

Secondary School Principals' Leadership Behavioral Characteristics that Inspire Teachers' Gratitude in Taiwan

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Abstract

This study mainly explored and realized five principals' leadership behavioral characteristics could possibly inspire teachers' gratitude, so as to help principals on contributing efforts to schools affairs. By sampling 35 of 360 secondary school teachers at south of Taiwan, and interviewed those 35 teachers who accepted the invitation of interview. Results summarized their stories and experiences shown that five principals' leadership behavioral characteristics are 1. The principals help teachers by contribute efforts or prices 2. The helps by the principal is valuable to teachers 3. The helps by the principal is based on the goodwill 4. The helps by the principal is beyond teachers' expectations and 5. The principals don't expect return favors for helps. The result approached goals for principals to inspire teachers' gratitude and promoting the school affairs.

Keywords: Leadership Behavioral, Teachers' Gratitude, Goodwill, Behavioral Characteristics, Return Favors

1. Introduction

1.1 Motivation of research

It is believed that school principals' certain leadership behaviors own behavioral characteristics that could always inspire teachers' gratitude. And it has a positive influence to teachers themselves that also generate a sense of motivation, passion and action to return favors with positive behaviors to school principals is often, and principals could use these behavioral characteristics to earn teachers' gratitude.

Besides, this study has received preliminary enlightenment by the idea of stimulating gratitude, generating gratitude and return favors motives. Therefore, the study mainly explores and realize what kind of principals' leadership behavioral characteristics could possibly inspire teachers' gratitude, so to enhance teachers' willingness to return favors not only for school principals but also help for affairs of schools.

1.2 Changes school structure affect the principal's leadership style

At Taiwan, public secondary schools have overall flattened school administrative organization and operations due to the government's promotion of organizational restructuring and school-based management recent years. However, there are some new-established school teachers'

associations, teacher reviewing committees, and the student parents' participation of school education affairs started in 2006. Since then, many schools have reformed, and have developed several of new-style individual organizations with specific and particular characteristics.

Certain long-running reciprocity leader emphasizes that the relationship between leaders and subordinates is mutually beneficial and is based on the exchange of economic, political and psychological values. Therefore, school leaders take strategies such as negotiation or compromise to meet with the needs of their subordinates and promote the leadership in the work of their subordinates. Therefore, it is the bartering leadership.

On teacher side, they usually use varied strategies to increase negotiation capability to fight for their own rights via the exchange of interests, external support with opinions of experts and scholars, all of which show the school power changes.

2. Method

By qualitative method design on this study because to dig out the stories, experiences and opinions of the teachers in secondary schools at south Taiwan, interview is much better than questionnaires' survey methods. Interview focus on teachers being inspired the gratitude by principals' certain leadership behaviors.

The scale was applied to 360 teachers determined by simple random sampling method at south Taiwan, and finally interview were implemented with 35 teachers who accepted the invitation of participated the qualitative interview.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The positive behavior of the principal's leadership earns the trust of teachers

The effective communication between teachers and principals could align each other's values, goals and resulted in a benign interaction. For teachers agree that the principal's direction of the school's efforts is meaningful and take proactive actions for the development of the school together with others.

Organizational members can focus on learning, have self-awareness, adjustment, recognize and learn the behavior characteristics displayed by leaders. Even more, to imitate certain specific behaviors. Then, return to the state of self-awareness, adjustment, showing certain leadership behaviors, and eventually could gradually become one of the outstanding leaders in sooner future.

3.2 Positive leadership includes the open mind, tolerance, openness, transparency, altruism, and integrity

Both the issues of school management and principal's leadership behavior have received the attention and study of many scholars. The related issues have being discussed by most educators, too. The concept of principal's leadership behavior is important very much on educational leadership than ever before.

If the principal's leadership behavior a result of a positive psychological process, it is enough to positively influence both self-awareness and self-adjustment. Also, accelerate the principal as a leader to produce positive behaviors, because leaders with highly positive thoughts and emotions are aware of self-worth with high degree self-confidence, and are consistent with

their words expression and behaviors. So that teachers can also recognize the same value of leaders' ability, knowledge, etc.

