

Opinions of Education Administrators on Political Behaviors Exhibited with the Willingness to Legal Power¹

Yalçın Varol YILDIZBAŞ² Sevim ÖZTÜRK³

Article History:

Received 16.05.2023

Received in revised form 23.06.2023

Accepted

Available online

01.07.2023

A basic qualitative research model was used in this study, which aims to determine the views of educational administrators on political behaviors exhibited by the desire to gain legal power. The study group consists of 3 provincial deputy directors, 3 district directors, 6 branch managers, 11 school principals and 7 deputy principals working in Van Provincial Directorate of National Education and central districts in Turkey in the 2020-2021 academic year, using the maximum diversity sampling method. The data collection tool is a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers. As a result of the research, the participants stated that individual reasons came to the fore in the willingness to legal power, they had more social benefits, and they had a positive effect on their professional and career development. They stated that the use of power out of purpose has negative consequences, the society imposes the meaning of respect and dignity on legal power, teachers and other institution employees see it as a service authority, competence and merit are not taken as the basis, political behaviors have to be exhibited, and the criteria are not objective. Accordingly, it is recommended to consider the criteria of competence and merit in educational administration.

© IJERE. All rights reserved

Keywords: Educational administrator, legal power, willingness to power, political behavior

INTRODUCTION

Power is one of the oldest concepts in human history. The power phenomenon that directs human relations, which is at the basis of social life, has had an important place in almost all social and political developments from the earliest ages until the present. The phenomenon of power has evoked different meanings among people and throughout history, people have sought ways to acquire and retain power. In every society, having power is seen as very important and power has always been an important value (Bayrak, 2001). Power is seen as a necessary feature for all social systems and draws attention as one of the most used concepts in management (Hodgkinson, 2008).

Power is based on dependency (Dikili, 2014); even being born creates dependence on the mother, and thus dependence on someone stronger arises at the first moments of life. Adler (2012) commented that people begin to feel dependent on those who will take care of them right after they are born because of their weakness. Over time, this feeling turns into an effort to gain power by influencing people's thinking structures and all their activities.

People's perceptions of their inner power cause them to think that their own competencies and selves are different and superior to the powers in the outer world. Because of this perception, individuals do not want what they cannot have, but even if it is not internal, they can be given a power attributed to them by other people (Tutar & Tuzcuoğlu, 2016). If people have this power even once, they behave in ways which help them to try not to lose this power which they have acquired (Adler, 2011). Schwartz (1994) stated that gaining power is an important motive for people, and that power directs people's behavior in order to influence other people, to be accepted and to establish authority. According to Nietzsche, the foundation of the world is built on power. Power is an important management tool which brings people together for specific purposes and enables them to work in line with a determined purpose. The most important tool in organizations is power, and the continuity of an organization cannot be ensured without it (Bayrak, 2000). All activities in organizations are determined by the management of power relations and individuals strive to gain power in order to influence each other (Alkan & Erdem, 2019).

The concept of power as the basis of social relations is an important concept that exists in all organizations and enables an organization to realize its purpose. Power is defined as "the ability to influence the behavior of others" (Aslanargun & Eriş, 2013) and "the ability of individuals or groups to get what they want, by withholding rewards or punishing others despite resistance" (Blau, 2017).

Individuals who are involved in power struggles for resources which are scarce in nature, valuable and desired by everyone constantly compete and engage in political interactions. Therefore, the power appreciated and desired by everyone can be obtained through political behavior (Kumar & Ghadially, 1989). The concept of political behavior in organizational activities is closely related to power because the efforts of those in the organization to obtain and use power create political behaviors (Armağan, 2005). Since organizations are

¹ This study was produced from the doctoral thesis prepared by the first author under the supervision of the second author.

² Doctor, Van Provincial Directorate of National Education, yalcinvarol@hotmail.com, orcid.org/0000-0002-9134-4276

³ Assoc. Prof., İnönü University, Education Faculty, sevimozturk@inonu.edu.tr, orcid.org/0000-0002-1436-103X

political by nature, the behavior of all individuals in an organization will also be political (İslamoğlu & Börü, 2007).

It is only possible for individuals to influence those around them and to direct them in line with their own wishes if they have power and use it effectively (Bursalı, 2008). Just as air is vital for human beings, so is power at the organizational level. Individuals who hold power in organizations control other employees, can move them in the direction they want and can always get their wishes done. For this reason, people exhibit political behaviors in order to gain power, use power in the direction they want, and increase their power (Alkan & Erdem, 2019).

All the political behaviors exhibited by the managers are primarily designed to serve their own interests and then behaviors in line with the interests of the organization (Karadal, 2008). Although defining, acquiring and using power in organizations is considered important for all members of an organization, managers' awareness of political behaviors among individuals and ensuring the balance of power will prevent uncontrolled power (Erdoğan, 1997).

Political behavior is the attempt of individuals with different personalities and interests who come together for the same purpose in an organization and to influence organizational goals, decisions and people by using their power (Koçel, 2005). Political behaviors in an organization can produce positive or negative results but are always inevitable (Bursalı & Bağcı, 2011). Power and politics affect all existing organizational activities in all organizations where individuals are trying to achieve a common goal by working together. Important activities such as recruitment, purchasing, production, wages, decision making and promotion are affected by the power balance between people and their fellow employees and cause political behaviors to be observed (Erdoğan, 1997).

