

## **Insights into Ethical Climate and Teacher Behavioral Outcomes**

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### **Abstract:**

*The aim of this study is to provide insight into ethical climate in schools through examining teachers' perceptions and thus understanding how ethical climate occurs and makes an influence on teachers. A qualitative study was designed employing 19 in-depth interviews with teachers in public and private elementary schools in İzmir. Inductive constant comparison method was used for the analysis. School principals appeared as the most important factor shaping the ethical climate through role-modelling. Caring and rules climates lead to positive outcomes such as increase in organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviors and retention, while instrumental climate negatively affects them. Findings indicate the critical role of school principals having strong ethical-ground and building trust-based relationships with teachers. The originality of the study lies in offering insights about how either a positive or negative ethical climate occurs and makes an influence on teachers' attitudes and behaviors through the teachers' voices.*

**Keywords:** *School Ethical Climate, Organizational Citizenship Behaviors, School Leadership, Trust*



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## INTRODUCTION

The era that we live in can be characterized by the necessity to adapt to the unabated technological advances, many accounts of ethical scandals pervading the business world and human greed consuming the planet. In this frantic world, the mission of educational institutions and the skills that they must cultivate in students are highly debatable. Soft skills like creativity and technological skills required in new trends like machine learning are highly emphasized. We expect and assume that today's youth will make vital decisions - with tomorrow's technological possibilities - about the increasing human population, depleted resources and the future of our planet. The question is are we equipping them with the necessary ethical foundations? In response to this need, educational policymakers have started to incorporate ethics into the curriculum. However, ethics is a concept that cannot be solely learned through courses, but internalized by living and experiencing. Thus, creating and maintaining an ethical climate is vital for schools. An ethical climate (EC) is needed for effective teaching and learning, and avoiding ambiguity as to what constitutes right and wrong behavior (Luo, Huang and Najjar, 2007). Therefore, all human relations – involving students, teachers, families, administrators, staff, and community – play an important role in schools, and instruction in how to develop supportive relationships is 'as essential a skill as math and reading' (Noonan, 2004, p.65). Besides, the impact of creating a positive EC is not limited to students, it also influences teachers' work attitudes and behaviors in a positive way. Research shows that when teachers perceive that they are surrounded by a positive EC (caring, just, rule-based etc.), they feel safer and trust-based relationship with the management is improved. Therefore, their commitment to school will increase, which leads them to show more extra-role behaviors (Huang, You and Tsai, 2012), and less withdrawal behaviors (Rosenblatt, Shapira-Lishchinsky and Shirom, 2010). All these relationships make EC a managerial tool to promote desired organizational outcomes in schools.

Despite a rich array of studies on ethics and ethical education in schools (e.g. Campbell, 2004; Colnerud, 2015), a specific focus on school ethical climate remains limited. As EC research is extremely important in school contexts, with significant positive influences on teachers' trust, commitment and motivation (Özen and Durkan, 2016) and development of students' ethical reasoning, a more profound understanding of the key tenets of EC is needed. Therefore, in this qualitative research, we aim to reveal stories about how EC -either positive or negative- occurs and makes an influence on students, teachers and school effectiveness.

In Victor and Cullen's (1988) seminal study, ethical climate was defined as the shared perceptions of 'ethically correct' behavior, which guide members of the organization while dealing with ethical issues. These researchers proposed a theoretical typology of EC, and subsequently conducted empirical analyses of their conceptual framework, which revealed five EC types existing in organizations: caring, rules, law-and-code, instrumental and independence. Since the framework was put forward, numerous studies have been conducted on perceived EC types (e.g. Simha and Cullen, 2012). However, the extant research carried out mainly in business organizations do not appear to have suggested conclusive results due to the diversity of organizations investigated.

Like all organizations, schools constitute ethical environments in which they promote certain attitudes and behaviors. In schools, EC serves as a perceptual lens through which school members identify potential ethical issues and solve ethical problems (Shapira-Lishchinsky and Raftar-Ozery, 2018). As such, EC has an effect on both the decision-making and subsequent behavior in response to ethical issues.

