Moreover, only one teacher claimed that five or more of his/her supervisors made such an attempt within the same period.

17- "to help to organise meetings between schools and their local communities to enable teachers and administrators to explain the aims of the school to the parents". When the teachers were requested asked whether they witnessed their supervisors organising meetings with parents and/or the local community to enable teachers and school administrators to explain the aims of the school to them, 92 per cent of them declared that their supervisors did not organise such kind of meetings. On the other hand, 59 per cent of the supervisors claimed that they did organise such meetings.

The teachers were also asked to state the number of such meetings each of them personally experienced. Interestingly, and compatible with the findings of the previous question, 29 per cent of those teachers who had witnessed meetings stated that each of them personally experienced five or more meetings within the last five years. However, 43 per cent of these teachers declared that they experienced only one or two meetings within the same period of time.

18- "to help to arrange any socio-cultural events performed or participated in by pupils". When the question 'have you ever helped to arrange any socio-cultural events (e.g. musicals, dances, drama activities, etc.) performed or participated in by pupils?' was asked of the supervisors, 84 per cent of them replied 'yes'. But, on the other hand, 78 per cent of the teachers claimed that their supervisors did not arrange (or help to arrange) these kinds of events.

19- "to help to organise meetings among teachers, local administrators and parents about the future life of pupils". With regard to the above behaviour of the su-

perisors, the vast majority of the teachers (92 per cent) reported that their supervisors did not exhibit it. On the other hand, while more than half of the supervisors claimed that they organised such kinds of meetings, the others (48 per cent) did not make such claim, stating that they did not organise meetings among teachers, local administrators and parents about the future life of pupils.

The responses of the supervisors revealed that although one-quarter of them reported that these meetings took place 15 or more times within the last five years, 38 per cent of the supervisors who organised such meetings claimed that these meetings took place only once or twice within the same period of time.

20- "to invite or recommend teachers to invite peripatetic teachers to their classrooms". The responses of the supervisors and teachers with regard to the above behaviour of the supervisors revealed yet another intriguing contradiction. For instance, although 93 per cent of the supervisors claimed that they did exhibit the above behaviour, nearly the same proportion of the teachers (89 per cent) stated that their supervisors did not exhibit that behaviour.

Almost one-third of the supervisors (14 in number) reported that they either themselves invited, or recommended most of the teachers to invite peripatetic teachers. Moreover, 21 per cent of these supervisors claimed that they made the recommendation to all of the teachers they supervised. However, 12 per cent of them reported that they made this recommendation to only one or two of the teachers they supervised.

When the teachers were asked to state the number of their supervisors who recommended that they invite peripatetic teachers to their classrooms, 58 per cent of them (eleven in number) stated that only one or two of their supervisors had made such a recommendation. However, a further 32 per cent claimed that five or more of them did so.

21- "to arrange or to recommend teachers to arrange meetings with the parents to train them to improve the readiness of their children before entering primary schools". In the last question of this section, the teachers and the supervisors were asked to state the situation about the above mentioned behaviours of the supervisors. While two-thirds of the supervisors claimed that they arranged or recommended teachers to arrange such meetings, 88 per cent of the teachers reported that no one of their supervisors did so.

Interestingly, while 31 per cent of the relevant supervisors claimed that they recommended this to 'most of the teachers', a further 28 per cent claimed that they made the recommendation to all the teachers they supervised. However, 14 per cent of them reported that the number of recommended teachers was 'only one or two'.

4. The Overall Conclusion of the Results and Recommendations

In the earlier pages the results with regard to primary school supervisors' practical involvement in certain specific innovative behaviours and practices as experienced or witnessed, first by the supervisors themselves and, by the teachers and the provincial directors of education are presented.

The findings do reveal some striking differences and sometimes interesting associations among the practices of the teachers, supervisors and directors. First of all, it should be noted that there were statistically significant differences at the 0.001 probability level between the responses of the teachers and the supervisors regarding all but one of the 21 would be innovative behaviours or practices of supervisors examined in the earlier pages. This is one of the most striking findings of the study. Such a difference between the perceptions of the supervisors and the "supervisees" is clearly of great importance.

