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How Symbols and Rituals Affect School Culture and Management

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Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

Abstract

The aim of the study is to evaluate the directors, teachers, and servants in the pre, primary, and secondary schools of the Near East University on their views about the functions of symbols, values, and rituals in developing school culture. This study was carried out in fall 2016–2017 academic year with 15 directors, 170 teachers, and 15 servants from the pre, primary, and secondary schools of the Near East University. In this research, a qualitative study was conducted, in which a case study design with a semi-structured interview technique was used to collect data through sampling, one of the objective sampling methods. A qualitative analysis technique based on the research questions for content analysis of the collected data was used. The majority of the participants emphasized that the common values of the individuals at school, symbols, rituals, and traditions formed the bases of school culture. Although, in general, perceptions and views related to school culture are positive, there are arguments that school culture should be integrated deeper into education. It is commonly believed that, if worked in collaboration, symbols, values, and ritual functions will contribute a great deal to social—organizational—and individual development.

Keywords: school culture, symbol, value, ritual, management, technology, organization

1. Introduction

Rapid developments in every field in today's world, have been forcing both the individuals and the community organizations to adapt an on-going process of alteration, which influences education, as all other fields, and urges the system to adapt to the new process through the provided innovations. But, in due course, organizations responsible for education were negatively affected by the good-will efforts in renovation put them in a

technical and mental position, and the educational institutions were perceived as successful companies, which ignored the needs of the individuals and the community, and were compared with manufacturing factories. It is clear that perceiving educational institutions as a company or a factory is closely related to classical, mental, and scientific approaches in administrative issues from the past to now. Relating schools to traditional approaches created a productive and effective mentality. However, such approaches were not effective in eradicating problems [1–3].

Several approaches in administrative and educational issues were effective in presenting some models related to organizations responsible for education. Researches in educational management in our country have recently speeded up and several theories and perceptions were referred to through scientific approaches [4, 5].

Symbolic interactions perceive organizational culture as an invisible power and investigate common sense created by the applicants of the so-called culture. This is because educational organizations are often inter-related with symbols. In the routine running, in the processes to do with determination, educational activities of the organization symbols have a significant role [5]. Although schools focus more on the symbols, the scientific data related to school culture reveal that there are a few researches done to analyze school culture in terms of symbols. In most of the researches done, quantitative studies occupy quite a big part in the analysis of school culture and the relation among the different parameters of culture structures. Even though researches in this field reveal crucial findings related to organizational existence, they are not sufficient to clearly show the fundamental meanings of the basic organizational behaviors. Researches assuming organizations as social structures and symbolic systems prefer qualitative approaches formed of ethnography, case studies, and sample cases in expressing organizational processes [5, 6].

Individual needs are of utmost importance in forming organizational culture. In this respect, some norms, ideas, and values, adapted by the group members, have to be specified when individuals are willing to join a group and being known as well. The history of the organization, membership, and sharing among members have a great say in forming organizational culture [2]. It is obvious that all the elements forming culture are of great importance. Researches show that in schools where certain norms of school culture are effective, there are on-going developments and renewals. Contrary to this, in the case of inefficient norms, renewals and achievements will be less and at random. Among the elements forming organizational culture, values are one of the most important because they are the basis of the culture of the organization. When the relation between organizational culture and interaction are examined, it can be seen that values are the triggering factors in the formation, sustainability, and transfer of organizational culture [7].

Values are essential factors in expressing cultural structures because individuals in an organization come together to share values, social ideals and beliefs. These values or beliefs are reflected through symbolic structures such as legends, myths, stories, and rituals. The shared values form the organizational value system and become the perspectives in perceiving organizational developments [2].

Rituals are radical formations of individuals experience in their social, political, societal, and cultural structures stemming from different necessities since the early days of human existence. Rituals, practiced by tribes and religious functionaries in old days, have taken their place and are applied in today's political and educational structures of states. The relation between ideology and culture has evolved from the efforts of many countries to shape their educational structure with many concepts from the very beginning [8]. Consequently, in order to adapt individuals to domain political value judgments of the past in educational institutions, some cultural issues are transferred to future generations through educational institutions. Cultural transfer in the field of education is possible through ritualistic activities. However, such ritual activities in educational institutions are formally experienced in educational programs, national days, commemorative, and flag-raising ceremonies. Even more, rituals are observed by students in different styles in in-class or outdoor activities. Individuals with various characteristics in social life and educational institutions come up with different views in regard to different paradigms as a result of the rituals among informally appointed individuals through financial and political reasons [9].

