



Relationship between the school administrators' power sources and teachers' organizational trust levels in Turkey

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore the relationship between school administrators' power sources and teachers' organizational trust levels.

Design/methodology/approach – The sample of the study, which employed a survey research method, consisted of 376 primary school teachers in Kutahya, a city in western Turkey. The data gathering instrument of the study incorporated "School Administrators' Organizational Power Sources Scale" and "Organizational Trust Scale". Descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used to analyze the data.

Findings – According to the research findings, the participant teachers' organizational trust levels were high. When power sources used by school administrators were considered, they positively correlated with the teachers' organizational trust perceptions at a moderate level. However, only referent power was the significant predictor of organizational trust perceptions, while referent power, expert power and reward power were significant predictors of trust in administrator. Although the other power sources were highly preferred, they did not have an influence on employees' organizational trust perceptions. Power sources used by administrators explained approximately two-fifths of total organizational trust perceptions of the teachers and three-fifths of trust in administrator perceptions.

Research limitations/implications – The research was limited to state primary school teachers' perceptions.

Practical implications – The research findings could be used to analyze primary school teachers' organizational trust environment. To increase the organizational trust levels of the staff, school administrators can prefer the power of expertise, charisma and awards. In this respect, conducting studies especially to develop the expertise of the administrators can contribute to the development of the trust perceptions of the staff.

Originality/value – Although there are studies on organizational trust, research connected to the relationship between power sources preferred by administrators and organizational trust has not been found. Furthermore, organizational power at schools is one of the disregarded fields of education.

Keywords Turkey, Primary schools, Teachers, Educational administration, Administrators, Trust

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

In organizational life, as in social life, human relations are critical. Human relations in organizational life are patterns to attain organizational goals and to meet employees' needs because organizations and employees have mutual needs. Employees make efforts to attain organizational goals on one hand, and they would like to receive a recompense for their work on the other hand. In such an exchange relation, administrators have the responsibility to meet employees' needs in return for their efforts (Başaran, 2004). Such a soundly functioning relation pattern depends on both



organizational and individual goal attainment and establishment of a trust environment. Trust environment contributes to organizational development and improvement of effectiveness (Lewicki and Bunker, 1996; Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 1998; Tschannen-Moran, 2001).

Trust, which could be defined as belief in people or groups in interactions without any fear or doubt (Lewicki and Bunker, 1996), is crucial in organizational life. Mutual trust or distrust perceptions have positive or negative effects on organizational functioning in organizational life. In a trust environment, a warm organizational climate is ensured, fears and uncertainties decrease, employees are able to take risks and come up with new ideas, and also conflicts and turnovers diminish (Lewicki *et al.*, 1998; Henttonen and Blomqvist, 2005; Laschinger and Finegan, 2005). In this context, trust plays an important role in establishing effective communication in organizations (Whiteley *et al.*, 1998). In a distrust environment, employees use their energy to protect themselves rather than contributing to organizations (Tschannen-Moran, 2001). Trust is one of the basic human needs. A feeling of trust is also important for educational organizations. Trust at schools is the key element for productive group relations and the development of interpersonal relationships (Hoy *et al.*, 1992). A high trust level increases student academic achievement (Hoy *et al.*, 1992; Hoy and Miskel, 2010) and enables employees to display organizational commitment and citizenship behaviors (Ozag, 2006; Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Yilmaz, 2009).

Organizational trust is defined as an employee's perception of organizational support and belief in leader's honesty and power to stand by his words. Trust, in this sense, is the basis of all intra-organizational relations both vertically and horizontally (Mishra and Morrissey, 1990). Employees' organizational trust is shaped by behaviors of people or groups in direct or indirect interactions. Since the purpose of the study was to explore teachers' organizational trust levels, organizational trust factors were specified as follows: trust in an administrator, trust in colleagues and trust in stakeholders (students, parents) (Hoy and Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Yilmaz, 2004, 2006, 2009). The factors were employed to obtain an organizational trust total score, but only the relationship between trust in the administrator and organizational power were defined. It is thought that organizational power used by school administrators does not have a direct influence on trust in colleagues and trust in stakeholders. Employees' organizational trust levels are affected by many variables and also affect many variables. The aim of the present research is to explore the effect of school administrators' power sources on organizational trust levels.

