

## Undesired Behaviors of School Principals and the Effects of These Behaviors on Teachers<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

In this research, it was aimed to determine the undesired behaviors of school principals and to identify the effects of these behaviors on teachers. This research study was designed in qualitative research design. Study group was consisted of the teachers working in primary, secondary, and high schools in Düzce city center, in the academic year of 2019-2020. The data was gathered through semi-structured interviews, and the interviews were conducted via video calls due to the pandemic effective in Turkey and world-wide. It has been analyzed with descriptive analysis method that the data collected from fourteen teachers with the maximum variation sampling method. The teachers were asked questions about the undesired behaviors of school principals, the effects of these behaviors, and their opinions about how to prevent these behaviors. According to the results of the research, some topics becomes prominent such concepts as administrative skills, unqualified administratorship, psychological violence at workplace, disequilibrium and inequality. The most emphasized negative personal characteristics are discriminatory behaviours, ride roughshod over and behave egoistically. Teachers verbalized that the school principals are lack of deficiency in administrative skills and due to their negative personal characteristics; teachers have difficulty such as loss of motivation, downheartedness, explode with anger. Regarding the organizational effects of unwanted behaviors of school principals, loyalty to the institution, loss of trust, lack of belonging, not being able to focus on jobs, being productive and cynicism have come to the fore.

**Keywords:** *Undesired behaviours, mistreatment, mobbing, school principal, teacher.*

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## Okul Müdürlerinin İstenmeyen Davranışları ve Bu Davranışların Öğretmenler Üzerindeki Etkileri

### Öz

Bu araştırma ile okul müdürlerinin istenmeyen davranışlarının belirlenmesi ve bu davranışların öğretmenler üzerindeki etkilerinin tespit edilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma, temel nitel araştırma yönteminde tasarlanmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, 2019-2020 eğitim öğretim yılında, Düzce il merkezinde bulunan ilkokul, ortaokul ve liselerde çalışan öğretmenler oluşturmaktadır. Veriler, yarı yapılandırılmış sorular aracılığıyla ve tüm dünyada ve Türkiye’de etkili olan pandemi nedeniyle görüntülü görüşme yöntemiyle elde edilmiştir. Maksimum çeşitlilik örnekleme yöntemi ile on dört öğretmenden toplanan veriler betimsel analiz yöntemiyle analiz edilmiştir. Öğretmenlere, okul müdürlerinin istenmeyen davranışları, bu davranışların etkileri ve önlenmesine ilişkin görüşleri sorulmuştur. Araştırmadan elde edilen sonuçlara göre, öğretmenlerin okul müdürlerinin istenmeyen davranışlarından en çok yönetimsel becerileri ve kişilik özellikleri üzerine görüş belirttikleri görülmüştür. Yönetimsel becerilerde; yöneticilik vasfının olmaması, mobbing, eşitsizlik ve adaletsizlik kavramları öne çıkmıştır. Olumsuz kişisel özelliklerde ise en çok vurgulanan; ayrımcı davranmak, egoistçe ve saygısız davranmak özellikleri öne çıkmıştır. Öğretmenler, okul müdürlerinin yönetimsel becerilerdeki eksiklikleri ve olumsuz kişisel özellikleri nedeniyle motivasyon kaybı, stres, ümidini yitirmek, mutsuzluk, öfkelenmek, gibi sorunlar yaşadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Okul müdürlerinin istenmeyen davranışlarının örgütsel etkileri ile ilgili olarak, kuruma olan bağlılıkta kayıp, güven kaybı, aidiyet hissedememe, işlere odaklanamama, verimli olamama ve sinizm görüşleri öne çıkmıştır.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** *İstenmeyen davranış, kötü muamele, mobbing, okul müdürü, öğretmen*

## Introduction

Schools are social open systems. The effectiveness of this system requires coordination of the all variables constituting this system. School principals are primarily in charge of providing this coordination in the micro level. School principals' management styles, personalities, professional qualifications, and human relations reflect on and affect school management. The school management affects all the processes, from the learning environment to the outcomes. Teachers are the ones who are among the firstly affected by school principals' attitudes and behaviors. When it comes to undesired behavior, students are the first to come to mind. However, undesired behavior is not a phenomenon concerning students. A teacher's spending his/her time and energy struggling with the undesired behaviors of both students and school administrators negatively affects school processes and goals. In the related literature, there is not a term available regarding the undesired behaviors of school principals. Instead of this term, terms such as psychological violence/intimidation/abuse, unethical practices, discourtesy/rudeness, bullying, favoritism, discrimination accepted as more specific mistreatment and different dimensions of mistreatment are used. In this research study, the undesired behaviors of school principals will be discussed including all these terms even in a more specific sense. In other words, in addition to the terms such as mistreatment, psychological violence, discourtesy, discrimination, favoritism; many schools principals' characteristics including not being self-sacrificing, unsociability, not taking initiative, and not accepting criticism will be discussed within undesired behaviors. This study can contribute to the literature and practice by conceptualizing school principals' undesired behaviors.