This research deals with the functions of symbols, values, and rituals as well as the importance of technology in the development of organizational culture in preschool, primary, and secondary education. When previous studies are overviewed, it can be noted that several studies have been done in organizational culture, but there have not been any studies dealing with the concept of symbols related to organizational culture, values, and rituals all together. Therefore, this study is expected to be different compared to other studies. The findings of this study, conducted among teachers, the key factors in our educational system, it is hoped that the symbols, values, and rituals will add to the improvement of organizational culture. Suggestions related to specifying perceptions to do with school culture, the functions of symbols, values, and rituals and their impact on school culture will be presented at the end of this study.

1.1. The aim of this study

The aim of this study was to reveal the views by directors, teachers, and servants employed in the pre, primary, and secondary schools at the Near East University about the functions of symbols, values, and rituals in the improvement of organizational culture.

The following questions were the main areas to be investigated in this study:

- What are the school directors', teachers', and servants' perceptions and views about school culture?

- How according to school directors, teachers, and servants should symbols, values, and rituals function in schools?

- What tasks and responsibilities should the school directors, teachers, and servants have to raise the functions of symbols, values, and rituals?

- What do school directors, teachers, and servants suggest to raise the standard in the process of improving school culture?

2. Methodology

2.1. Research design

A case study, one of the qualitative research designs, was conducted in this study. A case study is a method to investigate a routine fact in an entire way under real conditions [10]. An interview technique believed to be the most reliable data collection method was decided to be administered in this study.

The interview technique is categorized under three headings: nonstructured, structured, and semi-structured. The advantage of a semi-structured technique applied in this study was that its plan and program was prepared previously and it provided the participants with flexibility [11].

2.2. The participants

The participants, as shown in **Table 1**, were school directors, teachers, and servants from pre, primary, and secondary schools of the Near East University.

As it can be seen in **Table 1**, a total of 200 people, 50 participants, 5 directors, 40 teachers, and 5 servants in preschool education; 70 participants, 5 directors, 60 teachers, and 5 servants in primary education; and 80 participants, 5 directors, 70 teachers, and 5 servants in secondary education were interviewed for their views.

Objective sampling method was conducted in this study. It is a method to reveal multidiversity in case there are different findings [12]. This research was carried out in the spring semester of the 2016–2017 academic years in pre, primary, and secondary schools of the Near East University with a total of 15 directors, 170 teachers, and 15 servants. The reason for an objective

Educational institution		Number
Secondary school	Directors	5
	Teachers	70
	Servants	5
Primary school	Directors	5
	Teachers	60
	Servants	5
Preschool	Directors	5
	Teachers	40
	Servants	5
Total		200

Table 1. The participants.

sampling method was that it reflected ample views about the functions of symbols, values, and rituals as well as the importance of technology in the improvement of organizational culture.

A criterion sampling method, one of the objective sampling methods, was referred to in this research. It is a process that investigates previously specified criteria [13]. In this process, the criteria can be set by the person carrying out the study. The reason for the involvement of school directors and servants in the criteria is that they have known the teachers in the organization for a long time, and they are well informed about the symbols, values, and rituals and the impact of school culture on the school staff.

2.3. Data collection period and data collection tools

The data were collected through an interview technique, which expects detailed data from the participants on a specified research topic [14]. The interview question asked to the school directors, teachers, and servants in pre, primary, and secondary schools was "How do symbols, values, and rituals function, and what is the importance of technology in the development of organizational culture?" The interviews were conducted through semi-structured forms, in which the questions were flexible, unclear questions were rearranged, and when needed, supplementary questions, not on the interview form, were also asked for individual responses. To raise the validity of the research, the communication was spread to a long period of time with utmost attention to help participants shake off their timidness in responding at the presence of the interviewer at the beginning. Later in the interview process, the participants feel more confident and respond reasonably and effectively and reliable data were collected [13]. The length of the interview was tried to be spread as much as possible without losing productivity, and the validity was raised by summarizing the data and asking for the participants' approval.

The questions on the interview form were prepared with three experts in this field. Pilot studies were done prior to the interviews to confirm the validity. Conceptual structure of the interview forms was formed after related articles were examined in detail. Following this, participants were asked five open-ended questions for their views.