Power is defined as an individual's ability to guide others' behaviors in an arbitrary way (Pfeffer, 1992; Greenberg and Baron, 1993). Thus, power is a relational term. It does not make sense alone without any associations with others. However, power dynamics can also be more difficult to observe and sometimes they are even unconscious (Boonstra and Bennebroek-Gravenhorst, 1998). Leaders' power preferences in an organizational sense could affect employees' organizational perceptions because leaders are individuals who influence organizational members through power and authority (Başaran, 2004). The type of power used by administrators is closely related to perceptions of human relations. Parallel to the increasing importance of human relations in administration and leadership theories, informal leadership based on expert power and referent power has been given greater attention than formal leadership which is influential on groups by means of authority.

Organizations by nature need control mechanisms. Within this framework, use of power in organizations is compulsory. Administrators use power sources to guide behaviors of organizational members. However, the type of power is important at this point. Classifications of power sources are generally similar. One of the leading research papers on this issue is a study by French and Raven (1959). French and Raven (1959) examine power sources under five factors: "legitimate power, reward power, coercive power, referent (charismatic) power and expert power". In this study, French and Raven's (1959) classification was preferred. The factors are presented briefly below:

- (1) *Legitimate power*. This is the formal power, also known as authority or power, which is granted to administrators by post. However, excessive use of legitimate power might cause job dissatisfaction, resistance and conflicts.
- (2) *Reward power*. This is the reward power in return for desired behavior displayed by employees. It is somehow intermingled with legitimate power. Fair and effective use of reward power might lead to positive results.
- (3) *Referent power*. This is the power based on personality traits (Schein, 1977; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2006). The source of this power is the administrator's personality and communication skills. Administrators with referent power are liked, respected and modeled.
- (4) *Expert power*. This is the power based on the administrator's knowledge and skills. Like referent power, it concerns personality traits. In modern schools, expert power depends on school administrators' educational background and experience. Yet, to consider expert power merely as being knowledgeable in legal issues and practicing legal procedures is wrong. Expertise of school administrators depends on knowledge, skills and experience in educational administration.
- (5) *Coercive power*. This is the power versus reward power. It is based on fear. It expresses coercing employees materially or morally because of undesired behaviors.

There are recent studies on organizational power. For instance, Boonstra and Bennebroek-Gravenhorst (1998) made a comprehensive typology. Boonstra and Bennebroek-Gravenhorst (1998) discussed how different perspectives on power were related to change strategies, the role of change agents, and influence behavior. Later, Munduate and Bennebroek-Gravenhorst (2003) made significant contributions towards a better understanding of power dynamics in organizational change. However, power in these studies was examined in terms of organizational change. The reason for the use of the classification by French and Raven (1959) in our study is that the classification forms a general framework of power and includes fundamental terms. Thus, the classification by French and Raven (1959) seems eligible for educational organizations. The common use of the classification in the previous studies conducted in educational organizations (Short and Johnson, 1994; Erchul and Raven, 1997; Erchul *et al.*, 2001) supports this view.

Administrators' power preferences could affect employees' organizational perceptions (Yücel, 1999). According to Etzioni (1961, cited in Schein, 1977), the outcome of coercive power is inhospitality or alienation while the outcome of profit-based power is caution, and the outcome of value-based power is commitment. When the fact that leadership behaviors are shaped by power preferences is taken into account, it could be said that one

of the variables which might be affected by the type of power used by administrators is employees' organizational trust perceptions.

When the literature is reviewed, it is seen that the relationship between organizational trust and variables such as organizational justice (Cohen-Charash and Spector, 2001), leadership behaviors (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1996), and organizational citizenship (Deluga, 1994) is scientifically examined. There are some studies on organizational power (Yücel, 1999; Can and Çelikten, 2000; Aydoğan, 2008; Özaslan and Gürsel, 2008; Zafer, 2008). However, research connected to the relationship between school administrators' power sources and teachers' organizational trust has not been found.

The purpose of this research was to explore the relationship between school administrators' power sources and teachers' organizational trust levels. To this end, the answers to the following questions were sought:

- What are primary school teachers' organizational trust perceptions?
- What are teachers' perceptions about school administrators' use of power sources?
- Is there a significant correlation between power sources used by school administrators and teachers' organizational trust levels?

Method

In this section, information about research method, sample, data-gathering instruments and data analysis is presented. A survey research method was employed in the study.