Schools are places where social life is active. School principals' and teachers' being professionally successful is significantly influenced by their competences of interaction and communication. As especially school principals are the leaders of their institutions, their human competences, one of the significant competences, are highly important. Katz (1956) classified administrator competences in three groups which are technical, human, and organizational (conceptual) competences (as cited in Bursalioğlu, 1981). Human competence includes features such as communication with people, communication skills and their effective use; planned work, teamwork, motivating and rewarding employees, and cooperating (Ağaoğlu, Altinkurt, Yılmaz, & Karaköse, 2012). The human competence of school principals is of great

importance for a positive school climate. School principals have to establish good relations with teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders, and ensure democratic management by meeting their expectations. Achieving this is closely related to the achievement of the school goals, and the personality and behavioral characteristics of the employees. Therefore, principals with good personality traits and relationships are vital for schools (Akbaba & Örs, 2015). The success of a school principal can only be achieved by aligning the expectations of the staff with the goals of the school, creating a positive school climate and having effective communication skills. Schools with a positive school climate have a higher rate of reaching the defined goals (Getmez, 2018). The behaviors of school principals affect the morale of the employees, their job satisfaction and consequently the quality of the teaching and learning environment (Waller, 2016). Wrong attitudes and behaviors of school principals may undermine employees' trust in their superiors, as well as negatively affect their commitment to the organization, their job performance and professional satisfaction (Aslanargun & Bozkurt, 2012). Studies show that almost every individual in the workplace is a victim of workplace discourteousness as an undesirable behavior (Abid, Khan, Rafiq, & Ahmed, 2015).

Blase and Blase (2002) states that there are no empirical studies that systematically examine the dark side of school leadership, especially the mistreatment of teachers and the extremely harmful consequences of such leadership styles on life in schools (as cited in Huffman, 2015). Mistreatment in the workplace is a comprehensive term that refers to the various abuses and insults that employees are exposed to. It includes discrimination, discourteousness, disrespect, abuse, irrational behaviors, aggressive management practices and processes (Ahmad, 2019). Misbehavior describes behaviors that offend a person, and the range or extent of these disturbing situations is not defined. It can be minor or severe. Also, the same behaviors may not be perceived as mistreatment by different people, as they depend on the perspective of the receiver (Huffman, 2015). Abuse in work environments, which can be addressed within the context of mistreatment, leads to various harmful consequences for an individual's physical well-being, psychological/emotional well-being, job performance, and social relationships (Blase & Blase, 2006; De Vos & Kirsten, 2015). There are many reasons for school principals to mistreat teachers. Studies show that teachers are abused depending on their age, behavior, race or ethnic origin, their professional association (union) affiliation and gender, or because of personal and professional jealousy (Orange, 2018). Mistreatment and abuse in the workplace are manifested through a wide range of non-verbal and verbal behaviors. Examples of

nonverbal behaviors include aggressive eye contact, ignoring, physical acts such as throwing objects and bumping them. Examples for verbal behaviors may be given as sexual abuse, outbursts of anger, shouting, humiliating, threats of dismissal, excessive or unfair criticism, accusation, exclusion or isolation, initiating malicious rumors and gossip, hiding resources or blocking opportunities, favoritism, denying an individual's feelings or thoughts, hostile behaviors (Blase & Blase, 2006).

Bullying is a common problem in schools. Studies show that teachers experience a wide variety of bullying behaviors both inside and outside the school (Kruger, 2011). Although "bullying" and "mistreatment" are different terms by definition, they are often used interchangeably in the literature (Huffman, 2015). Ahmad (2019) addressed the concept of mistreatment in the workplace as workplace mobbing and workplace discourteousness. Beswick and Palferman (2006) used the concepts of mobbing, bullying, harassment, physical mistreatment, emotional abuse, mistreatment, rude behavior, aggression, hostile behavior, unacceptable behaviors and deterrent behaviors in order to define the behaviors including bullying in the workplace (as cited in Sabancı & Şekerci, 2014). A dysfunctional leadership style and dysfunctional organizational culture resulting from this leadership style are the situational factors that contribute most to workplace bullying. Managers' relationships with staff and their misbehavior in organizational management often lead to a work culture that allows bullying in the workplace (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015). School principals' mistreatment may not only be due to a tendency to protect and show their strength, but they may also display undesired mistreatment because of personality disorder, job stress, and learned violence (Ebeid, Kaul, Neumann & Shane, 2003).

School principals' management behaviors are observed and interpreted by teachers within the school structure (Kösterelioğlu, 2014). The democratic attitudes and behaviors of the school principals positively affect the motivation of teachers, thus contributing significantly to the increase of their productivity, the realization of the school goals and the increase of student success (Özan, Türkoğlu & Şener, 2010). School principals' behaviors give an idea about the school management process and style. These behaviors have positive and negative effects on teachers. For instance, these behaviors are highly influential in teachers' performance and school's success. An effective school principal affects the school's climate and environment by increasing the teacher's motivation, commitment and professional development. When teachers

believe that school principals are fair and objective, respect themselves, think positively about themselves, and they support universal values such as honesty, respect, tolerance, love, democracy, etc., they feel safe (Yalçın, 2017). School principals should pay attention to the attitudes and behaviors they display in their relationships; they should adopt a democratic management approach and take the individual differences into account. They should encourage the expression of ideas freely and be careful in observing different opinions (Çimen & Karadağ, 2019). Some studies show that the misbehavior of school principals damages their reputation in the eyes of teachers. A reputable school principal is a person who is impartial, fair, respectful, disciplined, friendly, tolerant, and respectable. The effective communication of the principal with stakeholders positively affects his reputation, but his favoritism affects his reputation negatively (Yıldırım, 2017). The teacher, who is the most strategic element of the learning-teaching process, has important roles such as educating students and raising them as individuals socially beneficial. However, teachers' morale should be high while fulfilling these roles. School principals' attitudes and behaviors are important in terms of motivation within the school (Kocabaş & Karaköse, 2005). School principals are one of the powerful factors in teachers' liking and embracing their work, and their high motivation and morale. A manager who gives employees the opportunity to express their feelings and thoughts will have positive effects on their performance and motivation (Argon, 2015). If the ethical codes are not clear in an organization, their effects may be reflected on employees in different ways. This situation may also lead to bad behaviors of organizational managers or leaders. In other words, the lack of ethical principles or not implementing them may increase the tendency to deviate from ethical principles. It can be said that the climate will be negatively affected in such an organization. Therefore, the most effective way against ethical erosion and deviations is to raise awareness against it (Thompson, Thach & Morelli, 2010). One of the most effective tools to raise this awareness is school principals who display ethical leadership behaviors because ethical leaders can influence individuals with their spiritual intelligence and are effective in developing positive spiritual values (Sama & Shoaf, 2007).