In other words, a positive principal leadership is a sort of methods or behavioral patterns that the subordinates believe it can lead with an open-minded and self-tolerance, transparency, altruism and integrity.

If a leader adopts a behavioral pattern that is consistent with certain high values and beliefs of the individual, it could encourage members to express different opinions, also, create a cooperative relationship with the leader and earn trust, and win full trust of the led. It is also a positive mental capability constructed by such as optimism, confidence, hope, and flexibility, etc.

However, teachers' gratitude will increase their trust of each other, satisfaction, and commitment to teachers themselves. Besides, it does have a highly positive influence on teachers themselves.

Since that is another new way of thought and approach, therefore, this study believes that the interview method should be able to collect various stories and experiences about the teachers' gratitude to the principals. So to explore the real situation in which different leadership behavior characteristics have the influence for principal's leadership behaviors and inspire teachers' gratitude.

3.3 The behavioral characteristics of the principal's leadership that inspires gratitude

During the interview period of the study, 33 of 35 teachers stated that their school principals did display adequate leadership behaviors characteristics which were summarized such as principals' selfless, honesty, compassion, empathy, humility, and justice based on teachers' current or the past experiences, stories at schools.

Therefore, this research summarized their mentioned five characteristics of principals' leadership behaviors. The interaction between the benefactor (principal) and the beneficiary (teacher) were used to explain the principal's leadership behavior characteristics which can inspire teachers' gratitude with examples are as follows:

1) The principals help teachers by contribute efforts or prices

Gratitude must first pass through the beneficiary's awareness and then judge the beneficiary's behavior. In other words, what if the benefactor pays is easy favors, light efforts or prices, which is a sign for beneficiary to judge and aware the helps' value.

The benefactor must in fact pay time, energy, effort and price. Also, stated that servant style leaders offering leaders enforce serving others and offer special attention to the practice of active service.

What a servant style leader's concern is what the serves actually is the highest needs of others. That is, the beneficiary is willing to contribute efforts or a certain prices, so that the beneficiary realizes and acknowledges that the benefactor actually make efforts or an amount prices.

Therefore, when teachers aware and acknowledge that the principal is actively making efforts or prices to display specific behaviors of altruism, the tendency of teachers' gratitude and return favors will be increased.

Table 1

Behavioral characteristics that inspire teachers' gratitude #1

#1 Characteristics	Example
Have made effort or price: The principal's behavior did pay some effort or some price.	With the teacher's consent, the principal visits teacher's classroom to learn, discusses and solves problems with the teacher after school. The principal offers his time and spirit, and the teacher learned and realizes that the principal has contributed effort and price.

2) The help provided by the principal is valuable to teachers
 The very first of the four basic elements of gratitude in the eyes of the beneficiaries is the favors with special benefits or valuable gifts.

In other words, for any material or spiritual benefits that human beings hope to obtain, the favors must be valuable and really needed.

Therefore, when teachers are aware and acknowledge that the help provided by the principal is needed and valuable, teachers' gratitude will appear which will increase the possibility of teachers' gratitude and return favors willingness.

Table 2

Behavioral characteristics that inspire teachers' gratitude #2

#2 Characteristics	Example
valuable to teachers: The principal knows what teachers' really needs and valuable to teachers.	A group leader became one of "the excess teachers" because of "downsizing school classes", and he might be forced to move to another school farther away from home. The principal coordinated to obtain the consent of other teachers to exclude the group leader from the list that the principal's help met with his actual needs.

3) The helps given by the principal is based on the goodwill
 Gratitude is receiving and recognition of the goodness or kindness from the outside world. It is not just a simply feeling, but also the awareness that the blessings it receives not due or earned by the beneficiaries but come from the well-intentioned actions of others.

It is also a joyful emotion for the benefactor to treat themselves well, because the beneficiary not only receives helps, but also feels the others' kindness much more than helps.