One of the five distinct climate types propounded by Victor and Cullen (1988) is the caring climate, which is characterized by the organization being concerned about the good of all in the organization, and expecting each to do what is right for the stakeholders. In schools, caring climate might involve concern for slow learners, respect for students' privacy, and attention to the needs of teachers (Rosenblatt and Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2017). Perceived caring climate in organizations is associated with positive outcomes such as effectiveness and

frequency of exhibiting ethical behaviors (Barnett and Vaicys, 2000). Schools are social living spaces where strong interpersonal relations and various communication patterns are generally observed. As such, perception of caring climate is expected to have a remarkable impact on teachers' morale and happiness. Research shows that a lack of caring climate increases absenteeism (Rosenblatt, Shapira-Lishchinsky and Shirom, 2010), burnout (Lavian, 2012) and intent to leave (Shapira-Lishchinsky and Rosenblatt 2009b).

The law-and-code climate is depicted as a climate in which people are expected to strictly follow legal and professional standards above all other considerations (Victor and Cullen, 1988). Another type of EC which was found to be closely associated with the law-and-code climate is the rules climate. The rules climate emphasizes organizational rules and procedures, with which employees are expected to conform (Victor and Cullen, 1988). In schools with a rules climate, policies, rules and professional codes of conduct are strongly emphasized, and teachers regulate their behavior by referring to those. Therefore, quality of decisions which incorporate ethical concerns increases (Barnett and Vaicys, 2000). Rosenblatt and Peled (2002) suggested 'formal climate' as a combination of rules, and law-and-code climate types in schools, which is based on clear, standard and transparent procedures and rules. This formal climate, which they renamed as 'formality', is a climate of compliance with professional and social codes and regulations (Rosenblatt and Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2017). Özen and Durkan (2016) also suggested that teachers' professional ethical principles are affected by their EC perceptions and rules climate was found to be the dominant one in many schools.

The instrumental climate is characterized by employees who are expected to do their utmost to further the organization's interests, regardless of the consequences (Victor and Cullen, 1988). Generally, people in an instrumental climate prioritize their own interests and personal benefits. In organizations with an instrumental climate, there are norms and expectations which encourage ethical decision-making from an egoistic perspective (Martin and Cullen, 2006). Individuals in such climates may take actions that would benefit the organization as a whole, but lack a moral basis for their reasoning. Or, they may be motivated to engage in self-serving behaviors despite the possible harm these behaviors would have on the other members (Armstrong and Francis, 2008). This egoistic approach does not seem to be congruent with the mission of school organizations, as schools provide the ground for developing students' moral values and ethical behaviors. Therefore, adults in schools are expected to model ethical behavior and practices for students' moral development through their daily interactions. Schools are also social communities where close human relationships and collaboration are considered essential. However, in instrumental climates, competition prevails over cooperation (Peterson, 2002), which may lead to unhealthy relationships and lack of team spirit and cooperation within the school.

Organizations are composed of individuals who are expected to comply with organizational rules and procedures; however, individuals also have their own personal moral beliefs and values that guide their decision-making. Thus, the last type of EC, the independence climate, allows employees to decide what is right and wrong for themselves. As such, people are guided by their own personal ethics (Victor & Cullen, 1990). In a recent study, Peng and Wei (2019) suggested that independence climate enables organization members to express their views openly and frankly, and therefore, allow for honest communication in the workplace. This, on the other hand, is dependent on the quality of the relationships in organizations and requires a great deal of trust on the part of management.

Being rather complex organizations, schools require careful scrutiny for a full insight into the existing climate. The present study aims to contribute to the understanding of schools' ethical climate, which could potentially influence teachers' behavioural outcomes. The originality of the study lies in offering insights about how either a positive or negative ethical climate occurs and makes an influence on teachers' attitudes and behaviours through the teachers' voices.

## METHOD

Despite the recent popularity of ethics in business organizations, and a plethora of evidence that indicates positive organizational outcomes of EC, there is scant research on EC in schools. The aim of this qualitative study is to provide insight into EC in schools through the examination of teachers' perceptions. Learning and analyzing teachers' experiences and stories, we attempted to have a deeper understanding on the topic and to provide practical perspectives and advice to educational policy makers. Thus, the study addressed the following questions:

1. What are the teachers' perceptions of ethical climate in their schools?
2. What are the factors influencing ethical climate in schools, according to teachers' perceptions?
3. What are the possible affective, behavioral and organizational reflections of school ethical climate?