Emotional abuse/violence is perhaps the cruellest of all inhumane acts by superiors. For fear of being fired, employees are forced to accept mistreatment, such as abuse, criticism, and humiliation, in return for holding onto their jobs. Many employers are aware of this and regularly force their employees to do as much work as possible (Ebeid, Kaul, Neumann & Shane, 2003). However, it is difficult to say that the management behaviors displayed by school

principals without considering the psychological, emotional and spiritual aspects of the teachers will increase the success of the school. The lack of leadership qualities of the school principal, the weakness of his administration or the use of his authority to threaten people are negative manager profiles encountered in the literature (Batur, 2004). Teachers' perceptions about their principals' negative behaviors cause some reactions in themselves and in the institution. If school principals are authoritarian and traditionalist, and are not open to change, teachers' motivation will decrease, their negative behaviors will increase, the feelings of self-worthlessness, unhappiness, negligence, and insecurity towards the institution will increase (Negiş-Işık & Paşa, 2017). The negative behaviors of school principals will cause cynicism in the organization. Cynicism manifests itself as dislike and feeling ashamed of the organization, being angry, doubting everything, and criticizing everything. Organizational cynicism reduces the organizational commitment of the employee, causes burnout, and negatively affects the relationships between employees and the employee's and the organization's performance (Akin, 2015).

In summary, school principals' management behaviors, which take teachers' psychological, emotional and mental states into account, ensure that teachers are happy and peaceful at school. Thus, teachers' motivation increases, they see themselves as a valuable member of the school, and they do their work fondly. In addition, the positive behaviors of school principals enable teachers to make an effort to achieve the goals of the school and to unite around common goals. The culture of the school is very effective on the working life in the school, the performance of the employees and their commitment to the school. This situation ensures that the school environment is peaceful and efficient. The undesired behaviors of school principals can be defined as a broader term which includes violence, maltreatment, mobbing, unethical behaviors, and bullying. In the light of the statements above, the undesired behaviors of school principals result in a lot of negative consequences such as the decrease of teacher motivation, low spirits, the decline in teachers' commitment and the desire for professional development, reducing the feeling of confidence, affecting school climate negatively, reducing performance and efficiency, arising self-depreciation, unhappiness, negligence, and cynicism. Taken into account that these negative consequences prevent the school from reaching its aims and goals or slow down this process, it is highly important to reveal the general profile of the undesired behaviors of school principals, draw attention to these issues, and raise awareness in terms of school principals and teachers. There are a few studies dealing with the undesired behaviors of

school principals in the conceptual level. This study may contribute to the literature by revealing that they are not the only students who have undesired behaviors, but also some other shareholders may display undesired behaviors at schools. Additionally, it may have a contribution in terms of providing a foresight through the data, which may help other researchers study on the undesired behaviors of school principals by conducting quantitative research. In this study, the undesired behaviors of school principals, the effects of these behaviors on teachers and what can be done to prevent undesired behaviors were tried to be determined according to teachers' opinions. It is hoped that the determination of these behavioral problems will contribute to the reduction of the negative effects on teachers, thus achieving instructional goals indirectly. For this purpose, answers were sought to the following questions.

According to teachers' opinions:

1. What are the undesired behaviors of school principals?
2. What are the negative effects of these behaviors on teachers?
3. What are the suggestions for the prevention of school principals' undesired behaviors?

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

Basic qualitative research method was used in this study which was conducted to determine the undesired behaviors of school principals and the negative effects of these behaviors according to teachers' opinions. The qualitative research design, used by many different disciplines, aims to figure out how people interpret their lives, how they live, and how they make their experiences meaningful. With this purpose, in qualitative research design, the researcher focuses on the personal meaning of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2013). The rationale behind the preference of this research design was to describe how the undesired behaviors of school principals are understood and interpreted, through teachers' experiences and opinions.

### **Participants**

The study group of this research consists of 14 teachers working in primary, secondary, and high schools in Düzce city center in the 2019-2020 academic years. Purposeful sampling

method was used in the study. In the purposeful sampling method, information-rich situations are selected in order to conduct the research in depth, and the focus is on deep understanding rather than generalization (Patton, 2014). The maximum variation sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used in the study. The aim of the maximum variation sampling is to create a relatively small sample and to reflect the diversity of individuals who may be a party to the phenomenon in this sample at the maximum level. The purpose of providing variation is not to make generalizations, but to determine whether there are common facts or differences between different situations and to reveal the different dimensions of the problem according to variation (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). To that end, interviews were held with teachers at different levels, different branches, and with different genders in order to include different perspectives. Participants were determined on a voluntary basis and interviews were held on the days and at times decided by the participants. Codes were used to protect the privacy of the participants. In the coding process, T1P stands for the first teacher working at a primary school; T4P stands for the fourth teacher working at a primary school; T1S stands for the first teacher working at a secondary school; T4S stands for the fourth teacher working at a secondary school; T1H and T6H represent the first and the sixth teachers working at a high school. There are 14 participants, 8 are female and 6 are male. 4 of the participants work in primary school, 4 in secondary school, 6 in secondary school, and their experience in their professions vary between 5 and 24 years. The descriptive characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1  
*The Descriptive Characteristics of the Teachers*

School Type	Participants*	Branch	Gender	Years of Experience
Primary School	T1P	Classroom Teacher	Female	21
	T2P	Classroom Teacher	Female	17
	T3P	Classroom Teacher	Male	15
	T4P	Classroom Teacher	Male	5
Secondary School	T1S	Maths	Female	15
	T2S	Science	Female	6
	T3S	English	Female	14
	T4S	Social Sciences	Male	23
High School	T1H	Child Development	Female	20
	T2H	Art and Craft	Female	24
	T3H	Maths	Male	18
	T4H	Turkish Language and Literature	Male	20
	T5H	Accounting	Male	17
	T6H	Public Relations	Female	5

\*The codes were used for the privacy of the participants.