On receiving the consent of pre, primary, and secondary school administrations of the Near East University for administrating the interview, the participants were presented the forms. During the interviews, all the participants were briefed in detail about the content of the research. They were also assured that the data would be used for scientific aims, and their identification details would definitely not be revealed. In addition, it was stressed that they responded voluntarily. The participants were reminded that their responses would affect the validity and reliability of the study. Each interview lasted for 20 minutes and in order to provide a comfortable environment, their answers were not recorded. The data collection process lasted for 2 months, from October to November, 2016. After the interviews, the participants were asked to overview their responses to assure the reliability of the study.

2.4. Data analysis

The responses given by the participants were put in the most relevant categories according to their content coded, and certain themes were specified.

The codes for the participants are as follows:

- D1, D2, D3,………., D15 (D1 refers to Director 1).
- T1, T2, T3,…………, T170 (T1 refers to Teacher 1).
- S1, S2, S3,……….., S15 (S1 refers to Servant 1).

The aim of such a coding is not to reveal identification, which facilitates data analysis.

A content analysis technique was referred to analyze and interpret the data provided by the participants. The aim in such an analysis is to reach the content and content relations of the grouped data [13]. Through a content analysis, it is possible to carry out an objective and systematic examination of written documents focusing on words. Content analysis is defined as a process of emphasizing contracted written informational content and messages [15]. Content analysis includes four steps. These are coding according to the data obtained from the documents, setting themes, forming themes and codes, and interpreting and explaining findings [13]. In this study, firstly, coding was fulfilled according to previously agreed research and scale criterion, which provided many themes. Then, the data were grouped according to themes and explained in numbers in the best possible way. As a last step, the existing findings were explained in detail.

2.5. Validity and reliability

The questions on the interview form were developed after related fields were referred to. Necessary arrangements with three experts were done twice on the interview forms before and after the interviews. After pilot studies prior to the interviews, the open-ended and semi-structured questions were given to the participants.

The data obtained from the participants were examined in detail while analyzing and comparative analysis was done. While analyzing, careful studies were done to assure the reality of the research and find out transferrable issues for variable platforms.

The data obtained were analyzed separately both by the researcher and an expert for any specifications. The two sides, the researcher and the expert, worked on their own to form the themes in the light of the specified views.

For the validity of the research, validity = agreement/(agreement + disagreement) formula was referred to [16]. An average over 70% indicates the validity of a study [16]. The average validity of this research was calculated as 92%.

3. Findings

3.1. Perceptions and views about school culture

The perceptions and views of school directors, teachers, and servants about school culture are as in **Table 2**.

A total of 200 participants presented views about the subject matter as in **Table 2**. In total, 1 director, 58 teachers, and 1 servant had a common argument that the community, individuals in schools, common values, symbols, rituals, beliefs, and traditions formed the basis of school culture. D3 expressed views as, "*With its history, build up, quality, vision, mission, traditional behaviours, symbols, rituals, and the status of its population form its culture.*"

T64 emphasized the factors forming school culture saying, "*In the broadest sense, school culture forms its identity and includes all materialistic and moral factors.*"

It is assumed that participants advocating this view are used to transferring school culture through in-class activities.

A total of 1 director, 33 teachers, and 4 servants point out that school culture should occupy more places in education with the help of school staff and parents. This view is the second important issue raised by teachers and servants. The participants strongly argue that school culture cannot be developed without the help of the school administration and parents.

D2 expressed that "*The number of individuals appreciating, implementing, and teaching our values has gone down. Especially in recent years, there has been a decline in the quality of our life and culture to such an extent that many are dissatisfied with this. I should say that school culture should occupy more place in education.*"

This expression indicates that school staff and the community should be more serious about school culture.

Themes	Directors		Teachers		Servants	
	Stating opinion	%	Stating opinion	%	Stating opinion	%
The society, individuals in school, common values, symbols, rituals, beliefs, and traditions form the basis of school culture	1	7	58	34	1	7
School culture should occupy more place in education with the help of parents and individuals in school	1	7	33	19	4	27
Effective management and education, school culture shapes individuals' behavior and unity	1	7	27	16	0	0
School culture helps collaboration and fighting problems	5	33	9	5	0	0
School culture creates a genuine, contemporary, multicultural, and respectful community	1	7	11	6	0	0
School culture adds to communal-organizational-individual development, performance, and academic success	6	40	32	19	10	67
Total	15	100	170	100	15	100

Table 2. Perceptions of school culture.