A qualitative study was designed as it aims to obtain deeper understanding of the topic at hand (Guba and Lincoln, 1994), and to reach deeper insights into EC with its antecedents and reflections in schools. Interview method was chosen since it can provide richer, more detailed information (Boyce and Neale, 2006). A total of 19 interviews were conducted. Research was carried out in Izmir, the third largest city of Turkey, with a population of around 4 million (<http://www.izmir.gov.tr/istatistiklerle-izmir>), as it was hometown to the research team.

**Participants:** Purposive sampling, widely utilized in qualitative research, was used in the study, i.e. participants were selected according to predetermined criteria that serve the research aims (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The sample size was determined by the data: Interviews were conducted until the data reached saturation (Morse, 1995). The sample was carefully selected to ensure diversity and balance, consisting of 8 male and 11 female teachers; 8 from privately-owned schools and 11 from public schools. Table-1 shows demographic characteristics of the participants. All participants were volunteers to contribute to the research.

**Table 1.** *Demographic Characteristics of the Participants*

No.	Department	Age	Experience	School	Tenure
P1	Maths	35	12	Private	9
P2	English	43	14	Private	13
P3	French	24	1	Private	1
P4	Elementary teacher	38	14	Private	2
P5	Sports	33	3	Public	1
P6	Science	30	4	Public	1
P7	Kindergartner	35	14	Private	4
P8	Sports	43	20	Public	1
P9	Elementary teacher	57	34	Public	7
P10	Maths	43	20	Private	20
P11	Elementary teacher	38	14	Public	2
P12	English	36	15	Public	4
P13	Guidance counselor	27	5	Public	2
P14	Elementary teacher	41	18	Public	3
P15	Guidance counselor	32	10	Private	6
P16	Elementary teacher	45	20	Public	10
P17	Guidance counselor	35	10	Private	3
P18	Sports	55	33	Public	1
P19	Elementary teacher	47	24	Public	4

*As seen in Table 1, the participants' age ranges between 24 and 57 and their experience ranges between 1 and 34 years. These participants represent a variety of branches.*

## **Data Collection and Analysis**

The team consisted of four researchers: one conducted and transcribed the interviews and all four researchers were involved in the analysis phase. During the field study, data was collected and analyzed concurrently. The interviews were conducted in a quiet, private room in schools based on participants' preferences and lasted between 40-90 minutes. Participants were informed about the study purpose and guaranteed anonymity. Their consent to participate and to be recorded was taken. The audio tapes were carefully transcribed verbatim right after the interviews, so that the researcher has fresh memory. Each participant was given a pseudonym and each interview, a number. All information reflecting identity of the participants was removed in transcriptions to protect anonymity. The initial analysis of data was made as soon as the interview was conducted and the transcription was completed, so that the researcher could recall personal observations better. The transcriptions were printed and read several times to find out emerging themes and meanings. During the initial readings of the transcriptions, the audio recordings were also listened.

Inductive constant comparison method was used because of its value in '...utilizing an entire data set to identify underlying themes presented through the data...' (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2007, p. 565). The research team used color coding rather than cutting-pasting. Repeated readings of every paragraph of the transcriptions allowed refining of the codings. In addition to the in-depth interviews, the field notes of 150 hours of observation in schools, were visited several times. In order to ensure rigor, researchers employed continuous triangulation during the research: they constantly checked on themselves, the methods, data, participants, meanings, explanations and theories. They moved back and forth between the data, interpretations, understandings of the data and theories. The interpretations were double checked referring to both the transcriptions, the audio recordings and the field notes. Researchers undertook each phase of the analysis independently. The interpretations were discussed by the research team in order to ensure the stability and dependability of the construction of interpretation. Once completed, the researchers shared their individual analyses, and resolved differences by reverting to the data. The emergent approach led to the identification of a range of recurring themes and issues specifically relating to EC in schools. Triangulation, prolonged engagement and self-reflexivity also facilitated trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The current study provided valuable insights into the research topic from teachers' perspective. As a result of an attentive and rigorous analysis of the data; caring, rules and instrumental climates emerged with their antecedents and reflections. Table 2 shows the frequency of the themes identified and the respective participants.

**Table 2.**

*Themes, number and percentage of occurrences across all interviews*

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>N=19</b>
Caring	P10, P17, P18, P9, P1, P11, P10, P15, P5, P4, P8, P16, P2, P19, P13, P14, P3	17	90%
Rules	P7, P17, P2, P6, P16, P5, P18, P11, P10, P15, P8	11	58%
Instrumental	P2, P1, P3, P12, P16, P14, P1	7	37%

## Caring Climate

The participants described in detail an atmosphere where colleagues supported, and valued each other, a place that felt like home; a community that felt like family.