Table 3

Behavioral characteristics that inspire teachers' gratitude #3

#3 Characteristics	Example
Give help based on goodwill: The help provided by the principal is based on goodwill and no other attempts.	The teacher tried his best to help the economically disadvantaged students in the class as much as possible. The principal actively raised funds after learning about it. In particular, the principal's initiative to help came out of goodwill and did not involve other purposes. The teacher was very grateful to the principal and aware of his kindness.

When the individual recognizes that the favors offered by others are based on the goodwill, he/she always could truly feel positive experiences and generates feelings of gratitude, which in turn arise one's own very internal gratitude motives and following behaviors. If the principals' helps without goodwill, even if the teacher receives helps, it will not produce any

gratitude.

4) The helps provides by the principal is beyond teacher’s expectations

When the helps received exceeds the general expectations of people, more gratitude will be generated. If the assistance of others is unexpected, gratitude will have a stronger degree and a broader dimension. Conversely, the more you look forward to the help of others, the less the experience of gratitude.

If the beneficiary can better understand the relevant needs of the beneficiaries, and practice specific altruistic behaviors, so that the beneficiaries are aware of unexpected benefits and attributed to the beneficiary. Under such circumstances beyond their expectations, make the beneficiary is more able to feel that the benefactor is trying his best to help the beneficiary.

Table 4

Behavioral characteristics that inspire teachers’ gratitude #4

#4 Characteristics	Example
Exceeding teachers’ expectations: The principal helps teachers’ further demand and exceed their expectations.	The teacher reported that the office lighting appliances were insufficient, and the principal instructed to deal with it as soon as possible and instructed the general affairs director to handle other problems in the teacher's office, such as poor ventilation, piled debris, and damaged seats.

5) The principals don’t expect any return favors for offering helps. If the beneficiary offer helps based on goodwill and does not expect any return favors, the beneficiary will always respond with gratitude.

Gratitude is related to not expecting to be return favors. If the benefactor (principal) offers and receives the favor without expecting any benefit, the beneficiary (teacher) will naturally feel gratitude. Whether or not the benefactor (principal) expects any benefits from the beneficiaries (teacher) is to determine whether their interaction will become gratitude or a key factor in the exchange of benefits.

A smart principal must cultivate altruistic spiritual senses to serve teachers and students. If the relationship between the two parties is biased towards the exchange of interests, it will be only a form of a very simple exchange of interests.

Table 5

Five behavioral characteristics that inspire teachers’ gratitude #5

#5 Characteristics	Example
Does not expect any return: The principal is selfless in giving helps and does not expect the teachers to return favors.	The principal realizes that the teacher have aged parents in need of care, and infant children, etc., so he actively review the class schedule and adjust the sessions so that the teacher can take time off when necessary. The principal’s motives are selfless and do not ask for anything as return favors.

Selfless motives and a mentality for not asking any rewards can inspire gratitude for the beneficiaries and realize that the principal does not expect rewards.

Finally, the summarized above all characteristics as below:

Table 6

Five behavioral characteristics of the principal's leadership inspire teachers' gratitude

Behavioral Characteristics	Behavior Characteristics
#1	Principals help teachers by contribute efforts / prices.
#2	Helps by the principal is valuable to teachers.
#3	Helps by the principal is based on the goodwill.
#4	Helps by the principal is beyond teachers' expectations.
#5	Principals don't expect return favors for helps.

4. Conclusion

In summary, the study agrees that if the principals can clearly realize the mentioned on above five leadership behavioral characteristics and contribute to help the teachers according to their needs, with good will, valuable and exceeds the teachers' expectation without expect any return favors, etc. So that teachers can be clearly aware that the helps they received is attributed to the principals' real favors.

Therefore, the study believes that it is possible by mentioned five leadership behavioral characteristics to inspire teachers' gratitude, and then develop the motivation and practice of teachers' internal return favors behaviors for principals.

Based on the findings, it can be suggested that school principals should have an opportunity to refer to mentioned five leadership behavior characteristics for approaching goals of both inspire teachers' gratitude and promote the school affairs.

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