D12 stressed that school culture needs to be taken more seriously, saying, "*School directors, teachers, servants, and particularly parents should show more effort to develop school culture.*"

A total of 6 directors, 32 teachers, and 10 servants expressed views that school culture contributes to communal-organizational-individual development, performance, and academic success, which is the most frequently expressed view by directors and servants. For them, the reason is that the improvement of school culture should be parallel to academic and individual development with pragmatic outcomes.

"*School culture reminds me of education and teaching. If educators do not avoid their responsibilities, school culture can possibly reflect to students' learning*" argued S2. This view indicates a possible effect of school culture on students' academic success.

"*School culture has a great effect on individual's societal and personal development. Therefore, school culture should not be academic-success, but personal and societal centered*" remarked D11. This view emphasizes the contribution of school culture on personal and societal development. "*For the sustainability of school culture, efforts should definitely focus on academic success*" pointed out D5.

3.2. The functions of existing symbols, values, and rituals in educational institutions

The views by school directors, teachers, and servants on the functions of existing symbols, values, and rituals in schools are as in **Table 3**.

Out of 200 participants, 9 directors, 131 teachers, and 14 servants expressed views and stressed that symbols, values, and rituals functioning together through existing various activities add a great deal to societal, organizational, and personal development of school culture. This view has been raised by the majority of the participants. They reasoned their views for the observable and satisfactory benefits of the presently existing school culture.

The participants also emphasized that school culture can be a factor to lead the society to better positions. "*The functions of the symbols, values, and rituals should be well organized in terms of place and time. They should function within the arranged framework. They have the potential to lead the society to a better position*" explained T65.

	Directors		Teachers		Servants	
Themes	Stating opinion	%	Stating opinion	%	Stating opinion	%
Various activities in school culture working in harmony add a great deal to societal, personal, and organizational development	9	60	131	77	14	93
Due to constrains in number of students, financial issues, and the educational system, applications are not at required level and need improvement	6	40	39	23	1	7
Total	15	100	170	100	15	100

Table 3. The state of symbols, values, and rituals existing in educational institutions.

The participants also stressed the contribution of school culture to emotional development. *"Several activities in our school aim at social and emotional development of our students. Bazars held intervally and donations add a lot to our students' emotional development"* pointed out S9.

In total, 6 directors, 39 teachers, and 1 servant expressed worries that the functions of symbols, values, and rituals are not at the required level because of some constraints such as number of students, lack of financial support, and education system and they needed to be improved.

Some participants emphasized that due to the lack of financial and moral support to the teachers, symbols, values, and rituals cannot function as expected from time to time. *"There are some deficiencies in the functions symbols, values, and rituals in our school. Our educators should be satisfied financially and morally, which leads to both the teachers and students to perform more effectively"* said T68.

A small number of participants stated that the functions of symbols, values, and rituals were not at the required level. S4 expressed views saying, *"There are deficiencies in the function of symbols, values, and rituals in our school. The rituals, which are binding factors in school culture, are declining day by day."*

It has been expressed that the low level of the function of symbols, values, and rituals is because of the excess number of students for each teacher. *"There are a huge number of students in each class and this is because of insufficient number of classrooms. This, naturally, decreases the function of symbols, values, and rituals"* explained T27. This indicates that financial lack is the biggest handicap in developing school culture.

3.3. Tasks and responsibilities for increasing the functions of symbols, values, and rituals

Table 4 shows the tasks and responsibilities of directors, teachers, and servants for the development of the functions of symbols, values, and rituals.

Table 4 presents views of 200 participants about the subject in question. In total, 3 directors, 44 teachers, and 5 servants emphasize that the school staff should be well aware of their tasks and responsibilities to raise the function of symbols, values, and rituals. This is the most frequently stressed view and the reason is that, as they point out, as in every phase of life, the feeling of responsibility should be in the issue of school culture, too. *"School directors and teachers should act in accordance of the needs of students and servants. Every individual should have the responsibility for each other"* explained T65. That is to say, all the involved participants should have the responsibility to raise the function of symbols, values, and rituals.

D61 points out to the importance of being aware of one's task to raise the function of symbols, values, and rituals. *"First of all, everybody in this institution should carry out what has been described. If everybody fulfills his/her responsibility, does not interfere with others, and sticks to the allocated time, the functions* improve." (D61).