Sample

The research population consisted of 912 primary school teachers in Kutahya, a city in Western Turkey, in the 2009-2010 academic year. Cochran's sample size formula was used to specify the sample size and it was decided that 270 participants were needed in order to achieve 95 percent trust level. The participants were randomly chosen and 400 teachers were reached. In total, 376 appropriate data-gathering instruments were included in the analysis.

Data-gathering tools

Data were gathered by "Organizational Trust Scale" and "School Administrators' Organizational Power Sources Scale". "Organizational Trust Scale" consisted of 22 items and the following three sub-dimensions: "trust in administrator", "trust in colleagues" and "trust in stakeholders". The factors were based on studies by Hoy (Hoy and Tarter, 2004; Hoy and Tschannen-Moran, 1999, 2003; Hoy *et al.*, 2002, 2006; Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 1998, 2000). The scale was developed by Yılmaz (2006) using this conceptual basis. Reliability coefficients of the scale were as follows: 0.89 for trust in the administrator, 0.87 for trust in colleagues and 0.82 for trust in stakeholders. Total variance explained by the whole scale was 45.31 percent and Cronbach's α reliability coefficient was 0.92. The three-factor structure of "Organizational Trust Scale", defined in a study by Yılmaz (2006) was tested by first-order confirmatory factor analysis. As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis, fit indexes were found as ($\chi^2 = 426.19$, $df = 204$, $p < 0.001$) ($\chi^2/df = 2.09$, RMSEA = 0.071, GFI = 0.84, AGFI = 0.81 and RMR = 0.052, and the standardized RMR = 0.057, CFI = 0.97, NFI = 0.94 and NNFI = 0.96. In consideration with the suggestions for modifications as a result

of confirmatory factor analysis, it was decided to have totally two modifications between items 3 and 11 and between items 19 and 21. It was shown that the modifications significantly contributed to the fit indexes ($p < 0.05$). Moreover, it was observed that all the scale items gave satisfactory t -values to explain the latent variables. As a result, it could be said that the three-factor structure of "Organizational Trust Scale" was confirmed by confirmatory factor analysis. In other words, the factor structure was a valid model (Çokluk-Bökeoğlu and Yılmaz, 2008).

The reply part of the original form ranged from 1 to 6; from strongly disagree to strongly agree. However, it is not commonly used in Turkey. Therefore, the reply part was reorganized as; 1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – moderately agree, 4 – agree and 5 – strongly agree. Total score from Organizational Trust Scale showed levels of the participants' organizational trust perceptions. High scores from each factor or high total scores showed high trust feelings and low scores showed low trust feelings. The scale included statements such as the following: "I believe in school administrator's honesty", "Teacher-administrator relations at school are consistent" and "School principal keeps his promises" (trust in administrator); "I believe what other teachers say", "Teachers in school are open to one another" and "I believe teachers' conversations are confidential" (trust in colleagues) and "I trust student work", "I believe what parents say" and "I trust parents" (trust in stakeholders).

"School Administrators' Organizational Power Sources Scale" consisted of five individual factors: expert power, referent power, reward power, legitimate power and coercive power (Zafer, 2008). The scale which was designed to define school administrators' power sources consisted of 59 Likert-type items and the answer sheet consisted of five options: 1 – never, 2 – rarely, 3 – sometimes, 4 – mostly and 5 – always. Total variance explained by expert power was 62 percent (Cronbach's α reliability coefficient was 0.94). Total variance explained by referent power was 60 percent (Cronbach's α reliability coefficient was 0.84). Total variance explained by reward power was 56 percent (Cronbach's α reliability coefficient was 0.82). Total variance explained by legitimate power was 54 percent (Cronbach's α reliability coefficient was 0.89). Total variance explained by coercive power was 58 percent (Cronbach's α reliability coefficient was 0.88). The scale included statements such as the following: the administrator improves himself by following the developments in the field (expert power); the administrator easily affects teachers in accordance with the defined goals (referent power); the administrator publicly honors teachers who have fulfilled the assigned tasks (reward power); the administrator regards laws in the immediate or critical decision-making process by exercising power when needed (legitimate power) and the administrator warns teachers about punctuality to lessons (coercive power).

Descriptive statistics were used to explain the teachers' perceptions and multivariate regression analysis was used to determine whether school administrators' power sources significantly predicted teachers' organizational trust perceptions. Correlation coefficients as absolute values ranging from 0.70 to 1.00 were considered high, correlation coefficients ranging from 0.69 to 0.30 were considered moderate and correlation coefficients ranging from 0.29 to 0.00 were considered low.