## Data Collection Instruments

Before the interview forms were prepared, the first draft of the form was made by reading the literature about the school principals' undesired behaviors, unethical practices, bullying, violence, and mobbing. The opinions of a professor as an educational expert were consulted to after the first draft was made. Following the expert opinion, the number of questions is limited to three. There were seven questions in the semi-structured form, four of these questions were formed to determine the demographic characteristics of the teachers, and three of them were formulated to capture teachers' opinions about the undesired behaviors of school principals, the effects of these behaviors, and their suggestions about preventing those behaviors. Afterwards, two teachers were interviewed as pre-interviews. After this process, it was seen that there was no problem in the comprehensibility of the questions in the form. The approval of the research study was taken from Düzce University-Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee. Research data were collected from the teachers who work in the city center of Düzce, in the spring term of 2019-2020 academic year. Due to the Covid-19 epidemic, which affected the whole world, teachers could not be interviewed face to face, and the data were obtained through semi-structured questions in video interviews. The teachers were interviewed on a voluntary basis. For this purpose, the lists of primary, secondary and high schools in the city center were made. First of all, some of the administrators of these schools were contacted and some information was given about the subject, purpose and method of data collection. Afterwards, the phone numbers of the teachers who agreed to participate in the study were taken by getting into contact again with the school principals, and random selections were made among the teachers in schools with a high number of teachers. Teachers who accepted to participate in the study were called and some of them were interviewed at the relevant day and time by making an appointment with some of them. During the interviews, video calls were made, it was stated that voice recording would be made on a second phone, and the permission of the teachers was obtained. The purpose of the study was explained to the interviewed teachers and assurance was given that the obtained data would not be shared with the third parties. Teachers were informed that their names would not be revealed and the codes would be used, instead. The interviews lasted between 20-30 minutes. After these interviews, eight volunteer teachers were recalled and asked the same questions. By this way, participant approval was provided, and additional information was gathered.

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### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive analysis method was used in the analysis of the data. The data obtained in the descriptive analysis are summarized and interpreted according to previously determined themes. In descriptive analysis, direct quotations are frequently used to reflect the views of the interviewed or observed individuals in an impressive way. The purpose of descriptive analysis is to present the findings to the reader in an organized and interpreted form. To that end, the collected data are firstly described systematically and clearly. Later, descriptions are explained and interpreted; some conclusions are made by examining cause and effect relationships (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). For this purpose, codes were determined by reading the obtained data. After the data were coded, sub-themes were created and similar codes were collected under the relevant sub-theme. The determined sub-themes were grouped under the themes created in the context of the questions. In the process of interpreting the data, biases and assumptions were avoided, and the participants' opinions were quoted directly in the research. In the process of coding the data, the consistency of the sub-themes and codes was tried to be ensured. In order to increase the reliability of the study, the opinions of a faculty member were obtained in order to confirm the reliability of those codes and sub-themes. Specified codes and sub-themes were calculated with the formula of  $\text{Number of consensus} \div (\text{Agreement} + \text{Disagreement}) \times 100$  developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The results of the calculations showed that the reliability ratio was .88 for the first question, .93 for the second question, and .89 for the third question.

### **Trustworthiness and Transferability**

In order to increase the credibility (internal validity) of the research, related literature was read while developing the interview form. During the preparation of the research questions, the opinions of a faculty member were consulted and the determined questions were pre-applied with the participation of two teachers. The interviews were recorded, and expressions that might have been misunderstood were prevented by comparing with the notes transferred to Word. Before the interview, credibility was tried to be ensured by informing the participants

that the final version of the interview data would be written and submitted to their approval. After the interviews are transcribed into word documents, participant approval was consulted to. The data were transferred to the study through direct quotations. In order to increase the consistency of the research, namely its internal reliability, the obtained sub-themes and codes were compared with an expert opinion and their compliance was controlled. The research period was explained in a detailed way in order to ensure the transmissibility (external validity) of the research. For this purpose, the design of the research, study group, data collection tools, data collection period, and the analysis of the data were clarified elaboratively. In order to ensure the consistency (internal reliability) of the research, findings were reported without interpretation, and participants' opinions were supported by direct quotations. Additionally, expert opinion was referred so as to prepare semi-structured interview form and compare the consistency among the codes.

### **Findings**

Teachers' opinions within the context of research questions were analyzed under three themes, which are undesired behaviors of school principals, the effects of school principals' undesired behaviors on teachers, and suggestions for preventing undesired behaviors of school principals.

#### **Principals' Undesired Behaviors According to Teachers' Opinions**

Regarding the first question, undesired behaviors of school principals were grouped under three sub-themes and forty-three (43) codes. Related sub-themes and codes were presented in Table 2.

