ETHICS IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract

A set of values are given to individuals through education. Schools deliberately convey various information to children to prepare for their social roles. With the knowledge they learned in school, individuals can question events in life, decide what is good and what is bad, associate their own values with social values and transfer existing ones to new generations. For this reason, many tasks fall on educational administrators in general, school administrators, and teachers in schools. This can only be achieved if the administrators attach importance to ethical values and standards as well as their professional knowledge and skills. Administrators should have ethical values such as being fair, behaving equally, being respectful, being impartial, not discriminating and acting in accordance with the legislation, and they should manage their institutions according to these determined ethical codes. In this study, firstly the concept of educational administration, secondly the concepts of ethics and ethical dilemmas in education administration are explained, and finally, the ethical codes that education administrators must comply within their organizations are examined depending on the literature.

Keywords: Educational administration, school administrator, ethics, ethical code, value.

INTRODUCTION

Today, many books have been written on ethics and ethical awareness has been increased. However, there are indifferences and deficiencies in the field of ethics at the root of the problems experienced. In fact, education is the basis of all these ethical problems. It is aimed to provide the individual with actions that are accepted as good and right with education and to gain ethical behaviors and attitudes. According to Froom, ethics is generally the evaluation of an individual's attitudes and behaviors, whether good or bad. The individual acquires these attitudes and behaviors either from the family or from the environment (1999). Individuals cannot acquire these attitudes and behaviors on their own. This happens through cultural transfer and education from the most primitive society to the most advanced society. Especially schools transfer various information to individuals to prepare for their social roles (Sergiovanni, 2015). With the information they have learned, individuals can question events in life, decide what is good and bad, associate their own values with social values and transfer existing them to new generations. Therefore, schools and educators have very important duties.

All school personnel are responsible for creating and maintaining an educational, emotional, and social community at school. Although teachers have a large share in the organizational climate formed in the school, the architects and organizers of the organizational culture and climate are school administrators. School administrators build the rules, core values, standards, vision, mission, and school atmosphere in the school. For this reason, school administrators must always be impartial and fair in their decisions, attitudes, and behaviors towards school personnel, and treat everyone honestly and equally. School administrators who pay attention to these, create a positive culture and climate in their school, who do not pay attention may encounter the opposite. If school administrators expect their schools to be effective, they should first take the first step in this direction. This can only be achieved if school administrators attach importance to ethical values and standards. In this study, firstly, the concept of educational administration, secondly the concepts of ethics and ethical dilemmas in educational administration are explained, and finally ethical codes have examined depending on the literature.

Educational Administration

Education administration is defined as using the determined policies and resources providing human and material resources to help educational organizations reach the determined goals (Demirtas & Gunes, 2002). It is the process of effectively operating, developing, and renewing educational organizations established to meet the educational needs of the society to achieve their predetermined goals (Basaran, 2000). It examines the philosophy of the education system that the society has, the values on which the philosophy is based, its purpose, policy, structure, duties, and tries to illuminate the behavior of the educational administrators based on these (Balci, 2010).

The duty of the school administration is to keep the school alive in accordance with its aims (Binbasioglu, 1988); is to use the human and material resources in the organization in the most efficient way (Bursalioglu, 2002). Apart from these duties, the school administration carries out the following works: *(1) Works related to the physical situation* (such as whether every place from the administration rooms to the surrounding of the school is in quality and quantity to meet the needs); *(2) Works related to education and training situation* (maintenance and protection of course supplies and equipment, preparation of course plans and programs, social activities, guidance, and club activities, etc.); *(3) Office works* (such as books, files, records, correspondence, etc. to be kept*); (4) Student affairs* (student records, imprint books, transfers, student attendance, success status, diploma, appreciation, report, registration, etc.); *(5) Personnel affairs* (attendance for school personnel, registration, keeping personal files, preparing course plans, works related to trainee teachers, etc.); and *(6) Works related to accounts, goods, and fixtures* (Ilgar, 2000; Taymaz, 2000).