P10: *'You can work in comfort when you are a part of that culture... our school has a warm atmosphere, like a family, like a community.'*

P15: *'In my school, there is a structure, like a family...We support each other in every way....'*

These reflections describe a caring climate, which is defined as the members of the organization having a genuine interest in each other's well-being, both inside and outside the organization (Shapira-Lishchinsky and Rosenblatt, 2010). Being accepted and cared for by the organization and colleagues means not only good professional workplace relationships, but also being a part of each other's lives outside the organizational boundaries. P5 shows the negative effect of the lack of close social intercourse inside and outside the school:

P5: *'Usually, here, the teachers just do their job... Teachers from different branches, all separated... everyone does his job and leaves... People don't see each other outside the school...'*

Thus, working in an organization in which people care for each other is of utmost importance. Mutual caring creates an atmosphere which helps the participants overcome the professional challenges and hardships. Emotional support, regardless of the nature of the problem, makes teachers feel safe and protects them against burnout (Richards, Hemphill and Templin, 2018).

Participants also provided insights about what stimulated caring climate.

P8: *'Our principal has been here long. He shaped the school, the structure... There is good communication between branches. The science teachers are not just close to each other as a group; there are also connections between branches.'*

P18: *'I like the management here, the way they speak to the teachers, as equals. They have experience, they know this job, they are equipped.'*

As seen in P18's reflections, the principal and vice principals' expertise creates a trust-based relationship between school administration and teachers. Previous research showed a positive relationship between expert power and trust (Crosby, Evans and Cowles, 1990). Thus, school principals have a strong influence in creating a caring climate, and expert power contributes to that influence through promoting trust.

The behavior of the principal and how far it promotes the wellbeing of others in school has a huge impact on the perceived climate. In some cases where the principal is ignorant, a lack of caring climate appears.

P13: *'Our school is in some sort of a ghetto, there are problems... there are really troubled students. While dealing with all these, it was an escape for me to go to the teachers' room... like I go there, have some small talk with other teachers, have some rest... it was so in my first year... now the principal changed... the problems between teachers, the decomposition and the enmity... Now when I go to the teachers' room, there is a tense atmosphere.'*

P14: *'Also, here, the principal and vice principals, they are so distant, they behave so distantly. You adjust your behavior accordingly, naturally...'*

These expressions show that loneliness and stress result from the lack of caring atmosphere, which has important effects on teachers: *'A caring climate is particularly relevant in professional, service, or public organizations, where the value of caring is intrinsic to the type of*

work and relationships with clients, and permeates other facets of organizational life. A typical example is the educational institution, where training and education are often provided with caring, support, and nurturing' (Shapira-Lishchinsky and Rosenblatt 2010, p.166).

P8: *'People help each other in their work. I personally do it. After my class hours, I assist my teammates in their projects. I volunteer, but they also help me when I need. We do it to help our friends.'*

A caring climate is considered to have positive relationships with organizational commitment (Wech, Mossholder, Steel and Bennett, 1998), psychological well-being (Dorsch, Swanson and Kelley, 1998), job satisfaction (Goldman and Tabak, 2010), satisfaction with supervisors (Deshpande, 1996), and OCB (Leung, 2008) and even students' commitment to their schools (Bakır Ayğar and Kaya, 2017). This study supports the link between OCB and caring climate, but further highlights that the caring climate is associated not only with OCB towards the organization (Huang, You and Tsai, 2012), but also with OCB towards co-workers. Teachers in a caring climate naturally adopt the atmosphere and help each other. In addition to the above-mentioned positive associations, caring climate is negatively linked to absenteeism, (Rosenblatt et.al, 2010) and intent to leave (Shapira-Lishchinsky and Rosenblatt, 2009) and obviously, lack of it stimulates these negative attitudes and behaviors. As P5 stated after having complained about lack of caring climate in their school:

P5: *'They say, in this school, teachers who complete three years of service ask to be assigned to a different school from the ministry.'*

## **Rules Climate**

Schools are bureaucracies; with clear division of labor, technical competence, hierarchy of authority, and standards, rules and regulations. Although bureaucracy is often criticised for its rigidity, research shows that bureaucratic structures help individuals by guiding their behavior, reducing stress, clearly defining roles and responsibilities, and therefore enabling smooth running of the system (Hoy and Sweetland, 2001). Our findings show that clear rules and established order seem to help teachers fulfil their responsibilities.