A total of 23 teachers argue that the staff should be receptive to development and should support each other to raise the function of rituals, values, and symbols. Particularly, the directors and servants are not interested in this issue because the socioeconomic system and the law of this country do not support individual development. Only the teachers emphasized the importance of being receptive to development. This can be assumed that the number of teachers advocating life-long learning is higher compared to the other school staffs who do not advocate this view.

Themes	Directors		Teachers		Servants	
	Stating opinion	%	Stating opinion	%	Stating opinion	%
Directors should assign and explain task effectively and do arrangements according to the teams	3	20	26	15	0	0
The staff should be aware of their duties and take responsibilities seriously	3	20	44	26	5	33
The staff should be open to development and support each other	0	0	23	14	0	0
Besides academic success, directors and teachers should organize student-centered activities for personal and societal development	0	0	12	7	1	7
School staff should work for common aims in organizational loyalty and collaboration	3	20	24	14	7	47
The staff should share ideas and have effective communication	2	13	18	11	2	13
Meetings, training sessions, seminars, excursions, and activities should be organized for directors, teachers, and students	4	27	14	8	0	0
All adults in the school should be role models for the students	0	0	9	5	0	0
Total	15	100	170	100	15	100

Table 4. The tasks and responsibilities of directors, teachers, and servants for the development of the functions of symbols, values, and rituals.

T66 expressed views as, "*Directors, teachers, and servants in the school should be receptive and follow innovations.*" "*In order to adapt to time, new ideas, and materials, every teacher and director should develop themselves and be receptive to new approaches*" added T3.

In total, 3 directors, 24 teachers, and 7 servants agreed on the views that the school staff should set a common aim and provide organizational loyalty and collaboration to raise the function of systems, values, and rituals. This is the second most frequently stressed view by 34 participants with the fact that school organizations need to come together with common interests.

"*For the development of symbols, values, and rituals, directors and teachers should leave exam-based and memorization system and adapt a constructive child-centered education. If done so, symbols, values, and rituals will develop and the school will benefit from it*" stated T3. In this respect, the participants frequently emphasized the importance of student-centered education to raise the function of symbols, values, and rituals.

"*If an education system is applied to respond more to the benefits of both the society and students themselves, rather than focusing more on academic success, the function of symbols, values, and rituals will improve*" explained T17. The expectations, according to the participants' views, should be more on societal and individual development rather than on academic success.

3.4. Suggestions to improve quality during the process of the development of school culture

Table 5 presents suggestions for quality improvement during the process of the development of school culture.

Themes	Directors		Teachers		Servants	
	Stating opinion	%	Stating opinion	%	Stating opinion	%
There should be more supervision and performance evaluation of school culture	0	0	9	5	2	13
Effective communication, collaboration in common values, organizational loyalty, and task awareness should be raised	3	20	51	30	6	40
Teacher and student self-development should be encouraged and awarded	1	7	25	15	0	0
Parent involvement in education, meetings, and activities should be encouraged	1	7	16	9	1	7
Physical structure of schools and equipment should be developed	1	7	5	3	0	0
Cultural activities such as graduation ceremonies sports activities, meeting with old graduates, poetry, theater, exhibition, excursions, the meaning of the week should be organized	7	47	37	22	4	27
Training, seminars, and conferences that should be involving the staff and students should be organized	1	7	6	4	2	13
Formal arrangements should be done, programs should be prepared, and different teaching methods and technology should be put in use	1	7	21	12	0	0
Total	15	100	170	100	15	100

Table 5. Suggestions to improve quality during the process of the development of school culture.

As it can be noted in **Table 5**, 200 people presented their views. A total of 3 directors, 51 teachers, and 6 servants commonly agreed on the need of effective communication, collaboration in common values, view exchange, motivation, organizational loyalty, and job awareness. This view is mostly advocated by 60 participants. Besides, it was the most frequently emphasized view by the teachers and servants. The reason for such a common agreement, as the participants put forward, was the belief in the effective impact of participation in decisions and organizational responsibility.

"*School directors should increase teacher motivation to raise the quality of school culture*" *stated* S1.

"*The working environment should be improved and the staff's motivation should be increased*" said T62. There were ample views about the importance of encouraging teachers.

T53 added saying, "*Parallel to school culture, there should be a very strong communication among directors, teachers, and other staff because successful and effective management helps shape culture.*" This view was shared by the participants, who emphasized that effective management would raise the quality of school culture.