There have been many studies of power, the use of power and power resources in organizations (Alapo, 2018; Altinkurt & Yılmaz, 2012; Avcı, 2018; Çalışkur, 2016; Kızanlıklı et al., 2016; Scott, 2019). It is of great importance to examine the political behaviors exhibited in order to gain and increase power since power relations form the basis of organizations, affect stakeholders positively or negatively, and direct all activities of the organization. In this study, the perspectives of education administrators, who are important members of an organization and who ensure the existence of educational organizations, their desire to gain legal power, the reasons for obtaining power and the political behaviors exhibited in educational organizations in order to achieve this power are analysed. In order to achieve this, the principal research question of this study is 'What are the opinions of individuals regarding the political behaviors exhibited with the desire to gain legal power in education administration?'

The fact that there is no other study in the literature which has directly determined educational administrators' willingness to use their legal power and their views on political behavior makes the research unique and important.

METHOD

Model of the Research

For this study, a basic qualitative research model was used to determine the perceptions of specific individuals regarding the political behaviors exhibited with the desire to gain legal power in education administration. This model deals with the way people perceive, interpret and experience facts, concepts and situations and is very useful when the research is done in depth (Merriam, 2013).

Universe and Study Group

The participants in the research came from the Van Provincial Directorate of National Education and the central Edremit, İpekyolu and Tuşba District Directorates of National Education in Turkey in the 2020-2021 academic year, and there are public schools at different levels in these districts. The broader population which the respondents in the study group represented comprised 28 branch managers, 196 school principals and 547 assistant principals. The study group consisted of thirty individuals: three provincial deputy directors of national education, six branch managers and three district national education directors recruited by the maximum diversity sampling method, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods, and eleven school principals and seven deputy principals working in different school types. Demographic data of the participants in the study are given in Table 1.

Table 1. The Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

	<i>Variable</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender	Male	24	80.0
	Female	6	20.0
Education status	Graduate	18	60.0
	Postgraduate	12	40.0
Years of service	1-5 Years	3	10.0
	6-10 Years	8	26.7
	11-15 Years	6	20.0
	16 Years and Above	13	43.3
Job Title	Deputy Director of National Education	3	10.0
	District National Education Directors	3	10.0
	Branch Manager	6	20.0
	School Principal	11	36.7
	School Deputy Principal	7	23.3
Total		30	100

Table 1 shows that 24 (80%) of the participants were male and 6 (20%) were female. Eighteen (60%) participants were graduates and twelve (40%) were postgraduates. In terms of their years of service, three (10%) had 1-5 years, eight (26.7%) had 6-10 years, six (20.0%) had 11-15 years, and thirteen (43.3%) participants had sixteen years or more. Three (10%) were deputy directors of national education, three (10%) were district national education managers, six (20%) were branch managers, eleven (36%) were school principals and seven (23.3%) were deputy principals.

Data Collection Tools and Data Collection

The data for the study were collected using a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher and consisting of ten open-ended questions. The interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis and were audio-recorded with the consent of some interviewees, but written notes were made during the interviews with those participants who did not want their responses to be recorded. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes.

Analysis of the Data

The data obtained from the interviews were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis; specifically, the content analysis technique was used for interpreting the data, which involved frequency and categorical content analysis. Frequency analysis is defined as the numerical measurement of the frequency of recurrence of the examined items; categorical analysis is defined as putting statements into categories (Bilgin, 2006). In the analysis of qualitative data, primarily the activities of coding the data, forming themes, organizing codes and themes, revealing and interpreting the findings were carried out. The raw data were converted into text using the Microsoft Word text processing program. Before coding, the texts were carefully read by two researchers and the research findings were analysed separately for each question. Findings were obtained by preparing the theme-category patterns and were explained and interpreted within the framework of the themes. In order to ensure the anonymity of the respondents, codes such as DDN1, DDN2, NEG1, NEG2, BM1, BM2, SP1, SP2, DP1 and DP2 were used.

RESULTS

The acquired data were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis and organized in themes and categories to create answers to the interview questions and to support them by direct quotations from the interviewees. The first question was *Why did you want to gain legal power in this institution?* The analysis produced several reasons for wanting to obtain legal power which were categorized as 'individual', 'political', 'social' and 'economic' reasons and analysed under fourteen codes. The findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Analysis Results for Reasons for Obtaining Legal Power

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>f</i>
Reasons for obtaining legal power	Individual reasons	Personal characteristics suitable for management	6
		Have management skills	4
		Use leadership skills	3
		Use problem-solving skills	2
		Have a different perspective	2
		Achieve your goals by improving yourself	1
	Social reasons	Gain a social reputation	5
		Establish authority over others	4
		Expand your circle	3
	Political reasons	Contribute to the education system	4
		Have coercive power	4
		Liaise with top management	3
	Economic reasons	Earn financial gain	5
Raise the standard of living		4	