Table 2  
*Data Regarding the Undesired Behaviors of School Principals*

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes
The Undesired Behaviors of School Principals	Personality Related Undesired Behaviors	Behaving egoistically Behaving opinionatedly Not being open to criticism Behaving unconcernedly Indifference Not being able to be prescient Self-righteousness
	Managerial Undesired Behaviors	Uncertainty about managerial issues Behaving discriminatorily Not protecting the school values Not being innovative Trying to suppress Not having managerial qualities Lack of interest and giving free rein Not being supportive Favoritism Not taking risks The requests occurring or changing suddenly Arriving to school late and leaving early The behaviors not complying with the seriousness of the position Not listening to new opinions and appropriation High expectation Nonequal treatment Mobbing Over increasing the work load of the employees Not admiring Unfair practices Taking advantage of the position Mistrusting employees Not taking initiative Lack of knowledge about legislation Not being a role model Looking as if he/she gave importance to teachers Not guiding Not following technological and current innovations Not informing about the received documents Lack of vision
	Communication Related Undesired Behaviors	Behaving disrespectfully/rudely Insufficient communication skills Addressing teachers informally Reprimanding loudly Hard to communicate/Unsociability Poor human relations

In the theme of school principals' undesired behaviors (Table 2), teachers have emphasized mostly the managerial undesired behavior sub-theme, then the personality-related undesired behavior sub-theme, and then the communication related undesired behavior sub-theme. Among the codes, behaving discriminatorily, trying to suppress and unfair practices were emphasized the most in the sub-theme of managerial undesired behavior. In addition, the codes

of uncertainty about managerial issues, not being supportive and mobbing are the codes that were emphasized in the second degree in this sub-theme. In the sub-theme of personality related undesired behaviors, teachers emphasized the codes of behaving egoistically, behaving opinionatedly, not being open to criticism, behaving unconcernedly, indifference and self-righteousness. In the sub-theme of communication related undesired behavior, the codes insufficient communication skills, addressing teachers informally, reprimanding loudly, hard to communicate/unsociability and poor human relations were highlighted. In this sub-theme, the code of behaving disrespectfully and rudely became prominent. Some of the teachers' opinions about the undesired behaviors of school principals are as follows, in their own expressions:

*“Our school principal's uncertainty about managerial matters, his inability to reach a result, his self-righteousness as an authoritarian power, and his disrespectful behaviors are his behaviors that affect me negatively...” (T1P)*

*“... It bothers me when she speaks loudly and scolds me as if she was talking to a student ... I don't like it when she addresses me informally.” (T2P)*

*“The behaviors that make me feel uncomfortable are our principal's efforts to suppress me by using her power, her unfair behaviors in designing the schedules or other tasks at school, and her indifference to school problems...” (T1S)*

*“Unconcerned and biased approaches, not realizing our wishes, while assigning a task having expectations from the same teacher as that teacher will do it anyway, that is, not treating everyone equally, mobbing with a poor schedule, guard duty or errands...” (T1H)*

*“...If we do not do what he wants, he does mobbing, he does not take the ideas of the teachers into account, and appropriates the ideas he takes into account... Being egoistic, not appreciating the work done, discriminating the staff, forcing his own ideas...” (T2H)*

*“The principal's prioritization of personal relationships, her inability to maintain her neutrality, not being open to communication ...Her vision being too shallow and her lack of foresight affect me quite negatively...” (T6H)*

As seen in Table 2, teachers are exposed to undesired behavior mostly related to management and then personality traits of school principals.

### **The Effects of School Principals' Undesired Behaviors on Teachers**

Regarding the second question, the effects of school principals' undesired behaviors on teachers were grouped under two sub-themes and twenty-three (23) codes. Related sub-themes and codes are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

*The Effects of Principals' Undesired Behaviors on Teachers*

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes
The effects of principals' undesired behaviors on teachers	Individual Effects	Stress
		Motivation loss
		Disappointment
		Becoming desperate
		Getting into panic
		Unhappiness
		Getting angry
		Worrying
		The feeling of deadlock
		Fatigue
		Poor performance
		Lack of self-confidence
		Distrust/loss of confidence
	Anxiety and nervousness	
	Organizational Effects	Lack of belief in profession
		The feeling of neglect
		Keeping silence
		Lack of dedication to the institution
		Loss of trust
		Not having a sense of belonging
		Lack of focus on work
		Inefficiency
		Cynism

In the theme of the effects of school principals' undesired behaviors on teachers (Table 3), teachers emphasized mostly the sub-theme of individual effects, then the sub-theme of organizational effects. Among the codes, motivation loss, stress, poor performance and distrust/loss of confidence were emphasized the most. Additionally, the codes of disappointment, becoming desperate, panicking, unhappiness, getting angry, worrying, the feeling of deadlock, fatigue, lack of self-confidence, and anxiety and nervousness were also emphasized in this sub-theme. In the sub-theme of organizational effects, teachers mostly emphasized the codes of lack of dedication to the institution, the feeling of neglect, lack of belief in the profession. Moreover, the codes of keeping silence, loss of trust, not having a sense of belonging, lack of focus on work, inefficiency and cynism were emphasized. Teachers' opinions about the effects of school principals' undesired behaviors on teachers are as follows in their own words:

*“...I feel stressed when the principal makes me think that I am losing my self-confidence. Actually he is responsible for this. ...Problems I face with decreases my motivation.” (T1P)*

*“The school principals’ disrespectful behavior makes me feels desperate. I feel hopeless, distrustful. I think all the humiliating behaviors reflect on the whole institution.” (T2P)*

*“The school principal suppresses me, or he treats unfairly, and this makes me feel stressed. When I am on duty, sometimes I get panicked and make mistakes because I am under pressure. ...I cannot find solutions to the problems I face with.” (T1S)*

*“My motivation decreases during the lessons, I have no faith in the profession ... I lose my trust in my principal and the people around me, most of all, I am sorry that I’m losing my trust.” (T1H)*

*“Being mobbed and being faced with egoistic behaviors affects my motivation extremely negatively... You do not want to go to work, you cannot work efficiently, you are unhappy. You live on your nerves when lecturing or doing the tasks...” (T2H)*