Results

Of the participants, 51.6 percent ($n = 194$) were female, and 48.4 percent ($n = 182$) were male teachers. The teachers' ages ranged from 22 to 56. Of the participants, 34.6 percent

($n = 130$) were in the age range of 30 years old and below, 23.9 percent ($n = 90$) were in the age range of 31-35 years old, 16.5 percent ($n = 62$) were in the age range of 36-40 years old and 25 percent ($n = 94$) were in the age range of 41 years old and above. Of the participants, 54.8 percent ($n = 206$) were classroom teachers and 45.2 percent ($n = 170$) were branch teachers. 54.3 percent ($n = 204$) of the participants were in the experience range of one to ten years, 33.5 ($n = 126$) were in the experience range of 11-20 years and 12.2 percent ($n = 46$) were in the experience range of 21 years and above.

Primary school teachers' organizational trust perceptions

The teachers' perceptions about organizational trust ($M = 3.69$, $S = 0.52$), trust in colleagues ($M = 3.81$, $S = 0.65$) and trust in administrator ($M = 3.80$, $S = 0.56$) were close to "mostly", and their perceptions about trust in stakeholders were close to "sometimes" ($M = 3.45$, $S = 0.71$). The most agreed item in the dimension of trust in administrator was "I trust school administrator's honesty" ($M = 4.17$, $S = 0.77$), and the least agreed item was "school administrator clearly shares personal information with teachers" ($M = 2.40$, $S = 0.98$). The most agreed item in the dimension of trust in colleagues was "I trust other teachers at school" ($M = 4.01$, $S = 0.71$), and the least agreed item was "I believe that conversations at teachers' room are confidential" ($M = 3.39$, $S = 1.05$). The most agreed item in the dimension of trust in stakeholders was "I trust students for what they do" ($M = 3.61$, $S = 0.84$), and the least agreed item was "students at this school do not deceive teachers even if they have a chance to do so" ($M = 3.21$, $S = 0.93$).

Primary school teachers' perceptions about school administrators' use of power sources

The primary school teachers thought that school administrators highly used all the power sources. According to the teachers, school administrators used the following powers, respectively: legitimate power ($M = 4.14$, $S = 0.55$), expert power ($M = 4.09$, $S = 0.66$), coercive power ($M = 4.00$, $S = 0.76$), referent power ($M = 3.89$, $S = 0.72$) and reward power ($M = 3.88$, $S = 0.73$).

Regression analysis of predictors of organizational trust perceptions

Regression analysis results of prediction of teachers' organizational trust perceptions by school administrators' power sources are presented in Table I.

There was a moderate (close to high) positive correlation between the teachers' organizational trust perceptions and school administrators' referent power ($r = 0.59$), legitimate power ($r = 0.55$), expert power ($r = 0.57$) and reward power ($r = 0.57$)

Variable	B	SE	β	t-value	p	Paired r	Partial r
Constant	1.568	0.163	-	9.603	0.00	-	-
Expert power	0.089	0.069	0.112	1.291	0.19	0.57	0.07
Referent power	0.180	0.067	0.251	2.683	0.01	0.59	0.14
Reward power	0.105	0.058	0.148	1.797	0.07	0.57	0.10
Legitimate power	0.138	0.074	0.147	1.874	0.06	0.55	0.10
Coercive power	0.020	0.037	0.029	0.538	0.59	0.38	0.03

Notes: $R = 0.63$; $R^2 = 0.39$; $F_{(5-370)} = 47.325$; $p = 0.00$

Table I.
Regression analysis results of predictors of organizational trust perceptions

and there was a low positive correlation between the teachers' organizational trust perceptions and coercive power ($r = 0.38$). However, when the other variables were considered, there was a low positive correlation between referent power ($r = 0.14$), reward power ($r = 0.10$), legitimate power ($r = 0.10$) and organizational trust perceptions and there was a slight correlation between organizational trust perceptions and the other variables, which could be disregarded.