As Table 2 shows, 'individual reasons' came to the fore more in the participants' willingness to legal power, followed by 'social reasons', 'political reasons' and 'economic reasons'. Emphasizing individual reasons, the participants stated that their personal characteristics would be suitable for management, that they had the knowledge and skills required for management, that they could use leadership and problem-solving skills, that they had a different perspective and that they wanted to gain legal power in order to achieve their goals by improving themselves (NEG1, NEG3, BM2, BM5, BM6, SP1, SP5, DP2, DP5). Highlighting other reasons, the participants stated that they wanted to gain power for reasons such as establishing authority over others, gaining social prestige, contributing to the education system, having the power of sanction, establishing relations with senior management, gaining financially and raising the standard of living (DDN1, DDN2, DDN3, BM1, BM4, SP2, SP3, DP4, DP7). Some of the opinions of the participants regarding the reasons for obtaining legal power were as follows:

"... I felt the need to gain legal power because I had the power and ability to direct events in terms of structure, temperament and character." (BM2)

"... there is leadership in production, I like to lead and direct people." (BM5)

"... I wanted to touch the lives of the masses and reach a better tomorrow by getting support from people." (DDN2)

"... I wanted to get a wider circle and to be recognized by people at the top, both for myself and for the institution." (SP2)

"... I wanted to be secure economically and increase my standard of living." (DP7)

The second question was *In your opinion, what is the official procedure for obtaining legal power in educational organizations today, what procedures were you subjected to while taking office?* As a result of the analysis, the methods of obtaining legal power were categorized as 'assignment' and 'appointment' and were examined under five codes. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of Analysis Regarding the Method of Obtaining Legal Power

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>f</i>
Method of obtaining legal power	Assignment method	By written exam and interview	10
		Direct governor's assignment	6
		By written exam	5
	Appointment method	By ministerial appointment	5
		By written exam and interview	4

In Table 3, it can be seen that the majority of the participants (n=21) had been appointed by the assignment method and that the rest (n=9) by the appointment method. It was found that among the education

administrators participating in the research, those with the status of school principal and deputy principal (SP2, SP5, SP7, SP8, DP2, DP4, DP5, DP6, DP8) had generally appointed by the assignment method and that those from provincial and district national education directorates and branch managers (DDN1, DDN2, DDN3, NEG1, NEG2, NEG3, BM1, BM2, BM3, BM4, BM5, BM6) had been appointed by the appointment method. It can be seen that the use of the assignment method was mostly based on written exams and interviews and direct governor assignment, and that for the appointment method, ministerial appointment as well as a written exam and interview were taken as the basis. Some of the views of the participants on the method of obtaining legal power were as follows:

“... I came to management firstly by passing the management exam and then through an interview.” (SP2)

“... I first took the written exam to become a manager. With the score I got, I was first assigned for four years and then for another four years according to the evaluation chart (DP4)

“... since I was successful in my previous duties, I was appointed to the duty with the approval of the Ministry in accordance with the relevant legislation of the Ministry.” (NEG1)

“... I won the Promotion Examination and attended an interview. Later, I was appointed by the Ministry as a branch manager.” (BM1)

The third interview question was *Did you have to use (forced) methods outside of the official procedures when you were appointed to this task, or do you have any information or hear about other people trying informal methods?* Analysis of the responses showed that the political behaviors exhibited while gaining legal power were ‘acting hypocritically’, ‘trying to befriend the senior management’, ‘trying to get favors’, ‘not exhibiting political behavior’, ‘forming a coalition’, ‘seeking mutual interests’ and ‘behaving conciliatory’ and were grouped under eleven codes. The findings are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Analysis Results Regarding Political Behaviors Exhibited while Obtaining Legal Power

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>f</i>
Political behaviors exhibited while obtaining legal power	Acting two-faced	Show yourself different	8
		Disrupt the task when there is no manager	4
		Act contrary to what he speaks	2
	Trying to benefit from the senior management	Use the senior management	6
		Try to get the appreciation of superiors	5
	Grandstand play	Try to appear successful	5
		Behave close to the managers	3
	Not exhibiting political Behavior	Avoid political behavior	4
	Forming a coalition	Seek support from the environment in the problems experienced	2
	Seeking mutual interest	To help by waiting in return	1
	Being compromising	To engage in favoritism	1

The findings set out in Table 4 show that the behavior of ‘acting two-faced’ stands out among the behaviors exhibited in the effort to gain legal power. This was followed by behaviors such as ‘try to benefit from the senior management’, ‘grandstand play’, ‘not exhibiting political behavior’, ‘form a coalition’, ‘seeking mutual benefits’ and ‘be compromising’. Most of the participants stated that they had exhibited behaviors of showing themselves as different from what they are, failing a task when the manager is not present, and acting contrary to what they say (DDN1, DDN3, BM3, BM4, SP4, SP8, DP3, DP7). Some of them stated that they had used the senior management, tried to win the appreciation of their superiors, tried to appear successful, behaved close to the managers, sought support from the environment in the problems experienced, helped by waiting in return and engaged in favoritism (DDN2, NEG3, BM1, BM6, SP2, SP9, DP1, DP4). Some participants stated that they did not indulge in any political behavior (BM2, SP1, DP2, DP5). Some of the views of the participants regarding the political behaviors exhibited while obtaining legal power were as follows:

“... Unfortunately, there are those who try to come to the job by using reference channels, especially in the interview system. In order to be a manager, they seek support from the upper levels and try to show themselves differently.” (DDN1)

“... for my part, I did not use a different method other than the appointment regulation. I know those who want to get support from the environment without using official means, those who show themselves differently than they are and then fail.” (SP4)

“... I witnessed the situations of getting help from senior management and using reference channels, especially in interviews.” (NEG3)

“... I didn't use any other method, and I don't think anyone else stepped outside official procedures either.” (DP2)

The fourth interview question was *How do you evaluate the conditions (criteria) applied in terms of obtaining legal power today? Do you think these criteria are objective, are equal opportunity, competence and merit criteria taken into account in giving authority?* The analysis showed that the criteria taken into account when seeking legal power could be categorized as positive and negative practices and were specified in eight codes. The findings are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Analysis Results Regarding the Criteria Considered while Obtaining Legal Power

Theme	Category	Code	f
Criteria considered while obtaining legal power	Negative practices	Not being objective	19
		Disregard for merit	19
		Ignoring competency	19
		Failure to provide equal opportunity	19
	Positive practices	Being objective	11
		Consideration of merit	11
		Consideration of competence	11
		Ensuring equal opportunity	11

As the findings set out in Table 5 show, more negative practices were mentioned by the interviewees than positive practices. Most of the participants stated that the criteria for obtaining legal power were not objective and there were more negative practices, such as the failure to provide equality of opportunity, and competence and merit not being taken as a basis for promotion (NEG2, NEG3, BM1, BM4, SP3, SP10, DP1, DP5). Some participants, however, reported positive practices (DDN1, NEG1, BM3, BM5, SP1, SP9, DP4, DP7) such as being objective with the regulations, the decisions taken and the work done, ensuring equality of opportunity, and basing decisions on competence and merit. Some of the opinions of the participants regarding the criteria taken into account while gaining legal power were as follows:

“... today we cannot say that the criteria for giving legal power are 100% objective. Unfortunately, the problems regarding equal opportunities, competence and merit are not to be underestimated.” (NEG2)

“... I think it is not objective, especially the interview somehow obliges people to be members of unions and other organizations, and there is no fair assignment regulation on equal opportunities, merit and competence.” (BM1)

“... I think the criteria are not objective. It is not enough to be more educated and successful; the principles of merit and competence are not respected.” (DP1)

“... even though there is some good progress, it is not possible to be objective enough, it would be much better if the criteria of merit and proficiency were taken as the basis.” (DP5)

“... even though there are some problems in these criteria from time to time, I find the criteria objective most of the time, I think that everyone is equal and that competence and merit are the basis.” (SP9)

“... the criteria for obtaining legal power are bound to a certain form, as long as this form is adhered to, it will be objective and equal opportunity will be protected. Merit and competence are taken into account.” (DP7)

The fifth interview question was *Do you think that legal power benefits the individual socially, politically and economically? If your answer is yes, would you please indicate what these benefits are?* The analysis of the responses showed that the benefits of gaining legal power could be categorized as social, political and economic and were gathered under nine codes. The findings are given in Table 6.

Table 6. Analysis Results of the responses on the Benefits of Obtaining Legal Power

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>f</i>
Benefits of obtaining legal power	Socially beneficial	Build a social circle	7
		Become more recognizable	5
		Obtain a social reputation	3
		Be respected	3
	Politically beneficial	Obtain political power	5
		Contribute to education policy	5
		Communicate with senior managers more frequently	3
		Economically beneficial	Increase financial income
		Raise the standard of living	4

The findings set out in Table 6 show that the respondents thought that there were more social benefits from obtaining legal power than political and economic benefits. Most of the participants stated that gaining legal power has more social benefits such as building a social circle, becoming more recognizable, obtaining a social reputation and being respected (DDN2, NEG1, NEG3, BM1, BM5, SP6, SP9, DP6, DP7), whereas others stated that they had benefits such as obtaining political power, contributing to education policy, communicating with senior managers more frequently, increasing their income and increasing their standard of living (DDN1, NEG2, BM2, BM4, SP2, SP11, DP1, DP4). Some of the opinions of the participants regarding the benefits of obtaining legal power were as follows:

"... yes, I usually see the benefits. In particular, it increases your social reputation, provides recognition, political environment and economic contribution. (DDN2)

"... as of my current position, the quality of the knowledge and skills I have on individuals are evaluated by the employees and they respond to me positively. In this case, I get more dignity and respect." (BM1)

"... it makes it easier for me to stay in touch with managers from different segments of society and allows me to participate in political decisions." (DDN1)

"... I can say that it had economic and social benefits, it helped me increase my income and have a better social environment." (DP6)

The sixth interview question was *Do you think that legal power has effects on the professional and career development of the individual?* After the analysis, the effects of legal power on professional and career development were categorized as positive effects and no effect and were specified under four codes. The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Analysis Results for the Effects of Legal Power on Professional and Career Development