*“What can I say? The fact that my manager uses his position as a threat causes me to remain unresponsive in the institution. As my dedication to my institution decreases, I feel stressed while doing my job. My confidence in my manager is decreasing ...As a result of all these, I think I cannot show my performance sufficiently.” (T5H)*

### **Teachers’ Suggestions for Preventing School Principals’ Undesired Behaviors**

Regarding the third question, teacher suggestions for preventing undesired behaviors of school principals are grouped under three sub-themes and forty (40) codes. Related sub-themes and codes are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

*Suggestions on How to Fix the Undesired Behaviors of School Principals*

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes
Suggestions for Preventing Undesired Behaviors	Human Competences Should Be Improved	Being able to develop empathy
		Should have humanistic behaviors
		Should give importance to values
		Respect, love
		Honesty
		Should behave equally, fairly, in other words righteously
		Should have forgiveness
		Should have a positive attitude
		Apologizing if necessary
		Should deal with wording problems
		Should not do mobbing
		Should have communication skills
		Should be open to interaction
		Should be away from ego
		Should not be affected by politics
Should have anger management		
Should appreciate success		
Should be patient		
Conceptual Competences Should Be Improved	Should be solution oriented	
	Should be innovative	
	Should work in harmony and cooperation	
	Should distinguish between the hard workers and the lazy	
	Should be a sharing leader	
	Should have a vision	
	Should increase commitment to institution	
	Should create a mission	
Should be able to guide people		
Technical Competences Should Be Improved	Should have managerial qualifications	
	Should be easy to get into contact with	
	Should be accountable	
	Should not discriminate	
	Should get his staff's opinions	
	Should be able to provide supportive guidance	
	Should have a master's degree	
	Should innovate himself	
	Should have a teacher-centered approach	
	Should behave exemplarily	
Should create organizational culture		
Should ensure participation in decisions		
Should be a good administrator		

In the theme of suggestions on how to correct the undesired behaviors of school principals (Table 4), teachers emphasized the sub-theme of “human competences should be improved” at most, then “conceptual competences should be increased”, and lastly “technical competences should be increased” Among the codes, they emphasized the codes of “should behave equally, fairly, in other words righteously”, “should have communication skills” in the sub-theme of increasing human competences. Later, the codes of “being able to develop

empathy”, “respect, love”, “should be open to interaction” and “should be away from ego” were emphasized. In the sub-theme of “technical competences should be improved”, emphasis was placed on the codes of “should have managerial qualifications”, “should be accountable”, “should have a teacher-centered approach” and “should ensure participation in decisions”. Other codes emphasized under this sub-theme were “should be easy to get into contact with”, “should not discriminate”, “should get his staff’s opinions”, “should be able to provide supportive guidance”, “should have a master's degree”, “should innovate himself”, “should behave exemplarily”, “should create organizational culture”, “should ensure participation in decisions”, and “should be a good administrator” .

The most emphasized code in the sub-theme of “conceptual competences should be improved” was the code of “should work in harmony and cooperation”. Then, the codes of “should be solution-oriented”, “should be innovative”, “should distinguish between the hard workers and the lazy”, “should be a sharing leader”, “should have a vision”, “should increase commitment to institution”, “should create a mission”, and “should be able to guide people” were emphasized. Teachers' opinions on how to correct the undesired behaviors of school principals are as follows with their own expressions:

*“Regardless of the institution where they work as principals, I suggest empathizing and being managerial and humane.” (T1P)*

*“A principal must be fair, honest, control his anger, have forgiveness, patient and guiding ...He must be accessible, accountable, and able to apologize when necessary...” (T2P)*

*“Principals should be able to provide collaborative and supportive guidance ... They should internalize the concept of empathy. I think they should take communication courses and it is crucial that they should be away from their ego.” (T3P)*

*“My advice to all school administrators is not to do this job if they cannot have the real quality of being an administrator ... When I want help about a certain problem; I want him to deal with the issue with a solution-oriented approach.” (T1S)*

*“School principals should read a lot and be in the search of more information. They should be open to interaction and cooperation. I suggest them behaving sincerely, equally, and fairly... They should solve their problems about wording, maybe they can be trained about that issue.” (T2S)*

*"...I think supervision should be stricter and better. They do not care about accountability because they have good connections with their superiors." (T4S)*

*"...The most important factors that I would recommend are caring about justice, not discriminating between the staff, not doing mobbing on the schedule, respecting personal rights, and taking the opinions of the staff." (T2H)*

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

In this study, the undesired behaviors of school principals and the effects of these behaviors on teachers were tried to be determined. The research was conducted through three semi-structured questions, the questions were handled as a theme, and codes and sub-themes were created through descriptive analysis.

### **The Undesired Behaviors of School Principals According to Teachers' Opinions**

The first question of the study is formed to determine the undesired behaviors of school principals. In the first theme, teachers emphasized managerial undesired behaviors of school principals. In this sub-theme, the opinions of behaving discriminatorily, trying to suppress, and unfair practices became prominent. In addition, indecision in administrative matters, not providing support, not listening to and appropriating new ideas, not behaving equally and mobbing are other prominent opinions. In the sub-theme of undesired behaviors related to personality, the opinions of behaving egoistically, behaving prejudicially, not being open to criticism, behaving neglectfully, indifference, behaving disrespectfully and thinking himself superior were emphasized. In the sub-theme of communicative misbehavior, disrespectful and rude behavior came to the fore. In this sub-theme, the emphasized opinions were insufficient communication skills, addressing informally, reprimanding loudly, not being open to communication / being asocial and having poor human relations. Without effective communication between employees; relationships at school will not serve anyone's needs (Bolarinwa & Olorunfemi, 2009). For this reason, it is important to keep individual and organizational variables under control that prevent the effectiveness of communication. Yalçın (2017) stated in his study that among the undesirable behaviors of school principals, teachers mostly stated that school principals lack leadership skills. In addition, teachers expressed mostly the views such as the lack of problem-solving skills of school principals, poor

management, insufficient communication skills, and avoidance of responsibility. It is possible to state that principals abuse their authority in various ways in order to victimize a teacher.