All the power sources were significantly correlated with the teachers' organizational trust scores at a moderate level ($R = 0.63, p < 0.01$). School administrators' power sources explained 39 percent of total variance of the teachers' organizational trust perceptions. According to the standardized regression coefficient (β), the relative order of importance of power sources was as follows: referent power, legitimate power, expert power, reward power and coercive power. When t -test results of significance of regression coefficients were considered, only referent power was the predictor of organizational trust perceptions. The other power sources were not significantly influential. According to the findings, regression equity of organizational trust perception was as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Organizational Trust Perception} = & 1.568 + 0.089 \text{ Expert Power} \\ & + 0.180 \text{ Referent Power} \\ & + 0.121 \text{ Reward Power} \\ & + 0.105 \text{ Legitimate Power} \\ & + 0.025 \text{ Coercive Power} \end{aligned}$$

A high correlation between power and organizational trust brings the necessity to define trust in administrator because administrators' power preferences affect employees' organizational behaviors. As a result, it is essential to explore the effect of administrators' power preferences on employees' trust in administrator perceptions. Regression analysis results of reductive factors of trust in administrator are presented in Table II.

There was a high, positive correlation between trust in administrator and expert power ($r = 0.73$) and referent power ($r = 0.71$). There was a moderate, positive correlation between trust in administrator and reward power ($r = 0.66$), legitimate power ($r = 0.64$) and coercive power ($r = 0.43$). However, when the other variables were considered, there was a slight correlation between trust in administrator and legitimate power and coercive power sources, which could be disregarded. When the other variables were considered, there was a low, positive correlation between trust in administrator and expert power ($r = 0.26$), referent power ($r = 0.12$) and reward power ($r = 0.12$).

All the power sources were significantly correlated with the teachers' trust in administrator scores at a high level ($R = 0.75, p < 0.01$). The school administrators'

Variable	B	SE	β	t-value	p	Paired r	Partial r
Constant	1.035	0.149	-	6.925	0.00	-	-
Expert power	0.324	0.063	0.376	5.137	0.00	0.73	0.26
Referent power	0.138	0.061	0.177	2.254	0.02	0.71	0.12
Reward power	0.121	0.053	0.157	2.275	0.02	0.66	0.12
Legitimate power	0.079	0.067	0.078	1.176	0.24	0.64	0.06
Coercive power	0.025	0.034	0.034	0.750	0.45	0.43	0.04

Notes: $R = 0.75$; $R^2 = 0.57$; $F_{(5,370)} = 97.71$; $p = 0.00$

Table II.
Regression analysis
results of predictors of
trust in administrator

power sources explained 57 percent of total variance of the teachers' trust in administrator perceptions. According to the standardized regression coefficient (β), the relative order of importance of school administrators' power sources was as follows: expert power, referent power, reward power, legitimate power and coercive power. When *t*-test results of significance of regression coefficients were considered, expert power, referent power and reward power were the predictors of trust in administrator. Legitimate and coercive power sources were not significantly influential. According to the findings, regression equity of trust in administrator perception was as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Trust in Administrator} = & 1.035 + 0.324 \text{ Expert Power} + 0.138 \text{ Referent Power} \\ & + 0.121 \text{ Reward Power} + 0.0791 \text{ Legitimate Power} \\ & + 0.025 \text{ Coercive Power} \end{aligned}$$

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between primary school administrators' power sources and teachers' organizational trust perceptions. But first, the teachers' perceptions about organizational trust and school administrators' power sources were examined.

The teachers included in the study had positive perceptions about organizational trust. The primary school teachers trusted their colleagues the most, which was followed by trust in the administrator. They trusted stakeholders the least. Trust in colleagues and trust in the administrator were high, while trust in stakeholders was about moderate level. The research findings were parallel to the results of the other studies in the literature (Özer *et al.*, 2006; Çokluk-Bökeoğlu and Yılmaz, 2008; Yılmaz, 2009). Trust in the administrator and trust in colleagues are similar in studies on state schools in Turkey. The research, in this aspect, is parallel to the studies in the literature (Özer *et al.*, 2006; Çokluk-Bökeoğlu and Yılmaz, 2008). Trust in colleagues is lower than trust in the administrator at private educational institutions (Yılmaz, 2009).

Trust in organizational life is closely related to employees' perceptions that they will not be harmed by others in interaction. High trust levels in colleagues might be the result of job guarantee in state schools. The participants of the study are not contracted teachers. Within the framework of public staff policy, public servants have job security as long as they do not commit offences that necessitate being relieved of duty in Turkey. On the other hand, contracts, a competitive atmosphere and risk of losing job in a crisis at private educational institutions may lead to distrust in colleagues. However, teachers' organizational trust levels are generally high although there are differences in trust in colleagues and trust in administrator levels. High organizational trust levels of employees may be the result of social features. The collective cultural structure of Turkey (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2006) is considered as the reason for high trust levels because, in collective cultures, trust dispositions and mutual trust between group members are higher than individualistic societies (Huff and Kelley, 2003). In collective cultures, group members are sensible to adapt and obey group norms. They see these norms as their own norms (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2006). For instance, high trust levels and citizenship behaviors of teachers at private teaching centers support the above-mentioned argument despite hard-working conditions, low-income levels (lower than the poverty threshold), and lack of job guarantee.

