

Research Paper

Investigation of Principals Unprofessional Expectations of New Teachers in Elementary Schools

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Abstract

Introduction: The purpose of this study was to examine the unprofessional expectations of elementary school principals and their impacts on new teachers who were graduated from Farhangian University.

research methodology: This study was conducted via qualitative approach using phenomenological method. The sample were selected through snowball sampling to theoretical saturation boundary, 25 new teachers who were freshman at Farhangian University, in academic year 2012-2013. The new teachers were worked at 4 region including: Tabadkan, Torghabeh and Shandiz, Razaviye and also Ahmadabad, under the supervision of central education office in Mashhad, and were subjected to semi-structured interviews. The data from interviews were analyzed and coded using the Strauss & Corbin method. Lincoln and Guba criteria were also used to determine the reliability of the research.

Findings: Findings revealed that there were 8 general categories of principals' unprofessional expectations with high frequency in primary schools. These expectations were led to formation of an unpleasant feelings in new teachers and had an impact on their professional performance.

Conclusion: results indicated that the weakness in principals' knowledge and skills, the pressure caused by low school budget and most importantly the weakness of principals' educational independence will have an impact on principals' unprofessional expectations in interaction with new teachers.

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Extended Abstract

Introduction:

Despite the importance of communication skills for school principals and creation a good relationship in interaction between teachers, but (Kazemi, and Zare, 2020: 211) while referring to numerous studies, state that some principals or supervisors show some sort of misbehavior with the teachers in their school, so that they can be called authoritarian, bullying, debilitating or offensive behavior. The importance of paying attention to desirable and professional behaviors in the community of school principals, especially, is that these behaviors affect the performance of teachers (Zainabadi and Ahmadianfar, 2015). Numerous research findings have pointed to this issue so far. For example, teachers' job attitudes and their organizational behavior (Zainabadi, 2011); Teachers' organizational silence (Durnali, Akbasli and Dis, 2020); Teacher Professional Behavior (Smith, Escobedo and Kearney, 2020); Improving the quality of teachers' performance (Eckert, 2019); Professional development of teachers and ensuring their satisfaction and success (Ashrafi and Zainabadi, 2017); Participation in improving school affairs and presenting new ideas (Ozen, 2018) or in general the in-role and out-of- role behaviors of teachers (Yasini, 2016) are greatly influenced by the behaviors of school principals. In this regard, if we consider the unprofessional expectations of school principals in dealing with new teachers graduating from Farhangian University, who are mainly serving as elementary teachers; so, the importance of the issue will be doubled. Because the new teachers who were graduated from Farhangian University have undergone various professional trainings for almost four years in order to lead to more positive changes in the educational system when entering schools, as ambassadors of change (Vahedi Kojanagh and et.al, 2018: 87), (Jafarian Yasar and Jafarian Yasar, 2020) and (Karami and Seraji, 2021). Now, if these capable new teachers interact with school principals who have expectations that are contrary to their perception about a professional teacher, so it will not only have a negative impact on their professional identities and performances; but, practically, the efforts of those in charge and

those involved in teacher training at Farhangian University will be somewhat fruitless.

Goal:

The purpose of this study was to examine the unprofessional expectations of elementary school principals and their impacts on new teachers who were graduated from Farhangian University.

Method:

This study was conducted via qualitative approach using phenomenological method. The tool used in data collection was semi-structured qualitative interviews, the general interview guide approach (Gall, Gall and Borg, 2017), in which interviewees were asked to reconstruct recurring and unexpected experiences about unprofessional expectations of their school principals that occurred during their service. Each interview lasted an average of one hour and after writing the text of the interview, it was analyzed and coded by the systematic method attributed to Strauss and Corbin (1992) in two levels of open and axial coding. The participants of this research were the new teachers who entered Farhangian University (Shahid Hasheminejad Campus in Mashhad) in 2012 and now they are serving as primary school teachers in Mashhad (2021). These participants were also selected because they were among the first graduates of Farhangian University and therefore had the longest work experience in education and also being in school atmosphere and interaction with the school principal, so they could have response to the researcher questions better than other graduated teachers from farhangian university. The sample size, which was selected using two methods of snowball and criteria based sampling, was 25 people based on information saturation. Lincoln and Guba criteria (1985) were also used to determine the reliability of the research.

Findings:

The findings led to the identification of eight categories as repetitive non-professional expectations of principals from new teachers in primary schools, which created many unpleasant feelings in new teachers and affected their professional performance. These

categories are: 1) Emphasis on the use of active teaching methods without regarding to its executive requirements, 2) Prioritizing ceremonial plans instead of paying attention to the quality of education, 3) Injustice in student evaluation and lack of attention to their competencies, 4) not paying attention to the students emotional needs and not establishing a relationship based on respect or understanding students conditions, when interact with them, 5) not using the facilities of the school physical environment for better education in order to maintain facilities and establish discipline, 6) Compulsory cooperation in solving school financial issues by receiving financial assistance from parents, 7) Encouraging the academic progress of some students based on comparing their progress with the progress of other students, and 8) Accompanying principals improvised decisions that lead to disruption in teaching time.

Results:

The findings of the present study showed that three main factors, including insufficient budget for school management, lack of independence of principals for making

educational decisions and most importantly lack of necessary knowledge, attitude and skills in principals to hold the position of school manager and how to interact with staff, leads principals ask directly and indirectly different non-professional expectations from the new teachers, and in turn, this created unfavorable feelings about the teaching profession in new teachers. These unfavorable feelings also affected the new teachers' performance in schools, too. No research has been done on the topic of unprofessional expectations of principals so far, but since there are several studies on creating an unfavorable work environment for teachers by immoral behaviors or weakness in human communications of school principals, so their findings can be related to the present study. For example, the research findings of (Sadeghi and Fathi, 2002), (Zainabadi, 2011), (Yasini, 2016), (Zainabadi and Ahmadianfar, 2015), (Shirbagi and Moradi, 2017), (Ashrafi and Zainabadi, 2017), (Kazemi, and Zare, 2020), (Blase and Blase, 2006), (Burnside Huffman, 2015), (Ouellette and et.al, 2018), (Liu and Werblow, 2019), which are discussed in detail in the literature section, are in line with the findings of the present study.