Another classification related to the professional duties of administrators are five categories. *(1) Responsibility towards one another* (acting truthfully and honestly, engaging in staff development and self-information, insisting on fair and equitable treatment); *(2) Responsibility for professional development and competence* (accepting responsibility for the consequences of behavior, maintaining, and developing individual competence, being cooperative in professional relationships with others, recognizing one's own needs and being responsible for the performance of professional roles); *(3) Responsibility towards all stakeholders* (Providing good long-term service to all stakeholders, feeling honest and responsible towards their environment, abiding by the principle of openness, agreeing on a mutually fair contract); *(4) Responsibility towards the profession* (assisting the professional development of interns and all professionals, sharing and supporting professional knowledge and skills, showing other colleagues and employees as an example); and *(5) Social responsibility* (being sensitive to all stakeholders, sensitive to multicultural and multinational differences, serving the betterment of others, encouraging fairness) (Reamer, 2000).

As can be seen in these classifications, administrators have a number of duties and responsibilities towards themselves, their environment, colleagues, and professions. Education administrators should act in accordance with both laws and policies, and professional ethical principles while fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. It is important to fulfill them.

It is unethical for the administrators to have Machiavellian tendencies and to act against work and morality in order to achieve their goals, generally not thinking about moral values (Tierney, 1997), in other words, not thinking about whether their attitudes and behaviors are good or bad and not questioning them. As a matter of fact, correct judgment, wisdom, and sanity are virtues of thought (Aristoteles, 1998). Therefore, the virtue of thought is necessary for administrators to investigate an ethical attitude and behavior (Reamer, 2000). Thus, administrators with the virtue of thought can behave more ethically in their attitudes and behaviors. Knowledge of administrators can lead them to

take the right action and ignorance can lead to wrong action (Arat, 2006). From this point of view, according to Demir (2007), ethics in terms of administration is examined in three parts. These are: *(1) Personal practices and moral issues* (including administrators' ethical choices that are illegal and result in personal satisfaction or gain. Conflicts of interest, misuse of resources, sexual harassment, etc.), *(2) Professional actions* (administrators' ethical decisions regarding professional choices), and *(3) Daily management tasks* (use of power, directing organizations and individuals, deciding the right values, whether the power is used fairly, judging the justification of the applied choices, etc.) is in the form. Administrators are expected to use their existing knowledge in the light of ethical principles while performing their management activities.

Ethics and Ethical Dilemma in Educational Administration

Recently, the most interesting issue in the educational context is in the field of ethics (Dempster et al., 2001; Yayla, 2004). It should come as no surprise that there is much debate about ethics. Because ethics is seeing what people do as good and bad or right and wrong (Cranston et al., 2004). Attributing a good or bad value to people's attitudes and behaviors constitutes the field of ethics (Aydin, 2001). In short, ethics are what people say about what needs to be done (Cranston et al., 2010). While these required and expected ethical behaviors are generally approved and accepted by social norms; unethical behavior is behavior that is generally not accepted by social norms (Griffin, 2002). Ethics also requires judgment about a particular situation or problem. Looking at ethics from this perspective, it leaves people face to face with a choice in their decisions in the context of relations with others; confronts people with an ethical dilemma (Cranston et al., 2003). The choice between principles, values, beliefs, or ideas increases the ethical dilemma. Regardless of the type of organization, leaders in all organizations experience this dilemma (Cranston et al., 2010).

The ethical dilemma is not being able to choose between right and wrong. When the important values coincide, the dilemmas increase. The ethical dilemma is not just during a choice between right or wrong; it can also be experienced in a situation where there is a choice between two lines. Especially when values conflict, dilemmas arise (Radouche, 2020). According to Lashway, anything that enables complex dilemmas to be solved easily should have an ethics manual, like the cookbooks in which it is written step-by-step. For this, firstly certain ethical standards should be clearly set and well defined; secondly leaders should look at ethical dilemmas from different perspectives, and thirdly they should express the different perspectives they look at people. Wherever they are, leaders should make conscious reflections of these ethical principles a habit (1996). In addition, ethics is that the individual visualizes life. In this context, the individual comes face to face with the choices and decisions. As a matter of fact, ethical life is not a momentary event. Ethical life is based on accumulation and ethical life continues while the individual maintains the relations with others (Cranston et al., 2004).