According to the teachers included in the study, school administrators used legitimate power, expert power and coercive power the most, and referent power and reward power the least. According to the research results in the literature (Erçetin, 1995; Üstüner, 1999; Özasan and Gürsel, 2008; Zafer, 2008), administrators use legitimate power and expert power the most, referent power and reward power the least. However, administrators need to be cautious in using their legitimate power because excessive use of power may adversely affect employees' performances, moods and relations. It is not possible to ensure employees' organizational commitment merely by legitimate power (Katz and Kahn, 1977). School administrators need to exert legitimate power in a fair way to provide and facilitate effective functioning, not as a means of imposing pressure (Altinkurt and Yılmaz, 2010).

According to Lunenberg and Ornstein (2000), legitimate power needs to be supported by expert power. According to the research findings, legitimate power is supported by expert power. Still, educational administrators need to prefer power sources such as expert power and referent power to display more leadership behaviors in order to become effective leaders instead of formal or legitimate power (Yukl, 1994; Hoy and Miskel, 2010). Yet, educational administration is not a profession in Turkey (Kaya, 1999; Şimşek, 2002). Therefore, the following two assumptions are still common in Turkey: "teaching is the main focus in the profession" and "successful teachers make good school administrators". Although "efficiency (competence) is the main requirement" in the legal procedure of administrative appointments, success in teaching and experience are the criteria in the appointments of administrators. Teachers appointed as administrators are not provided with pre-service training in educational administration in Turkey. As a result, a good knowledge of legal regulations and successful teaching are enough to become educational administrators. Hence, legitimate power is the most preferred power by school administrators. When the items in expert power in the study were examined, it was seen that the teachers considered school administrators as competent in terms of legal regulations and practices. Thus, expertise of school administrators was lowered to knowledge of regulations on a technical basis. This finding was confirmed by the similar results of the previous studies.

When administrators' power sources were considered, they were significantly correlated with the teachers' organizational trust perceptions at a moderate level. However, only referent power was the significant predictor of the teachers' organizational trust perceptions. This finding is striking because it is clear that the other power sources do not have an influence on employees' organizational trust perceptions although they are highly preferred. In the present study, school administrators' power sources explained approximately two-fifths of total variance of the teachers' organizational trust perceptions.

In this study, it was concluded that expert power, referent power and reward power of school administrators were important predictors of trust in an administrator. On the other hand, legitimate power and coercive power were not significantly influential. School administrators' power preferences explained approximately two-fifths of total variance of trust in an administrator. This finding supports the perception that employees' organizational trust perceptions are rather affected by administrators' behaviors (Hoy and Tarter, 2004) since the followers contribute to organizations when they trust leaders (Hoy and Miskel, 2010). Thus, school administrators as organizational leaders need to get their followers' trust (Hollander, 1985; Hogg *et al.*, 2005;

Hogg and Vaughan, 2007). At this point, leaders' personality traits (Tan and Tan, 2000) and expertise gain importance. Hogg and Vaughan (2007) define referent power as a disproportional force created by personality traits. As a result of the research, it was clear that expert power, referent power and reward power, also known as soft powers (Aslanargun, 2010), positively affected trust in administrator and organizational trust. Besides, research in the literature has shown that coercive power preferences have adverse effects on employees (Yücel, 1999) and that expert power and referent power increase job satisfaction and performance (Erchul *et al.*, 2001). Consequently, it could be suggested that school administrators need to prefer expert power, referent power and reward power in order to increase employees' organizational trust levels.

Conclusion

Trust is not a spontaneous perception in organizations. Administration plays an important role in creating a trust environment in the organization. Behaviors that create trust are essential for a trust environment. Administrators' behaviors are one of the main sources of organizational trust perceptions. Moreover, employees could have a tendency to generalize trust in an administrator to the organization (Erdem, 2003). The research findings also show that trust in an administrator is affected by referent power and expert power. Referent power and expert power enable administrators to display behaviors based on personality traits. In other words, employees trust administrators who display leadership behaviors more.

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