

The Relationship between Leadership Behavior of a Principal and Quality of Work Life of Teachers in an Industrial Vocational High School in Taiwan

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between leadership behavior of a principal and quality of work life (QWL) of teachers. This was a case study of an industrial vocational high school in Taiwan. Firstly, literature review was applied to generalize the components of leadership behavior and quality of work life to develop the "Questionnaire for Leadership Behavior of a Principal and Quality of Work Life of Teachers in an Industrial Vocational High School". Secondly, in order to find out perspectives of teachers about leadership behavior of the principal and quality of work life themselves, all teachers in that industrial vocational high school were surveyed. Then, the data, which was obtained from that survey, was analyzed by t-test, one-way ANOVA, Pearson product-moment correlation, and stepwise regression. The results showed the differences in perspectives about leadership behavior of the principal and quality of work life of teachers with different backgrounds, as well as the relationship between two variables. Finally, the conclusions will be for the principal as the reference, for promoting teachers' quality of work life and their further performance.

Keywords: leadership behavior; quality of work life (QWL); industrial vocational high school

Introduction

Effective schools emphasize and reinforce the value of human resources and other internal morale issues among their members while being sensitive to external demands (Cameron, 1984). For school operation, teachers are one of the most important human resources. What and how to meet teacher needs are questions deserve to be mentioned. Richard (1992) found in his study that principals positively influenced the respect accorded teachers, teacher participation in decisions affecting their work, professional collaboration and interaction, use of skills and knowledge, and the teaching/learning environment. As a result, behavior of the school principal and teachers is closely related.

Quality of work life (QWL) is a process by which an organization responds to employee needs by developing mechanisms to allow them to share fully in making the decisions that design their lives at work (Robbins, 1989). It includes life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and work-specific facet satisfaction such as satisfaction with pay, co-workers, supervisor, among others (Danna & Griffin, 1999). All hierarchy of QWL related to the director

leadership. In school, the school principal is the highest level of leader; his/her leadership affects teachers' QWL. This study explored the relationship between perceived leadership behaviors and quality of work life (QWL) among teachers in an industrial vocational high school. The outcomes will provide reference to the principal to promote school effectiveness.

Method

Participants

This study was a case study, and survey used to find out the perception of teachers in the principal leadership behavior and their QWL of self. The case school is a public industrial vocational high school in Taiwan. The school now offers eleven industrial programs. Current enrollment is 1,580 students of day school and night school, with 104 teachers, 30 staff member and 12 manual workers. The principal assumed office on August 1, 2004.

Questionnaires were sent to all 104 teachers. A total of 42 participants responded to the questionnaire (40.38 percent response rate). A total of 26 respondents were male and 16 female. Participants were, on average, 41.6 years of age and had 13.43 years' teaching experience in this school. 50 percent held a Bachelor's degree, 45.24 percent a Master's degree, 2.38 percent a doctor's degree, and 2.38 percent other degree. And, 42.86 percent served administrative staff concurrently.

Measures

Data were collected using a three-part questionnaire—"Questionnaire for Leadership Behavior of a Principal and Quality of Work Life of Teachers in an Industrial Vocational High School". The first portion contained a demographic data sheet. The demographic data sheet included the variables of sex, age, teaching experience, education level, and the situation of serve administrative staff concurrently etc. The leadership behavior questionnaire and the QWL questionnaire both were developed using a summative model with a Likert scale ranging from one to five. 24 items of leadership behavior questionnaire were modified from Chang's (1998) "Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire". It contained three components of "task-oriented", "relationship-oriented", and "personal example led". 38 items of QWL questionnaire were modified from Yang's (2002) "Public School Teachers' Attitudes toward Quality of Work Life Questionnaire". It contained four components of "formal / material", "formal / mental", "informal / material", and "informal / mental".

Analyses

The data collected from survey was analyzed by t-test, one-way ANOVA, Pearson product-moment correlation, and stepwise regression. Among these, t-test and one-way ANOVA resulted differences in perspectives about leadership behavior of the principal and quality of work life of teachers with different backgrounds. Pearson product-moment correlation resulted the relationship between two variables. Stepwise regression resulted the best subset of predictors.

Results

The means (M) and standard deviations (SD) calculated for the leadership behavior questionnaire and the QWL questionnaire were presented in Table 1. The means in all components were above median.

Table 1 Means and standard deviations for variables included in the study

	M	SD
Leadership behavior	3.94	0.41
Task-oriented	3.76	0.49
Relationship-oriented	4.06	0.41
Personal example led	4.01	0.52
Quality of work life	3.62	0.47
Formal / material	3.55	0.51
Formal / mental	3.52	0.38
Informal / material	3.63	0.72
Informal / mental	3.74	0.58

Note. N=42.

The results of perspectives about leadership behavior of the principal and quality of work life of teachers with different backgrounds were not different roughly. Nevertheless, female respondents were significantly higher than male respondents in informal /material and informal/mental quality of work. Respondents with different teaching experience were significantly different in relationship-oriented leadership behavior. Respondents served administrative staff concurrently or not were significantly different in formal /material and informal/mental quality of work.

Correlations between the variables included in the study were presented in Table 2. Task-oriented leadership behavior was significantly correlated with all components of quality of work life. Relationship-oriented leadership behavior, in common with personal example led leadership behavior, was significantly correlated with every component, except informal/material quality of work life, of quality of work life. The strongest correlation was found between task-oriented leadership behavior and informal/mental quality of work ($r=0.55$, $p<0.01$).

Table 2 Correlations between leadership behavior and quality of work life

Leadership behavior	Quality of work life			
	Formal/material	Formal/mental	Informal/material	Informal/mental
Task-oriented	0.38*	0.48**	0.44**	0.55**
Relationship-oriented	0.37*	0.54**	0.27	0.48**
Personal example led	0.40**	0.36*	0.28	0.54**

Note. N=42. * $p<0.05$. ** $p<0.01$

Stepwise regression analyses were also calculated using each component of leadership behavior as the dependent variable and the four components of quality of work life as the predictors (Table 3). Formal/material quality of work life emerged as the strongest predictor of person example led leadership behavior ($\beta=0.41$, $p < 0.05$).

Formal/mental quality of work life emerged as the strongest predictor of relationship-oriented leadership behavior ($\beta=0.54$, $p < 0.05$). Informal/material quality of work life emerged as the strongest predictor of task-oriented leadership behavior ($\beta=0.44$, $p < 0.05$). Informal/mental quality of work life emerged as the strongest predictor of task-oriented ($\beta=0.36$, $p < 0.05$) and person example led leadership behavior ($\beta=0.33$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 3 Regression analysis - significant predictors (β) for each component of leadership behavior

	Formal/material	Formal/mental	Informal/material	Informal/mental
Task-oriented	*	*	0.44**	0.36**
Relationship-oriented	*	0.54**	*	*
Person example led	0.41**	*	*	0.33**

Note. N=42. ** $p < 0.05$. * = not a significant predictor. β = standardized beta estimates

Conclusions

This study presents a starting point in exploring the relationship between leadership behavior of the principal and quality of work life of teachers. The conclusions of this study in the case industrial vocational high school were as follows.

1. The perspectives of teachers were positive in leadership behavior of the principal and quality of work life themselves.
2. The relationship between leadership behavior of the principal and quality of work life of teachers was strong positive in substance.
3. Teachers' quality of work life could forecast with the principal's leadership behavior.

These conclusions could be reference for the principal to promote teachers' quality of work life and their further performance.

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