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>f</i>
Effects of legal power on professional and career development	Positive effects	Providing professional development	23
		Ensuring career advancement	23
	No effect	Not affecting professional development	7
		Not affecting career development	7

Table 7 shows that the perceived positive effects of legal power on professional and career development were considerably more than no effect. Most of the participants stated that obtaining legal power has positive effects on individuals' professional development and advancement in their careers (DDN1, DDN3, NEG2, BM1, BM2, BM5, SP5, SP8, DP1, DP6) whereas some stated that professional and career development depends on the characteristics of the individual and that the legal power obtained does not affect this much (SP3, SP10, DP3, DP4). Some of the views of the participants on the effects of legal power on professional and career development were as follows:

"... as the circle addressed by individuals will expand and their mobility in the institution will increase, they will want to improve themselves; in this case, they will progress in their career and develop themselves professionally." (DDN1)

“... certainly the legal power gained by the individual contributes to his professional and career development.” (BM2)

“... legal power contributes positively to professional development, because this way, the individual will be able to stay and advance in the profession.” (SP5)

“... yes, professionally developing individuals can have the opportunity to further this with the legal power they have acquired.” (DP6)

“... for professional and career development, it is necessary to give broader powers and receive the necessary training, so I do not think that legal power has much effect.” (SP10)

“... I think that an individual’s professional and career development is not related to legal power.” (DP4)

The seventh interview question was *Are there any negative effects of legal power on the individual? If so, what could they be?* The analysis showed that the effects of legal power on the individual could all be categorized as negative effects listed under five codes. The results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Analysis Results on the Negative Effects of Legal Power on Individuals

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>f</i>
Effects of legal power on individuals	Negative effects	Use of power out of purpose	14
		Harm to society and the individual	12
		Influencing an individual's psychology	12
		Making decision making difficult	5
		Disrupting personal relationships	3

The findings set out in Table 8 show that the negative effects of legal power on the individual were regarded as the ‘use of power out of purpose’, ‘harm to society and the individual’, ‘influencing an individual's psychology’, ‘making decision making difficult’ and ‘disrupting personal relationships’.

The majority of the participants stated that the use of the legal power obtained by individuals for their own benefit other than their job purpose might harm both themselves and the society, that the negative decisions taken might negatively affect the psychology of the individuals and this could disrupt personal relations (DDN1, NEG1, BM1, BM2, SP5, SP3, SP7, DP4, DP10). Some of the views of the participants on the negative effects of legal power on the individual were as follows:

“... if the individual uses the power he has obtained in a negative way, it will have a very negative effect, but this situation is in the hands of the individual.” (NEG1)

“... those who are drunk with power can use their authority in any direction they want, against its purpose.” (BM6)

“... by misusing his power, the individual can harm himself and his environment, experience more stress and anxiety and become overwhelmed by the workload.” (SP3)

“... yes, it can have many negative effects; a manager who uses his power contrary to expectations may experience anxiety and inadequacy.” (DP10)

The eighth research question was *In your opinion, what is the meaning and value that society ascribes to legal power?* The responses showed that the meaning that society attaches to legal power could be categorized as a social perspective and were gathered under four codes. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Analysis Results Regarding the Meaning that Society Attaches to Legal Power

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>f</i>
The meaning that society attaches to legal power	Social perspective	Respect and reputation	16
		Competent authority	12
		Service authority	11
		Worthless	4

Table 9 shows that the meaning attributed to legal power from the social perspective was gathered under the codes of ‘respect and reputation’, ‘competent authority’, ‘service authority’ and ‘worthless’. Most of the participants stated that those who hold legal power are respected, seen as holding an important position where

problems are resolved, and that service is always expected from those with legal power (DDN2, NEG2, BM1, BM4, BM5, SP1, SP4, DP3, DP10). Some interviewees also stated that individuals with legal power cannot see the desired value in society (SP2, SP8, DP4, DP7). Some of the views of the participants on the meaning which society ascribes to legal power were as follows:

“... it is loaded with more meaning than it should be, it is seen as an authority and respected.” (DDN2)

“... legal power in society is seen as commanding and authoritative, while everyone respects those in authority more.” (BM4)

“... as it is the place where the problems are solved and the service is provided, the respect expected from the environment is shown.” (DP10)

“... I think that people with legal power are not valued much and there is no old point of view in society.” (SP8)

The ninth interview question was *In your opinion, what is the meaning and value attributed to legal power by teachers and other employees in the institution?* The responses showed that the meaning attributed to legal power by teachers and other employees in the field of education was categorized as ‘corporate overview’ and gathered under four codes. The results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Analysis Results Regarding the Understanding of Legal Power by Teachers and Other Institution Employees

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>f</i>
The understanding of legal power by teachers and other institution employees	Corporate overview	Service authority	14
		Competent authority	12
		Respect and reputation	11
		Worthless	4

Table 10 shows that the meaning ascribed to legal power by teachers and other employees in education were identified under the headings of ‘service authority’, ‘competent authority’, ‘respect and reputation’ and ‘worthless’.