A total of 1 director and 25 teachers argued that both teachers and students should always support and reward themselves. However, none of the servants agreed with this view. A total of 26 participants put this view forward.

T14 stressed saying, "*We, the teachers have a great role in transferring school culture, providing and sustaining a good quality education in the best possible correct way. Therefore, teachers should be provided with a good environment they need, be supported and rewarded.*" The urgent support for teacher development was frequently brought up in views.

"*In order to add to quality, an educational institution needs to employ qualified staff and intake good students. For better productivity, the staff should be well satisfied with the pay. On high performance, students should be rewarded by the teacher*" remarked T19. Rewarding both teachers and students was a common expectation among the participants.

A total of 7 directors, 37 teachers, and 4 servants agreed that cultural activities such as graduation ceremonies, sports activities, meeting with old graduates, poetry, theater, excursion, and the meaning of the week are organized. This issue was frequently raised by both 48 participants and the directors. With this argument, they believe that interaction among individuals develops school culture.

"*Before anything else, when on excursions, convenient and comfortable means of transport should be provided for carrying out activities without any constraints*" explained T61. In this respect, the participants pointed at the importance of excursions in the quality of school culture.

"*I suggest that collective activities are organized and school awareness is created and adapted by all individuals*" said D5. It is believed that activities are effective means to create a unity among all the individuals in school organizations.

D2 raised views saying, "*In order to increase the quality during the process of developing school culture, activities should be organized in advance, for example, activities leading students to develop themselves in a certain field, such as sports to increase interest through competitions.*"

It is advised that the quality of school culture should be raised to help the students' development. The reason for these views by the participants is that life-long learning has a positive impact on school culture, and individuals trying to develop themselves do not receive sufficient financial and moral support.

4. Discussion and conclusions

4.1. Perceptions and views about school culture

In total, 7% of the directors, 34% of the teachers, and 7% of the servants agree that the society, individuals in schools, common values, symbols, rituals, and beliefs and traditions form the basis of school culture. The reason for sharing this view by a great majority of teachers is that they are used to transferring school culture through activities. In their study, Özoğlu and Turan [17] defined school culture as a unity of meanings formed by the individuals in the organization and stated that in the light of research findings, symbols occupy an important place in school culture.

In total, 7% of the directors, 19% of the teachers, and 27% of the servants stressed that with the help of the directors, staff, individuals in schools, and parents, school culture should be

spread more throughout education process. In their study, Karadağ and Özdemir [18] reached a different finding, which revealed that a majority of school directors demanded more applications to prioritize role and task culture when defining school culture.

In total, 40% of the directors, 19% of the teachers, and 67% of the servants believe that school culture contributes to social—organizational—individual development, performance, and academic success. Another finding by Karadağ and Özdemir [18] is that school culture has significant importance and is a must in the transfer of sociocultural inheritance as well as in students successfully achieving their socioeconomic roles. In a study by Doğan [19], it is stated that school culture has a positive impact on students' success.

4.2. The functions of existing symbols, values, and rituals in educational institutions

In total, 60% of the directors, 77% of the teachers, and 93% of the servants stress that when symbols, values, and rituals function together interactively and in harmony, school culture contributes a great deal to social-organizational-individual development. Özdemir [20], on the other hand, argues that, when schools with weak school-culture are considered, it is noted that the relation among directors, teachers, students, and parents is far from being strong. In a study, Özoğlu and Turan [17] found out that as a result of differences, there emerged some sub-cultures, but there was a common organizational culture and power among all the individuals belonging to that organization.

In total, 40% of the directors, 23% of the teachers, and 7% of the servants admitted that due to the number of students, financial problems, and the education system, the functions of symbols, values, and rituals was not at the expected level and needed development. Aslan et al. [21], in their study, argued that ceremonies to bring about unity were not arranged because of lack of physical places and insufficient financial support. In another study by Silman et al. [22], it was argued that new generations did not appreciate the values reflecting their traditions as in the past and there was a possibility of losing rituals and values in due course.

4.3. Tasks and responsibilities for increasing the functions of symbols, values, and rituals

In total, 20% of the directors and 15% of the teachers stress the need for an effective job distribution and description as well as arrangements with the characteristics of the team to raise the functions of symbols, values, and rituals. In their studies, the authors [20, 23], too, shared the similar idea and emphasized that the directors should do sound arrangements to meet the expectations of both teaches and students, who are the factors affecting the school culture. The authors [17–24] state that the director in an institution is the leader in the process of school culture.