P15: *'My current school (in comparison with her previous school) is more institutionalized. People just can't act as they wish, there are people they must consult... There are rules, procedures, but I have space for freedom, I can take initiative, I can offer new methods and they are accepted.'*

P10: *'There is an established order... You can work in comfort when you are a part of that culture.'*

Teachers appreciate school climates where professional principles are translated into clear and formal rules, which are perceived to facilitate work in a well-structured workplace (Shapira-Lishchinsky and Rosenblatt, 2010). The favoring of schools with clear hierarchy of authority, and well-established rules and procedures is not limited to state school teachers. One participant from a privately-owned school suggested: *'The reason I preferred this school was that it is institutionalized and well-rooted, it has a history. There is a hierarchy, an order.'* (P7)

School organizations are hierarchical in nature. As the main authority, the principals represent the hierarchy, and their leadership skills play a key role in the school's efficient functioning, as well as the shaping of its climate. The ethical principles adopted are reflected in principals' attitudes (Bursalioğlu, 2015); in other words, the principal's values set the ethical tone, and shape the moral environment. A healthy school climate encourages its members to observe the existing rules and practices. Rules climate is closely linked with the leader's ethical criteria.

The leader's personal conduct influences the effectiveness of the policies, procedures and codes of conduct (Banerji and Krishnan, 2000), and is considered a major antecedent of EC. This connection between principal's personal conduct and the perception of rules climate was manifested in interviews:

P16: *'We are so lucky to have such a principal. He manages conflicts well. He follows everyone and if something is not done on time, he asks why, not in a way to arouse conflict, but with a will to solve the problems.'*

Leaders not only have a direct influence on followers' behaviors, but their actions affect followers' perceptions with regard to appropriate conduct, and this leads to the formation of norms and rules in the organization (Grojean, Resick, Dickson and Smith, 2004). Leaders' influence on individual ethical behavior and EC can be explained via Bandura's *social learning theory*, which describes leaders' influence through a process of role modeling. Followers observe what behavior is expected, rewarded, or punished, and leaders act as *'models of ethical conduct who become the targets of identification and emulation for followers'* (Brown, Treviño and Harrison, 2005, p.120).

In schools characterized by a rules climate, the emphasis is on school rules, policies and professional codes of conduct. Teachers refer to those rules while regulating their behavior, in the belief that these rules serve as protection against violation of their rights (Rosenblatt and Peled, 2002). Borhani, Jalali, Abbaszadeh and Haghdoost (2014) present a positive association between perceptions of rules climate and affective commitment. These findings suggest that after internalizing the school rules and values, teachers' commitment is likely to increase.

Research also suggests that the low level of rules climate hinders employees' voluntary efforts (Leung, 2008). In contrast, the shaping of EC through rules and norms disseminated by school leaders leads to effective and open communication among teachers, and renders OCBs.

P8: *'Our principal has been here long. He shaped the school, the structure... Everyone is trying to do his job very well. They enjoy what they do and they also try to do it well... People help each other in their work. I personally do it. After my class hours, I assist my teammates in their projects. I volunteer, but they also help me when I need. We do it to help our friends and we do it because we want the students to do better in exams, also to help them learn more.'*

Conscientiousness, courtesy and altruism are likely to be more prevalent when teachers perceive rules climate, as illustrated above. The existence of a rules climate together with a caring climate, brings an increase in OCB directed both towards the organization (Huang et al., 2012) and co-workers.

### **Instrumental Climate**

Schools are generally characterised by caring and rules climates, in line with the nature and requirements of education (Shapira-Lishchinsky and Rosenblatt, 2010). However, schools are exposed to organizational politics like all organizations. Organizational politics stimulates perceptions regarding instrumental climate, which refers to an environment where employees focus overwhelmingly on their own interests (Cullen, Parboteeah and Victor, 2003). In our participants' words, this creates an artificial atmosphere where people mask their true feelings, have hidden agendas and are self-centered.