The majority of the participants stated that teachers and other employees expect service from those who hold legal power and that management is seen as an important position gathering respect and reputation (DDN2, NEG1, NEG3, BM2, BM5, SP5, SP11, DP2, DP6); some of them, however, stated that they could not see the desired value (SP2, SP8, DP4, DP7). Some of the views of the teachers and other education employees regarding the meaning attributed to legal power were as follows:

“... since we have great responsibility, they see it as a solution point for problems and expect service.” (NEG3)

“... as they are considered as the representative of the Ministry in the institution, they respect and always expect service.” (BM5)

“... teachers and all employees show the necessary respect and expect administrators to be the ones who produce solutions to the problems they experience.” (DP2)

“... I think that since there are those who cannot fulfill their duties within the framework of expectations, they cannot see the expected value and it does not make much sense for the employees.” (SP2)

The tenth interview question was *If you compare your desire to obtain legal power with the benefits it provides you, how would you explain this experience?* Their responses showed that the benefits provided by the willingness to legal power could be categorized as ‘benefits of power’ and were listed under four codes. The results are shown in Table 11.

Table 11. Analysis Results Regarding the Benefits Provided by a Willingness for Legal Power

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>f</i>
Benefits provided by a willingness for legal power	The benefits of legal power	Increasing responsibility	14
		Raising awareness of responsibility	12
		Gaining a different perspective	12
		Ensuring reaching the goal	9

Table 11 shows that the interviewees' views on the benefits provided by the willingness for legal power could be grouped under the headings of 'increasing responsibility', 'raising awareness of responsibility', 'gaining a different perspective' and 'ensuring reaching the goal'.

The participants stated that they felt more responsibilities with the legal power obtained; this develops a sense of responsibility and enables them to look at events from a different perspective, and that the obtained legal power is a tool for achieving goals (DDN3, NEG2, BM1, BM2, BM4, SP6, SP10, DP1, DP7). Some of the views of the participants on the benefits of the willingness to acquire legal power were as follows:

"... after gaining legal power, people's expectations increase your responsibilities and you gain a sense of responsibility." (NEG2)

"... I have used my powers within the framework of legal regulations and laws during my time as a manager. I think this situation imposes more responsibilities on me and I am aware of my responsibilities." (BM1)

"... legal power also imposes responsibility. This responsibility increases my determination to work and enables me to do what I want to do within the legal regulations." (BM4)

"... it creates stress and anxiety as it's a lot of responsibility and a much riskier task, but it improves me." (SP6)

"... the achieved status increases the workload and brings responsibility. As your status increases, so do your responsibilities." (DP7)

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

In this study, the opinions of the participants regarding the political behaviors exhibited by individuals in their desire to gain legal power in education administration were gathered and explored. The results showed that individual reasons were more prominent in the participants' desire to gain legal power, followed by political, social and economic reasons. It was determined that the 'assignment' method was mostly used in being appointed as an education administrator, and that the 'appointment' method was also used for some posts.

The participants stated that when they were appointed as education administrators, behaviors such as 'acting two-faced', 'trying to be helpful to the senior management', 'trying to get favors', 'forming a coalition', 'seeking mutual interests' and 'behaving in a compromising way' were exhibited and the majority of them expressed a negative opinion that competence and merit were not taken as a basis for obtaining legal power, the criteria were not objective and equality of opportunity was not provided. Some of them, however, stated that these factors were taken into account.

Another result obtained from the findings was that the participants believed that legal power provides more social benefits than political and economic benefits. Although the majority of the education administrators stated that acquiring legal power positively affects the professional and career development of individuals and their progress in their careers, some of them stated that professional and career development depends on the characteristics of the individual and that any legal power acquired does not affect this much.

The participants were asked for their views on the meaning which society, colleagues and other employees in the field of education ascribed to legal power. Some of them attributed positive meanings such as respect and reputational authority, a problem resolution center, a service office and a source of organizational leadership, whereas others expressed a negative opinion that the value of education administration in society in general is gradually decreasing.

When the participants were asked about their experience in terms of the desire to obtain legal power and the benefits of power, they said that legal power gives them a sense of responsibility and a different perspective and enables them to reach their goals and expectations, and added that this duty also increases their responsibility and workload. The findings obtained from this study are congruent with those of Armağan (2005), Closson (2001), Çavuş and Harbalıoğlu (2016), Greene and Elffers (2005), Hassenboehler (2004), Liu and Fang (2006) and Schulman (1989) but differed from those reported by Aydın (2015), Gandz and Murray (1980), Kuru (2017), Okur (2019), Oruç (2015) and Turabik (2019). Greene and Elffers (2005) and Liu & Fang (2006) had found that people want to have more power due to their personal characteristics, whereas Hassenboehler (2004) and Schulman (1989) both found that that legal power is more demanded because of the benefits it provides. The finding in the current study about the meaning attributed to legal power is similar to those reported by Altınkurt and Yılmaz (2012) and Zafer (2008), who found that the society ascribes meanings

to legal power such as respect and dignity, an important position and a service position, and therefore that education administrators tend to use this power more than other types of power.