On one hand, there are supervisors who claim that they did perform the mentioned practices, but, on the other hand, there are teachers who respond in the way that denies all these claims. One possible explanation for this, at least for some of the activities, could be the different definition of the activities by the teachers and the supervisors. It might be that some specific behaviour was seen by a supervisor as meeting the definition implied by the question, but not by a teacher. However, the size of the differences found strongly suggests that there are real substantial differences in the perceptions of supervisory practices, and also in what supervisory roles should be in general. The apparent lack of awareness and understanding of each others activities much greater than anticipated.

It should also be noted here that the existence of this amount of difference between the two groups creates a considerable difficulty for the understanding of the true nature of the situation.

However, it appeared that the teachers and the supervisors did not reveal statistically significant difference on the supervisors' activity "to arrange meetings with colleagues from other schools to discuss and share new ideas". A considerable proportion of teachers (more than

two-thirds of them) and the vast majority of the supervisors (more than three-quarters of them) reported that this activity was carried on by the supervisors. It is also noteworthy here that the highest 'yes' response from the teachers was on this practice of the supervisors.

Taking the other findings with regard to the aforementioned innovative supervisory behaviours into account, we may draw the following conclusions;

The two behaviours of supervisors on which more than 50 per cent of each group reported that the behaviour was exhibited by the supervisors were; "to arrange meetings with colleagues from other schools to discuss and share new ideas" and "to have post-observation conferences". As was also stated earlier, although there was not any significant difference between the groups regarding the former activity, there was a statistically significant difference at 0.001 probability level for the latter.

However, the findings suggested that, taking the both groups' responses together into account, the two most practised activities by the supervisors were the above mentioned ones. Interestingly, these two items were the only ones on which more than 50 per cent of the teachers reported that their supervisors practised them. Moreover, 100% of the supervisors reported that they did have post-observation conferences with teachers.

On the other hand, as the findings revealed, the only two behaviours on which more than 50 per cent of the supervisors responded that they did not practice the behaviours were; "to pair teachers up with a colleague to discuss teaching performances" and "to attend workshop sessions with teachers about the implementation of any educational innovation". What is more, the highest 'no' responses that came from the supervisors (76 per cent) was on the former item. In other words, more than three-quarters of supervisors stated that they did not pair teachers up.

It can be concluded that the majority of the supervisors might have thought that this activity could have some negative psychological effects on the teachers. On the other hand, the limited number of the practices of attending workshop sessions with teachers could be due to the limited time that supervisors had to devote to fulfil the other supervisory activities, as another finding suggested that average number of teachers per supervisor was more than 130.

It must be stated that the overall findings of the study suggest that the long-standing discussion of the place and the role of supervisors in educational systems in general

was also one of the most discussed and most controversial issues in Turkish primary education system as well. As is widely accepted there are two main tendencies in perceptions of the role of supervisors. While one of them stresses the “quality control” and “assessment” aspects of the role, the other stresses the “support” and “advice” dimensions of it.

If we take the conditions prevailing in Turkish primary education into consideration, it seems reasonable that the most appropriate role for primary school supervisors is the one that focuses upon advice and support complemented by inspection and assessment. The proportion of the dimensions must be carefully examined and then assigned, and open to review and change when the need arises. However, bearing in mind that it may vary from time to time and from case to case, it is the personal opinion of the researcher that in present circumstances the efforts devoted to the advice and support dimension of the role should compose, generally speaking, at least two-thirds of supervisory efforts in any case.

On the other hand, it is quite obvious that we do need to be cautious about it. As Lowe [7] pointed out, “people like to be liked. ...Within the context of the individual school the adviser is often regarded as a supportive friend, a sounding board, in the words of one head ‘a shoulder to cry on’. Within the wider authority such an ad hoc approach to support and auditing, in whatever guise, is potentially damaging to the service as a whole. It can, all too often, convey a picture of *laissez faire* and inconsistency, particularly to those institutions who have not benefited from the service”.