P2: *'Personal relations are so artificial. People walk with masks. Thus, if you are as you are, and honest, you have problems... no team spirit... factions... talking behind people's back... everyone thinks about himself.'*

Previous research underlines the impact of management in creating a certain type of EC in organizations (Grojean et.al, 2004). Although our participants did not directly specify the causes

for an instrumental climate, they mentioned the general influence of principals' behaviors on their perceptions of EC. For instance, one participant (P14) quoted a well-known Turkish proverb 'Where the front wheel goes, the back wheel goes, too'. The participants were unhappy when perceiving such a climate, as they suffer from its behavioral outcomes. For instance, perceptions of instrumental climate negatively affected relationship quality and trust, and stimulated injustice perceptions. In such an environment, competition prevails over cooperation (Peterson, 2002). One participant (P14) complained about the lack of caring attitude and sincerity. These unhealthy relationships and dysfunctional competition harm students and team spirit within the school. Participants also underlined that teaching requires teamwork (Shapira-Lishchinsky and Rosenblatt, 2010), which cannot be achieved in an environment characterized by instrumental climate. As expected, participants reported lower job satisfaction (Torabian and Daovudi, 2016), withdrawal behaviors and lack of OCB.

P16: *'Some teachers conduct extra lessons, they make extra exercises with their students, voluntarily. That's ok, what is not ok is, as they know the exam questions, they make the students answer and work on similar questions. By that, they want to ensure that their students will get better grades than others... This is unfair.'*

P14: *'It was very hard for me, like I told you before, interpersonal relations here; they put me off the school. People's behavior in the place you work, affects everything. Pretty cold, distant relationships, mostly based on personal interest.'*

As seen above, the dark side of competition may come along with the instrumental climate; a Machiavellian way to get the job done. This is clearly against the spirit of education and inappropriate for shaping future generations' value system.

## CONCLUSION

Teaching is essentially a moral profession, and the school staff are expected to form an ethical community that shares responsibility for moral education and adheres to the core values that guide students. Ethics cannot only be taught through curriculum content; there needs to be an atmosphere where students can experience appropriate behavior (Campbell, 2004). Therefore, EC in schools and the factors shaping it are crucial for all stakeholders in education.

Out of five types of EC, three emerged from participant reflections: caring, rules and instrumental. Caring and rules climates were found to be more prevalent. Caring climate was highly valued due to the nature of the teaching profession; rules climate was also favored, as it decreases ambiguity. The ethical climate in which teachers are most satisfied and productive is the combination of rules and caring climate. Participants reported a variety of affective, behavioral and organizational outcomes of the perceived EC types, such as OCB towards the organization and coworkers in the caring and rules climates. In contrast, dysfunctional competition and negative effects on trust and relationship quality were evident in instrumental climates. In addition to the findings of previous quantitative studies, in this qualitative study, we shed light on how positive or negative EC occurred and affected teachers' attitudes and behaviors.

As stated in the literature, among many factors affecting school effectiveness and productivity, one of the most important is principal behaviors (Toprakçı and Taş, 2020; Cömert and Dönmez, 2018). In line with this, in our study participant reflections showed that caring, rules and instrumental climates were highly shaped by principal attitudes and behaviors through role-modelling. Principals should guide teachers regarding ethically appropriate conduct in a variety of situations; from daily issues to major ethical problems by building trust-

based relationships (Li, Hallinger and Ko, 2016) and exhibiting their strong ethical background in their behaviors. This finding directly speaks to school administrators and policy makers: to benefit from the positive outcomes of ethical climates including OCB, organizational commitment, increased job satisfaction, teacher retention and decreased absenteeism, the assignment of principals should be based on the required qualifications and an awareness of the need for a role-model in ethical behavior. As outlined by Gürkan and Toprakçı (2018), this need is prevalent especially in public schools in Turkey. By carefully recruiting and selecting principals, it will be possible to ensure the positive outcomes of ethical climates and their direct contribution to teacher and school effectiveness. Moreover, offering professional development support and ethics education to principals regularly will be helpful as previously called by many researchers (e.g. Wood, 2005). Although such practices are observable in some countries, they are exceptions rather than common rules. It is believed that these findings will spur further research and discussions on the importance of ethics as a core value in human resources policies and practices in education.