The findings related to political behaviors exhibited in the attempt to obtain legal power were compared with similar research findings that political behaviors are caused by personal qualities rather than organizational characteristics (Armağan, 2005) and are exhibited for the purpose of gaining power and thus affect career success at a high level (Judge & Bretz, 1992), and behaviors such as negotiation, rational persuasion and trying to obtain favors are encountered in organizations (Yukl & Falbe, 1990). In educational organizations, people mostly use the behavior of seeking support for their own ideas and blaming others (Kaya, 2014), and education administrators use rational persuasion and negotiation methods the most, and the tactics of asking and exerting pressure the least (Closson, 2001).

Based on the findings and results obtained from this study, it can be said that although the power of expertise should be given importance due to the function of educational organizations, attributing more value and opportunity to legal power increases the willingness of individuals to obtain legal power. For this reason, it should be taken as a basis to increase the gains based on competence and merit by ensuring the gains in legal power as well as in the power of expertise. Future studies could be carried out in order to enable those who have just started in the teaching profession, those with less professional seniority, those who work at different education levels and those who have postgraduate education to act as education administrators, and the criteria of competence and merit should be taken into account by providing equal opportunity in making appointments. In this context, the criteria of competence and merit in being appointed as an educational administrator should be clear, objective and transparent. It should be ensured that all levels of status in education administration should be included in the general administrative services class, and that appointments should be based on merit and positions in education administration should be strengthened. This research is limited to the opinions of Van Provincial Directorate of National Education and central District National Education Directorates and the education administrators working in public schools in these districts.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest

No potential conflicts of interest were disclosed by the authors with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

Ethics Approval

The formal ethics approval was granted by the Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Ethics Committee of İnönü University.

Funding

No specific grant was given to this research by funding organizations in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Research and Publication Ethics Statement

The study was approved by the university ethics committee of the İnönü University (Date/Number: 27.01.2021/07).

Contribution Rates of Authors to the Article

This article was produced from the doctoral thesis titled 'The willingness to legal power in education management resolution in the context of political behaviors exhibited'.

REFERENCES

- Adler, A. (2012). *Children's education*. (Trans. K. Şipal). Istanbul: Cem Publishing House.
- Alapo, R. (2018). Organizational power politics and leadership experiences on the view and use of power in organizations. *Management*, (1), 30-36. doi: 10.17265/2328-2185/2018.01.003
- Alkan, A., & Erdem, R. (2019). Power: A conceptual view of formal and informal power. *Süleyman Demirel University Visionary Journal*, 10(24), 405-433. <https://doi.org/10.21076/vizyoner.472535>
- Altinkurt, Y., & Yılmaz, K. (2012). The relationship between the power sources used by school administrators and teachers' organizational citizenship behaviors. *Educational Sciences in Theory and Practice: Theory and Practice*, 12(3), 1833-1852. https://silo.tips/queue/okul-yneticilerinin-kulland-g-kaynaklar-ile-retmenlerin-rgtsel-vatandalk-davranl?&queue_id=-1&v=1687520659&u=NzguMTczLjcuMTkw

- Armağan, A. (2005). Analysis of organizational political behavior: An application in İzmir print media. *Journal of Management and Economics Studies*, 3(4), 91-107. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/yea d/issue/21827/234619>
- Aslanargun, E., & Eriş, H. M. (2013). The scale development of power sources that lecturers' applied in class management at higher education. *Journal of Atatürk University Institute of Social Sciences*, 17(2), 207-220. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/32399>
- Avcı, A. (2018). The effects of intra-organizational policies and power practices. *Digital Economy*, 56(2), 1-13. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327201222_ORGUT_ICI_POLITIKALAR_VE_GUC_UYG_ULAMALARININ_ETKILERI_Avci_A_2018_Dijital_Ekonomi_56_2_0-0_Retrieved_from_httpdergi_parkgovtrdijitalissue_38894395790
- Aydın, M. A. (2015). *The relationship between classroom teachers' perceptions of organizational opposition, organizational politics and political behavior*. Master Thesis, Abant İzzet Baysal University, Institute of Educational Sciences, Bolu.
- Bayrak, S. (2000). Power and power management as a matter of neglect in management, I. *Süleyman Demirel University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences*, 5(2), 21-34. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/sduiibfd/issue/20851/223599>
- Bayrak, S. (2001). Power and power management as a matter of neglect in management, II. *Süleyman Demirel University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences*, 5(2), 21-34. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/sduiibfd/issue/20850/223581>
- Bilgin, N. (2006). *Content analysis techniques and case studies in social sciences*. Ankara: Political Bookstore.
- Blau, P. M. (2017). *Exchange and power in social life*. Routledge.
- Bursalı, Y. M. (2008). *The functioning of organizational politics: Relationships between organizational policy perception and political behavior*. Doctoral Thesis, Dokuz Eylül University Social Sciences Institute, İzmir.
- Bursalı, Y. M., & Bağcı, Z. (2011). The interrelationships between employees' perceptions of organizational policy and their political behaviors. *Pamukkale University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, 9, 23-41. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/pausbed/issue/34721/383879>
- Closson, R. K. (2001). *Faculty evaluation of leadership styles and influence tactics of northern California collegedeans*. Doctoral Thesis, University of the Pacific, California.
- Çalışkur, A. (2016). Power fact and using power in organizations. *Çankırı Karatekin University Journal of the Institute of Social Sciences*, 7(1), 29-48. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/jiss/issue/25889/272748>
- Çavuş, M., & Harbalıoğlu, M. (2016). Manager's perception of power sources and organizational citizenship behavior: A research on accommodation businesses. *Niğde University Journal of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences*, 9(1), 117-130. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/niguiibfd/issue/19761/211553>
- Dikili, A. (2014). The concept of power in organizations: A comparative analysis of the perspectives of critical management studies and the Resource Dependency Approach. *Journal of Management Sciences*, 12(23), 141-164. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/comuybd/issue/43591/533731>
- Fromm, E. (1990). *To have or to be*. Istanbul: Aritan Publishing House.
- Gandz, J., & Murray, V. V. (1980). The experience of workplace politics. *Academy of Management Journal*, 23(2), 237-251. <https://doi.org/10.2307/255429>
- George, D., & Mallery, P. (2016). *IBM SPSS statistics 26 steps by step: A simple guide and reference*. Routledge .
- Greene, R., & Elffers, J. (2005). *48 laws of power*. 5th Edition, Istanbul: Gold Books.
- Hassenboehler, D. (2004). *The exercise of power by high school principal*. Doctoral Thesis, New Orleans: University of New Orleans.
- Hodgkinson, C. (2008). *Management philosophy*. (Trans. Ed. İ. Anıl ve B. Doğan). İstanbul: Propedia Publications.
- İslamoğlu, G., & Börü, D. (2007). Political behavior dimensions: A scale development study. *Journal of Akdeniz University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences*, 7(14), 135-153. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/auuibfd/issue/32316/359111>
- Judge, T. A & Bretz, R. D. (1992). Political influence behavior and career success. *Journal of Management*, 20(1), 43-65. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639402000103>