Often over-monitoring of teachers' work, controlling and restricting the communication flow between staff; often over-criticizing victims' work and repeating the work rather than helping to correct obvious mistakes; issues such as heavier workload or too little work assignment can be cited as examples of undesired manager behaviors in the literature (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015). It can be said that school principals should take on more transformational leadership roles because leadership functions are wider and go beyond the job description of any position in a school. A management-oriented management cannot go beyond the status quo when there is a need for change. Thus, transformational leadership roles towards the change and improvement of the basic tasks of schools (teaching and learning) as well as their organizational development are likely to be more effective. In the decision-making process, participation increases effectiveness. Participation functions as a means of achieving and enhancing effectiveness as it facilitates the commitment of those involved in any action as a legitimacy mechanism built on democratic principles. When participation is implemented to promote democratic principles and empower teachers, it should lead to a distributed leadership among school staff (Bolivar & Moreno, 2006). In Can and Can's (2019) study, principals' were found to display unethical behaviors towards teachers such as favoritism, bias, shouting/reprimanding, influencing the opposite sex through status, watching with cameras, not giving greetings; political, trade union and religious discrimination, applying psychological pressure, strict control, requesting changes in student grades, and making personal requests outside of their duties. Based on these results, it can be said that school principals' undesired behaviors may negatively affect their reputation in the eyes of teachers.

Effective and open communication at school improves the trust factor in principal-teacher relationships. Being able to trust gives teachers greater meaning and confidence in their ability to effectively guide their students for academic success. When there is a high level of trust in the school, teachers are more willing to work together, and more collaboration occurs. When teachers trust each other, they feel more comfortable discussing issues related to the organization's climate, culture, and general professionalism (Waller, 2016). Some studies (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015) showed that male school principals exhibit more bullying behaviors. Men in patriarchal cultures may be more prone to display rude behavior in the workplace due

to a lower threshold for disrespectful behavior, and women may sustain their victimization by tolerating rude behaviors and encouraging perpetrators without being aware of it (Ghosh, 2017).

All these results show that school principals display a large number of undesired behaviors. However, in the school environment, undesired behaviors have negative effects regardless of whom they are directed to. For this reason, it is important to increase the activities and practices aimed at raising awareness in schools.

### **The Effects of School Principals' Undesired Behaviors on Teachers**

The second question of the study is about determining the effects of school principals' undesired behaviors on teachers. In this theme, teachers mostly emphasized the individual aspect of the effects of school principals' undesired behaviors on teachers. In the sub-theme related to the individual effects of school principals' undesired behaviors on teachers, the opinions of motivation loss, stress, poor performance and insecurity/loss of confidence were emphasized. Additionally, the codes of disappointment, loss of hope, panic, unhappiness, anger, worry, lack of solution, fatigue, loss of self-esteem, and anxiety and nervousness were other opinions emphasized in this sub-theme. In the sub-theme related to the organizational effects of the undesired behaviors of school principals on teachers, the opinions of loss of commitment to the institution, feeling of neglect, loss of faith in the profession came to the fore. Besides, keeping silence, loss of trust, inability to feel belonging, inability to focus on work, inefficiency and cynicism were other prominent opinions.

Studies show that some attitudes and behaviors of school principals affect the quality of education directly or indirectly (Balyer, 2013). Some of the effects mentioned in the literature are that mistreatment in the workplace (rudeness, abuse, mobbing) negatively affects the performance of employees (Ahmad, 2019); the stress experienced as a result of mistreatment reduces the emotional attachment of employees to the institution (Demirel & Akça, 2008), and teachers experience various health problems due to the mistreatment they are exposed to (Huffman, 2015). Many of the results mentioned in the research overlap with the results of the research available in the literature. Blase and Blase (2004) studies show that teachers who are mistreated by their principals, experiences lack of motivation, depression; psychological/

emotional problems such as strong anger and feelings of rage. Research also shows that teachers refuse to participate in social and professional activities voluntarily, if possible, and do not participate when they have to participate in certain activities in order to avoid mistreatment. In terms of physical and physiological problems, depending on whether teachers are exposed to mistreatment for a long time or not, chronic sleep disorders, chronic fatigue, stomach aches, nausea, weight gain or loss, neck and back pain, and headache or migraine are the findings of some other research. Examples of other serious physical/ physiological problems experienced by teachers include diarrhea, high blood pressure, blurred vision, nausea or vomiting, respiratory tract infections, hives, heart palpitations, gum disease, hearing impairment, panic attacks and chest pains (Blase & Blase, 2004). The harmful consequences of abusive behavior on job performance include decreased performance and commitment, decreased satisfaction and morale, and absenteeism. As a social impact, isolation and loss of friendship are other effects of mistreatment (Blase & Blase, 2006). Teacher burnout, less participation in the teaching-learning process, boredom, and perhaps a decrease in interest in teaching as a profession can be accepted as the effects of school principals' undesired behaviors on teachers (De Vos & Kirsten, 2015). Another finding of the research is that teachers who are faced with favoritism will feel sad, discontented and excluded, feel anger, lose their trust, and feel worthless. The organizational consequences of all these psychological effects may appear as a decrease in productivity, an unsafe and peaceless school environment, and a negative impact on education (Demirtaş & Demirbilek, 2019). In the study conducted by Karabağ Köse, Taş, Küçükçene and Karataş (2015), regarding the characteristics of the managers that reduce the motivation of teachers; incompetent administrators, ignoring success, lack of communication, having ego, and reflecting the school principal's family problems were determined. Effective communication with teachers and involving teachers in the decision-making process enable teachers to express their feelings. The satisfaction experienced as a result of this will bring happiness to school (Argon, 2015).