Although values and rules that change from wrong to right also constitute ethics, this is not necessarily a legal component applied in business life (Hellriegel et al., 1998). Empathy, intuition, honesty, optimism, self-esteem, self-confidence, determination, and self-awareness are the foundation of good management. In addition, administration knowledge and skills, beliefs, thoughts, values, and attitudes are fundamental to good managerial behavior. The educational values and beliefs of the administrator are seen as the mood of the school. The moral encouragement of the staff by the administrator increases the school performance. In addition, management requires establishing strong and positive personal relationships with people (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2006).

Aydin (2001, 2010) lists the ethical principles that the manager is expected to comply with as follows: "Justice, equality, honesty and truthfulness, impartiality, responsibility, attention to human rights, organizational commitment, obey the laws, tolerance, love, secularism, respect, frugality, humanism, being democratic, positive human relations, openness, rights and freedoms, giving the right to labor, resisting illegal orders. The unethical behaviors that the administrators should avoid while fulfilling

their duties in the management are as follows: "Discrimination, favoritism, bribery, intimidation-intimidation, neglect, exploitation (abuse), selfishness, corruption, torture (torment), sycophancy, violence- pressure-aggression, mixing politics in business relations, insults and swearing, physical and sexual harassment, bad habits, abuse of duty and authority, gossip, embezzlement, dogmatic behavior, bigotry" (Aydin, 2001, 2010).

Being successful in school management is not just about finding basic competencies. In addition to competence, moral beliefs and ethical criteria are also features that a good administrator should have. The ethical criteria that school administrators should have are as follows: Administrators; (1) In their decision-making and implementation activities for students, they should comply with the core values, (2) They should fulfill their professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity, (3) They should protect all individual and human rights and support the principles appropriate to these rights, (4) They should not engage in direct or indirect destructive actions to the state, comply with national and local laws (5) They should implement administrative decisions and regulations, (6) They should try to base laws, policies, and regulations that will prevent the achievement of educational goals, (7) They should avoid behaviors that provide personal gain in the political, social, religious, and economic fields, (8) They should only accept professional certificates and academic degrees from institutions that issue equivalence certificates, (9) They should protect standards, conduct research that will contribute to continuous professional development, develop professional effectiveness, and (10) They should comply with and adhere to all organizational agreements (Celik, 2003).

Administrators who use the ethical criteria listed appropriately are considered at a high level by the staff. It becomes easier for administrators who are accepted by the staff to carry out management duties. Thus, it can increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the executive school to higher levels. Having a school administrator that staff believes will defend their rights in the best way increases employees' commitment to the school and fulfilling their assigned duties.

Ethical Codes in Educational Administration

It is important on what basis an ethical code of conduct will be based. Ethical codes are not just simple rules to be followed. Rather, it is concerned with the application of principles about the wrongs and rights of human behavior, based on reasonable theories, with objectivity and impartiality (Belsey & Chadwick, 1998). Organizations have developed ethical codes that directly affect the behavior of their employees (Ozan et al., 2017). Moral standards, the ethical values of the organization, and the behaviors of the individual constitute ethical codes (Pater & Gills, 2003). Ethical codes, written or unwritten behavior patterns developed to facilitate decision-making in uncertain and complex situations, are a compass that determines the direction of action of the employee when a moral dilemma (Bektas & Koseoglu, 2007).

People face some difficulties while performing their duties related to their profession. These difficulties have led to the creation of ethical codes. Understanding the functions of the profession adequately and criticizing the ways to be followed play an active role in the formation of these codes. The benefits of knowing the professional codes to the members of the profession and others. According to Frankel; (1) It is a document expressing the essence of the profession. (2) It is a source of evaluation. (3) It provides professional socialization to new entrants. (4) It helps to increase the confidence in the profession and the reputation of the profession. (5) It protects professional thoughts and prejudices. (6) It deters unethical behavior. (7) It is almost a support system for the members of the profession. (8) It helps to make decisions and reason about the profession and the situations in the profession (1989). It provides to guidance to employees, also provide professional development of employees (Pater & Gills, 2003). The principles that administrators should have, and the behaviors expected from them are given in detail in Table 1 (Schwartz, 2002).