No one can ignore the importance of experience in any job. But, along with the experience criteria, formal education and training, at least at graduate level, should be considered as a must in the appointments of primary school supervisors. Although there have been established certain departments at different universities in recent years for the purpose of educating and training primary school supervisors, considering the lack of primary school supervisors both in quantity and quality, it is necessary to open new departments and also to add new quotas to the existing ones. It must also be stressed here again that the suitability of the individual for this job is the most crucial criteria to be considered.

One of the other main striking findings of the study was the level of the quality and the quantity of the innovative behaviours exhibited by the supervisors. The results of the study suggest that twenty of the twenty-one pre-defined would-be innovative behaviours of supervisors

had not been exhibited, according to the responses of the vast majority of the teachers. Generally speaking, more than three-quarters of the teachers reported for each one of these behaviours or activities that they had not witnessed or experienced such behaviours at all. However, it should be noted that a substantial proportion of the supervisors, as might be expected, reported that they had exhibited those behaviours.

The overall examination of the results with regard to the questions related to curriculum matters in general revealed some interesting figures about the activities of Turkish primary school supervisors. These questions were about “recommendations on curriculum revisions”, “to bring leaflets or any printed resources related to teaching learning activities in primary schools”, “meeting(s) with teachers about the teaching methods applicable to requiring special attention pupils”, “giving an example lecture” and “recommendations on any remedial coaching for slow learning pupils”. As was stated in the earlier paragraphs, generally speaking, the responses to these questions suggested that, although some of the supervisors did want to act effectively, it was not possible to draw positive conclusions for most of the findings extracted from these questions.

It can be said that the calibre and rate of curriculum change can be (and must be) different in different circumstances. Some revisions can be major ones while some others can only require minor tune-ups. Some supervisors may wish to be seen as a revolutionary change agent while some others may only prefer some minor improvements in the existing situation. However, neither of these two extreme points are found in the study data. A gradual but continuous approach can be more effective in the long-run in education, especially in curriculum matters. It can be concluded that, while sudden, quick and major changes can produce much initial attention, they often shortly disappear. However, fortunately, most supervisors are not forced to commit themselves solely to either of these extreme positions.

Forming a new “advisory teacher” post in Turkish primary education could be helpful and beneficial in the initiation and implementation processes of educational innovations as well as in other aspects of teaching and learning activities in primary schools. With considerable experience and expertise in teaching and learning process, “advisory teachers” can provide indispensable support for their younger colleagues. The general aim of this support would be to improve performance of teachers. Successful and, say, with at least, with 20 years of experience, “advi-

sory teachers” can play a crucial role in balancing the old and the new for successful implementation of innovations. While these senior teachers provide experience and expertise, younger teachers can bring dynamism and enthusiasm to the teaching and learning process in primary schools. Blending the two may ultimately prove a way forward.

Supervision has to be more than a passing snap-shot taken on a good or bad day. Supervisors have to do it in a thoroughly professional manner which includes professional research in depth with considerable time spent on it. All topics related to the supervision done have to be thought out and discussed with the related personnel, i.e. headmasters, teachers and other helping staff, in detail.

Finally, it is important to appreciate and to acknowledge what has been achieved by primary school supervisors, especially bearing in mind the inappropriateness and undesirability of the conditions they experienced over the years. Their hard-won achievements must be credited. Having said that it must also be stressed here that with regard to the findings of this study, there appears a long way to go for the successful implementation of educational innovations and changes in most (if not all) of the primary schools in Turkey.

To increase the quality of education and to improve the degree of implementing educational innovations it is necessary to provide supervisors and teachers with better job satisfaction, more in-service training and well planned and implemented career development prospects. Supervisors must show their respects to teachers’ ideas and opinions about the initiation and the implementation of educational changes. An “As long as I am the supervisor here, this is the way we will do it” approach can irritate teachers and stops any successful appraisal of problems. It can

also produce results that the best solutions may never be applied to situations and successful practices never be reached.

The years of careful research and the libraries of writing in the field suggest that the successful implementation of educational innovations requires team work, rather than sporadic initiatives. Therefore, three groups of key professional educationalists, namely provincial directors of education, primary school supervisors and primary school teachers in the Turkish primary education system, can unite their efforts and work together in renewing educational practices for improved and effective primary schools.

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