According to the findings of the research, undesired behaviors of school principals were mostly grouped under managerial undesired behavior sub-theme. However, it was observed that the negative effects of managerial misbehavior had the greatest effect on the individual aspect.

### **Teachers' Suggestions for Preventing School Principals' Undesired Behaviors**

The third question of the study is about teachers' suggestions for preventing the undesired behaviors of school principals. In this theme, teachers expressed their opinions mostly on the sub-theme of “human competences should be increased” to prevent the undesired behaviors of school principals.

In the sub-theme of increasing human competences, the opinions of “should behave equally/fairly”, “should have communication skills”, “should be able to empathize”, “respect/love”, “should be open to communication”, and “should stay away from their egos” became prominent. In addition, other prominent opinions were “should display humanistic behaviors”, “should care about values”, “should be honest”, “should forgive mistakes”, “should behave positively”, “know how to apologize when necessary”, “should solve problems about”, “should not do mobbing”, “should not be affected by politics”, “be able to control anger”, “should appreciate success”, and “should be patient”. In this sub-theme, it was seen that communication competences are expressed predominantly.

The communication environment in an organization is of great importance as it contributes to the effectiveness and success of the organization. The communication environment can affect the atmosphere that encourages or hinders horizontal, upward or downward communication between employees within the organization. In organizations with a defensive climate, employees tend to avoid communicating their needs and are very cautious in speaking out. However, organizations with supportive environments encourage active participation, good information exchange, and constructive conflict. Achieving a collaborative communication climate in an organization is only possible with effective management of conflicts (Nordin, Sivapalan, Bhattacharyya, Wan Ahmad & Abdullah, 2014). It depends on the dose and frequency of the undesired behaviors of the school principal, but teachers in a defensive climate will not be able to express their views and provide information exchange. For this reason, it is of great importance to prevent undesired behaviors that block communication channels in schools.

In the sub-theme related to increasing the conceptual competences, the opinion of “should work in harmony and cooperation” became prominent. In addition, the opinions of “should be solution-oriented”, “should be innovative”, “should distinguish between the hard workers and the lazy”, “should be a sharing leader”, “should have a vision”, “should increase organizational

commitment”, “should create a mission”, and “be able to guide” were prominent. In the sub-theme related to increasing technical competences, the opinions of “should have managerial qualifications”, “should be accountable”, “should behave in a teacher-centered manner and ensure participation in decisions” were emphasized. Additionally, the opinions of “should be accessible”, “should not discriminate”, “should take the opinion of their staff”, “should be able to provide supportive guidance”, “should have a master's degree”, “should innovate themselves”, “show guiding behavior”, “establish organizational culture”, and “be a good administrator” were other prominent opinions. Managerial competence refers to what is expected from managers to ensure organizational effectiveness. Technology use, communication and leadership competences are some of them. School principals' ability to manage schools effectively and efficiently requires them to have some competences. In countries that consider school management as a professional field, some competences have been defined in the appointment of school principals and those with these competences have been appointed. Considering that there are not any qualification criterion sought in the appointment of school principals in Turkey (Ağaoğlu, Altınkurt, Yılmaz & Karaköse, 2012), it is inevitable that some problems related to these competence areas are experienced. Therefore, in the appointment of managers, the defined competence areas of managers should also be taken into account.

The first step into establishing and maintaining a good organization is to develop a written "intolerance" plan to deal with all forms of discrimination and workplace abuse. This policy should be committed by the top officials of an organization as part of the vision and strategic human resource planning. It is absolutely essential that top management support such a policy, which will make a difference in employees' perceptions of how serious the organization is in maintaining a good work environment (Ebeid, Kaul, Neumann & Shane, 2003). School principals should display leadership behaviors based on cooperation and take the opinions of teachers into consideration when making decisions (Çimen & Karadağ, 2019). School principals' self-improvement (Yıldırım, 2017) and their improvement of verbal communication skills will positively affect teacher motivation (Özgan & Aslan, 2008).

### **Suggestions**

In order to minimize the individual and organizational effects of the undesired behaviors of school principals on teachers, intolerance, accountability and transparency policies can be developed for the undesired behaviors. By keeping the issue updated, positive examples can be rewarded, and negative examples can be reduced with appropriate enforcements. Selection methods that emphasize communication and human relation skills can be used in the appointment of school principals.

In this research, data were not collected through face-to-face interviews because of pandemic of Covid 19, and this is one of the limitations of the study. Apart from this, the collected data were limited to the study group and semi-structured three questions. For this reason, it may be possible to obtain deeper data by interviews. In further research, the relation between the undesired behaviors of school principals and variables such as years of experience, school type, and gender can be investigated. School principals can be the object as well as the subject of undesired behaviors. In a study to be conducted, school principals' exposure to the undesired behaviors or mistreatment by top management can be discussed.

### **Statements of Ethics and Conflict of Interest**

“I, as the Corresponding Author, declare and undertake that in the study titled as “*Undesired Behaviors of School Principals and the Effects of These Behaviors on Teachers*”, scientific, ethical and citation rules were followed; Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry Journal Editorial Board has no responsibility for all ethical violations to be encountered, that all responsibility belongs to the author/s and that this study has not been sent to any other academic publication platform for evaluation.”

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