The need for job awareness and responsibility by the school staff to raise the functions of symbols, values, and rituals was commonly shared by 20% of the directors, 26% of the teachers, and 33% of the servants. In the study by Doğan [19], the teachers expressed views that school culture affects responsibility awareness. In similar studies by the authors [20, 25, 26], task culture occupies the highest position in relation to school culture dimensions.

Setting common aims through which organizational devotion and collaboration is provided to raise the functions of symbols, values, and rituals was another view put forward by 20%

of the directors, 14% of the teachers, and 47% of the servants. According to studies by the authors of [27, 28], in organizations where there are strong organizational elements, tolerance, and mutual support, and collaboration at a high level, there is always a high motivation, devotion, and an increase in the staff's performance. It was noted in a recent study by Şahin [29] that strong organizational structures bring about organizational success.

In order to increase the function of symbols, values, and rituals, all adults in the school (directors, teachers, and servants) should be role models in the views of 5% of the teachers. In total, nine participants raised this view. On the other hand, none of the servants and directors expressed such a view. The reason for such a low rate of explanation is because the importance of being a "role model" has not been realized sufficiently. In a study by Özdilekler et al. [30], the significance of being the right role model to students has been stressed. It was found out in a study by Doğan [19] that, according to the teachers, students take their teacher as role models either consciously or unconsciously.

4.4. Suggestions to improve quality during the process of the development of school culture

In total, 20% of the directors, 30% of the teachers, and 40% of the servants commonly agree that awareness of effective communication, collaboration in common values, view exchanges, motivation, organizational devotion, and tasks should be raised. Similar to these findings, harmony, collaboration, and solidarity among teachers have been stressed in previous studies by Alemdar and Köker and Fedai et al. [31, 32].

Teachers and students should always be encouraged and awarded for self-development, which was a view raised by 7% of the directors and 15% of the teachers. Silman et al. [22] found out in their study that teachers and students were awarded with certificates and verbal thankings, but there has not been a fully satisfactory awarding system. This can be interpreted as a need of promotion and pay rise.

Another finding in this research is that 47% of the directors, 22% of the teachers, and 27% of the servants agreed on their views about organizing activities such as graduation, poetry, theater, exhibition, excursion days, and the meaning of the week. In their research, Karadağ and Özdemir [18] noted that the participants stressed the need for policies to be adapted to widespread activities, traditions, customs, habits, and rituals, which are the basic elements of school culture. In a study by Özoğlu and Turan [17], it was found out that farewell dinner ceremonies for teachers, awarding ceremonies for students, competitions, semester festivals, and graduation ceremonies are strong functional symbols.

In conclusion, although perceptions and thoughts are to do with school culture, school culture should be dealt with more in education. Therefore, some participants expressed worries that the functions of symbols, values, and rituals with great roles in school culture are not at the expected level due to the number of students, financial issues, and education system that need to be improved. Many participants stress the fact that the society, individuals in schools, common values, symbols, rituals, beliefs, and traditions form the basics of school culture.

5. Suggestions

- In order to increase the functions of rituals, symbols, and values, managers, teachers, and servants should be well aware of their duties. These qualifications should be considered when employing individuals. School managers can closely monitor the progress of symbols and rituals in influencing school cultures. Management can learn new information in this process and develop by self-improvement.

- Particularly, managers, teachers, and servants can organize various ceremonies, seminars, training sessions, excursions, activities, and meetings to bring students and parents together to fight for common aims. While doing so, individual-cultural similarities and diversities should be borne in mind. Cultural activities such as graduation ceremonies, sports activities, graduation days, poetry, theater, exhibition, excursions, meaning of the week, etc. can be organized to raise the quality.

- To raise the quality during the process of developing school culture, reasonable supervision and performance evaluation can be applied in school management.

- Additional budget can be allocated for the development of the physical structure of schools and the necessary equipment and education to raise the quality during the process of the development of school culture.

- New teaching methods, technology can be put in use, formal arrangements, and teaching programs can be prepared.

- Studies can be done on the capability of creating organizational devotion and collaboration of school managers and supervisors in relation to developing the functions of rituals, symbols, and values. Investigations may be conducted that examine school managers' learning ability in school culture, organizational commitment, and cooperation.

- Studies can be done in improving an effective, satisfactory, fair, and objective merit system for learning in school management.

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