- Karadal, H. (2008). *Political behavior and tactics in organizations*. (Ed. M. Özdevecioğlu and H. Karadal). Selected topics in organizational behavior: Dark aspects of organizations and counterproductive behaviors (p. 1-20). Ankara: İlke Publishing House.
- Kızanlıklılı, M. M., Koç, H. ve Kılıçlar, A. (2016). A conceptual study on organizational power and sources of power. *Journal of Business Research-Turk* , 8(4), 488-504. DOI: 10.20491/isarder.2016.229
- Koçel, T. (2005). *Business management*. (10th Edition). Istanbul: Arıkan Publishing and Distribution.
- Kumar, P. & Ghadially, R. (1989). Organizational politics and its effects on members of organizations. *Human Relations*, 42(4), 305-314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872678904200402>
- Kuru, B. (2017). *Interaction of perceived ethical leadership, political behavior and organizational trust: A study on teachers in public schools in Tuzla (Istanbul) district*. Master Thesis, Istanbul University Institute of Social Sciences, Istanbul.
- Liu, A. M. & Fang, Z. (2006). A power-based leadership approach to project management. *Construction Management and Economics*, 24(5), 497-507. DOI: 10.1080/01446190600567944
- Merriam, S. B. (2013). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. (Trans. Ed. S. Turan). Ankara: Nobel.
- Mintzberg, H. (1985). The organization as political arena. *Journal of Management Studies*, 22(2), 133-154. DOI:10.1111/j.1467-6486.1985.tb00069.x
- Okur, A. (2019). *Evaluation of the interaction of positive psychological capital, political behavior and organizational cynicism in public organizations: An application in Erzurum vocational and technical Anatolian high schools*. Master Thesis, Atatürk University Institute of Social Sciences, Erzurum.
- Oruç, E. (2015). *The effect of positive psychological capital on political behavior: A study on academics*. Doctoral Thesis, Sakarya University Institute of Social Sciences, Sakarya.
- Schulman, J. M. (1989). *Power behavior, job satisfaction and leadership effect in public school principal*. Doctoral Thesis, University of Bridgeport.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1994). Are there universal aspects in the structure and contents of human values? *Journal of Social Issues*, 50, 19-45. DOI:10.1111/J.1540-4560.1994.TB01196.X
- Scott, A. (2019). Power through politics: The means of organizational leadership. SSRN, 1-15. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3480858
- Turabik, T. (2019). *The relationship between organizational democracy and political behaviors in higher education organizations*. Doctoral Thesis, Hacettepe University, Institute of Educational Sciences, Ankara.
- Tutar, H., & Tuzcuoğlu, F. (2016). Will to power and desire for grandeur: An evaluation on symbolic cities. *Süleyman Demirel University Journal of Social Sciences Institute, CIEP*, 656-672. <https://sbedergi.sdu.edu.tr/assets/uploads/sites/343/files/sosyal-bilimler-enstitusu-dergisi-2016-sayiciep-ozel-sayisi-17012017.pdf>
- Yukl, G., & Falbe, C. M. (1990). influence tactics and objectives in upward, downward, and lateral influence attempts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75(2), 132-140. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.75.2.132>
- Zafer, D. (2008). *Teachers' views on organizational power sources used by primary school administrators*. Master Thesis, Sakarya University Institute of Social Sciences, Sakarya.