Table 1

Expected principles and behaviors from managers

Values	Principles	Behaviors expected of them
Trust	Being honest with stakeholders	Avoid deceptive advertising
Respect	Values that hold despite financial loss	Avoiding bribery despite losses
Responsibility	keep your promise	Fulfill all contractual obligations
Impartiality	Avoiding conflicts of interest	not accepting gifts
Care	Respecting the rights of others	Not bothering about gender
Citizenship	Take responsibility for your behavior	To take necessary measures to avoid abuse of power

Source: Schwartz, M. S. (2002). A Code of Ethics Corporate Code of Ethics. *Journal of Business Ethics,* 27-43.

As seen in Table 1 ethical principles can fulfill their profession as individuals who inspire trust, are respectful, responsible, impartial, care about their job, and they are conscious of citizenship. It is important for each member of the profession to behave in accordance with the ethical codes determined for their profession, both in terms of their own careers and national development. Managers who know ethical codes; trust (honesty, integrity, reliability, and commitment), respect (respect for human rights); they use features such as responsibility (being responsible), impartiality (process, impartiality, and equality), giving importance (avoiding unnecessary harm), citizenship (following the rules and protecting the environment) in their work and put them at the service of individuals.

As in all professions, there are a number of ethical codes that administrators must comply with in their professional lives. These ethical codes should be idealistically determined but also suitable for reasonable use by all educational administrators. Administrators agree to serve with the aim of providing all educational opportunities and take on some responsibilities in order to provide professional leadership in society and school, sign some standards from the beginning (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2006; Kocabas & Karakose, 2009). Many organizations include the American Association of School Administrators, the National Association of Elementary School Administrators, the National Association of Middle School Administrators, the National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education, and the National Policy-Making Fellow for Education Administration clearly stated the various ethical behaviors expected from educational leaders. Many governments have also published these ethical codes for educational administrators (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2006).

The determined ethical codes are as follows: To consider the welfare of students in all their decisions and behaviors, to fulfill their professional responsibilities correctly and honestly, to protect all citizenship and human rights and to support all principles required by the process, to comply with all regional, national, and state laws, to comply with administrative rules and laws, educational laws set by the government, to take appropriate action to correct laws, policies and regulations that are not compatible with the aims of education, to avoid situations of personal benefit by political, social, religious, economic, or other factors, to obtain academic degrees or professional certificates, to have it approved by duly authorized institutes, to continue research and professional development, to continue the pursuit of professional development research and standards, to honorably fulfilling all agreements until they leave or contract is terminated (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2006). Although these

are not absolute codes, they may change over time and according to the organization. These ethical principles should not be taken as unchangeable.

Ethics, in which humanity exists, should be open to development, as in other fields. Because ethical principles can be compared to scientific theories. It must be influenced by the human mind and human experience. As long as humanity exists, research and discussions, and improvement of these principles should continue (Belsey & Chadwick, 1998). Most professional codes are based on ordinary ethical norms or simple human rights principles. Professional ethical codes express ethical standards and positive ideals (Campbell, 2004). They often derive from core values such as honesty, respect, and trust. In addition, ethical behavior is learned from the behavior of others (Jazzar & Algozzinne, 2006). For this reason, it is expected that administrators' behaviors will comply with ethical codes. They should be role-models at school and show them in their behavior.

The ethical values of education administrators have an important place in gaining the leadership role in the schools (Aydin, 2010). The raw materials of managerial life and leadership are values, morality, and ethics. Leaders should be in need of doing what they know best, the most practical way, in an ethical and moral framework. Leaders must demonstrate both their moral and professional responsibilities. Moral responsibility about wants the best for learners (staff or student). Professional responsibility, on the other hand, is about upholding the moral standards of a profession. Both are of the opinion of fulfilling the moral goals of educational leaders (Cranston et al., 2003).

Ethical issues are encountered at school every day in some part of life. They often arise from decisions that require value judgments about doing the right things, saying good things, or particularly the best situations. Although it often seems easy enough to do the right thing, when ethically difficult situations arise, it can be a reason to examine individuals ethically (Campbell, 2004). School administrators should follow an approach that does not aim to increase the success level of students by giving importance to democratic and ethical values (Ozan et al., 2017). From this point of view, school administrators should create a school culture and climate that does not discriminate against race, class, gender, religion, or any other kind. Each school has its own unique culture and a form of its own ethical values (Schwartz, 2002).