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## Etik İklim ve Öğretmen Davranışlarına İlişkin Sonuçları

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### Özet:

Bu çalışmanın amacı, okullarda etik iklimin oluşumuna etki eden faktörleri ve etik iklimin öğretmenlerin tutum ve davranışları üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektir. Bu doğrultuda nitel bir araştırma tasarlanmış ve 19 farklı okullardan öğretmenle yüz yüze derinlemesine görüşme yapılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda okullarda etik iklimin şekillenmesinde rol model olmaları sebebiyle okul müdürlerinin en büyük etkiye sahip oldukları görülmüştür. Etik iklimin başkalarının iyiliğini isteme ve kurallar boyutlarının örgütsel bağlılık, iş tatmini, örgütsel vatandaşlık davranışı ve çalışanı işte tutma üzerinde olumlu etkileri olduğu, bununla beraber araçsallık ikliminin bahsi geçen örgütsel çıktılar üzerinde olumsuz etkisi olduğu görülmüştür. Bulgular okul müdürlerinin, sağlam etik temellere sahip olunması ve öğretmenlerle güvene dayalı ilişkiler geliştirilmesinde kritik bir rolü olduğuna dikkat çekmektedir. Çalışmanın temel katkısı, öğretmenlerin deneyimlerinden yola çıkarak olumlu ya da olumsuz etik iklimin nasıl oluştuğu ve öğretmen tutum ve davranışlarına nasıl etki ettiğine dair bir bütünsel kavrayış sunmasıdır.

**Keywords:** Okul Etik İklimi, Nitel Çalışma, Örgütsel Vatandaşlık Davranışı, Liderlik, Güven



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## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

**Problem:** Bu çalışmada okullarda etik iklimin oluşumuna etki eden faktörleri ve etik iklimin öğretmenlerin tutum ve davranışları üzerindeki etkilerini incelemek amaçlanmıştır.

**Yöntem:** Etik iklimin oluşumunu ve etik iklimin öğretmenlerin tutum ve davranışlarına etkisini anlamak amaçlandığından, araştırma keşfedici bir nitelik taşımaktadır. Bu sebeple nitel araştırma tasarımı yapılmıştır. Araştırma kapsamında İzmir ilinde farklı bölgelerdeki okullardan 19 öğretmenle yüz yüze derinlemesine görüşme gerçekleştirilmiştir. Derinlemesine görüşmelerle eş zamanlı olarak okullarda gözlem yapılmış, öğretmenler arası ilişkiler ve öğretmen-müdür ilişkileri incelenmiştir. Her bir derinlemesine görüşme sonrası, katılımcının izni ile alınan ses kayıtları birkaç kez dinlenmiş ve bire bir yazıya dökülmüştür. Veri analizi, bu konuşma dökümlerinin, araştırmacıların saha notlarının ve ses kayıtlarının tekrar tekrar gözden geçirilmesi ile yapılmıştır. Veri kendini tekrar etmeye başladığı noktada görüşmeler sonlandırılmıştır. Veri analizinde renk kodları kullanılmış ve verinin sürekli ve özenli incelemesi sonucu belirgin temalar ortaya çıkmıştır.

**Bulgular ve Tartışma:** Araştırmanın bulguları okul müdürlerinin okul etik ikliminin şekillenmesinde önemli rol oynadıklarını göstermektedir. Öğretmenler ve diğer okul mensuplarınınca rol model olarak görülmelerinin bir sonucu olarak etik iklim üzerinde etkileri olduğu görülmektedir. Bulgular, etik iklimin farklı boyutları bağlamında değerlendirildiğinde ise, başkalarının iyiliğini isteme ve kurallar boyutlarının örgütsel bağlılık, iş tatmini, örgütsel vatandaşlık davranışı ve çalışanı işte tutma üzerinde olumlu etkileri olduğu görülmüştür. Buna ek olarak araçsallık ikliminin sözü edilen örgütsel çıktılar üzerinde olumsuz etkisi olduğu da anlaşılmıştır.

**Sonuç ve Öneriler:** Araştırma okul müdürlerinin, okullarda sağlam etik temeller oluşturulması ve öğretmenlerle ve öğretmenler arası güvene dayalı ilişkiler geliştirilmesinde önemli bir rol oynadığını göstermektedir. Okul müdürlerinin seçim, atama, performans yönetimi ve eğitim süreçlerinde bu etkinin göz önünde bulundurulması önem taşımaktadır.