School staff and students develop certain behaviors in line with these values. A school organization is unlikely to survive without its own unique values and norms. Administrators should avoid unethical behavior. They should adjust their behaviors according to the values and norms of the school and the ethical climate of the organization (Karakose & Kocabas, 2009). In addition, the decisions made by the administrators about the school, students, and staff should be within an ethical framework (Kiral, 2015). From this point of view, administrators should pay attention to ethical decision making. As can be seen, the purpose of ethical principles is to increase the quality of professional practices. Professional ethical principles have now become one of the indispensable conditions of a profession (Kahraman, 2003).

It is important that school administrators behave in accordance with ethical principles and behaviors, exhibit an honest, fair, and moral attitude, and strive for the success of all students, that is, they have ethical leadership qualities (Gumuseli, 2001). In short, school administrators have three types of ethical responsibilities towards themselves, their organizations and society.

1-Ethical responsibility of the administrators to themselves. The school administrator must personally develop a set of principles and rules and must act in accordance with them. It is not enough to simply define and express these rules. It is necessary to act in accordance with these ethical rules and live them (Celik, 2003). Personal responsibility for complying with ethical rules concerns administrators rather than subordinates (Campbell, 2004). Because mistakes made by superiors can be justified by subordinates (Erdogan, 2007). For this reason, it is necessary for the school administrator to

internalize the ethical principles. This requires the moral and conscientious responsibility of the administrators (Aydin, 2010).

2-Ethical responsibility of the administrators to the organization. The school administrators' explanation of the rules of their school's work ethic to teachers and interpretation of the incomprehensible rules show the ethical responsibility of the school administrator towards the organization. The ethical responsibility of the school administrator towards the organization should clearly understand the education laws and regulations, and share them with the school staff, and share the rules that the school has produced with them (Celik, 2003). School administrators should act equally when applying organizational ethics. The rules applied differently can create discontent among the personnel (Campbell, 2004). The school administrators should be able to unite all informal groups in their school on ethical principles; they should ensure that ethical rules are transformed into ethical rules shared by all personnel in the school (Aydin, 2010).

3-Ethical responsibility of the administrators to the society. The school administrators should share the ethical principles that they have personally and organizationally adopted with the school environment. Students should introduce the school's work ethic to their parents and non-governmental organizations (Celik, 2003). School administrators should try to establish a balance between his own ethical principles, the ethical principles of his school and the ethical principles of the society (Kocabas ve Karakose, 2009).

School administrators should fulfill their ethical responsibilities effectively without transferring them to someone else. As Theodor Lipps said ethical responsibility is not a piece of burden to be taken from one's shoulder and placed on another's shoulder (Akarsu, 1965). Ethical responsibility imposes an obligation on the administrators to fulfill his duties effectively. Fulfilling this obligation is essential for the protection of professional dignity.

CONCLUSION

Educational administrators who have an ethical perspective can look at their own lives and their environment with different lenses. Administrators who act according to ethical values gain the ability to think and act in a certain way, who have received a certain education can be more effective school administrators if they combine ethical values with what needs to be done in the existing legislation. School administrators should understand ethical values and why they should be applied in their organization, explain to their staff and support this with their behaviors. They must carry the basic values that are accepted as moral and show this in their activities. If the training administrators combine the training they received with the ethics, they will not only act by adhering to the legislation in the face of any problem but will also implement the ethical principles. They will bring their personal sensitivity to the fore in the face of events that occur, criticize and question why things are good or bad.

Since schools are educational organizations that transfer existing values and create new values, the education administrators in its management should act according to certain values. Administrators should take into account the social and organizational values and should not only do business according to the legislation. The general rule to be followed at school is determined by laws and regulations. However, the school has a different atmosphere that is not noticed by outsiders. It can be said that school administrators who both manage their schools with laws and regulations, and manage their schools with ethical sensitivity, ethical codes, principles, and standards, core values, thus, they can get rid of unethical situations and dilemmas. The administrators who have ethical behaviors can be more effective in creating organizational culture and climate, establishing positive communication, and ensuring the commitment of their staff to the school.

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