



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Role Practiced by Female Principals in Dealing with Student Behaviors as Perceived by Female Teachers within Irbid First Educational Directorate

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ABSTRACT

The role practiced by school principals is multifaceted. As an educational leader, the school principal has an influential power and ethical authority (Johnson, et al., 2000) enable him/her to manage the values, organizational culture and the prevailing practices in school. The purpose of the current study is to identify the role practiced by school principals in dealing with student behaviors from viewpoint of teachers at schools attended by female students within Irbid First Educational Directorate. The present study attempts to answer the following questions:-

1. *What is the degree of female teacher's estimates of the role practiced by female principals in dealing with female student behaviors?*

Does the degree of female teacher's estimates of the role practiced by female principals in dealing with female student behaviors vary by the academic qualification, experience years and school level? Population consisted of all female teachers (n=4095) at the public schools within Irbid Educational Directorate during the academic year (2017/2018), out of which selected a sample of (390) female teachers. The results that indicated high estimation by respondents to items can be accounted by the fact that such items describe routine practices of school principals such as monitoring student absence and instill Islamic beliefs in students and the like. However, the items that describe nontraditional practices like researching about behavioral problems looking for specialized information were estimated at a moderate or low degree. This could be due that school principal preparation programs implemented pre and in-service are concerned with technical aspects in teaching rather than providing them knowledge and experience about student problematic behaviors which they can employ in classroom situations.

Keywords: *IT and Communications, Student behavior*

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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary time witnesses unprecedented advancement of IT and communications technologies accompanied with explosion of information and outgrowth of population. All such advancements and had a far-reaching influence on schools and the teaching-learning process. Currently, the role practiced by school principals is multifaceted. As an educational leader, the school principal has an influential power and ethical authority (Johnson, et al., 2000) enable him/her to manage the values, organizational culture and the prevailing practices in school. Teachers face many behavioral problems in classroom that need solutions. The cooperation between educational supervisors and school principals can be vital in finding solutions or reduce behavioral problems to minimal limit. This role of school administration is somewhat unclear that it requires investigation of the role of school principal in dealing with problematic behaviors in advance. Traditionally, abusive students are sent to school principal office who has the authority to

take disciplinary action like temporary suspension, or transfer to other school, expulsion, or refer problematic behavior to a professional (Hamida, 1998, P123). On the other hand, the traditional role of school principal in dealing with academic issues of students in school has grown out of school walls to include the entire daily life of students including the values, social relations and behavioral rules. Hence, if the question was to instill positive values in students and modify their behaviors, the role of school principal becomes critical. The role of school principal has no longer limited to routines tasks that include monitoring absence and presence of teachers and students, keep order and discipline inside school, but also concern with professional development of teachers and make available human and material condition for progress of the teaching-learning process. Chaplain (2003) indicated that school principal is the one in school who takes responsibility on developing strategic plans on how to deal with student behaviors. Hence, the school principal assumes a vital role in setting up strategies, making policy and supporting the scholastic system for best management of student behavior. Further, principals are seen at schools as being the first person in charge of providing a safe educational environment and establishing disciplinary rules for student behavior management.

Statement of the Problem

Student behavior management has increasingly become a major concern for teachers and school administrators. So, developing strategies for how to deal with student behaviors serves a critical and complementary part along with a set of processes and activities included in the scholastic daily life. Therefore, best management of student behavior in schools represents the start point for developing effective policies and strategies of managing student behavioral problems beforehand. Consequently, the role of school principal as an educational leader includes not only dealing with academic issues in schools but also the daily life of students including their values, beliefs, social relations and skills. Obviously, this reveals the need to cast greater light on the role of school principal in the interaction with and management of student behaviors, so that to get any inconvenient behavior positively controlled and disciplined.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the present study stems from the information it generates about the role practiced by female school principals in dealing with student behaviors, which is critical for decision makers when they consider taking necessary measures in this regard. Additionally, such information holds significant for female school principals because they give them insights about their own behavior, and methods of development in light of the results from this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current study is to identify the role practiced by school principals in dealing with student behaviors from viewpoint of teachers at schools attended by female students within Irbid First Educational Directorate.

Questions of the Study

The present study attempts to answer the following questions:-

1. What is the degree of female teacher's estimates of the role practiced by female principals in dealing with female student behaviors?
2. Does the degree of female teacher's estimates of the role practiced by female principals in dealing with female student behaviors vary by the academic qualification, experience years and school level?

Limitations

The following limitations might limit the generalize ability of results from this study:

1. The sample was limited to participants recruited from female teachers attending public schools within Irbid First Educational Directorate.
2. The School Principal's Tasks Inventory developed by the researcher adds another limitation, meaning the need for further studies with other populations.

Operational Definitions

- Student misbehaviors: refer to unwanted conducts and behaviors practiced by students inside and outside of the classroom, which obviously violate the social and scholastic rules.
- Role: describes different functions supposed to be assumed by an individual or institution within specific framework. Such roles assumed are expected to realize at a high degree if were accurately defined, and the conditions of success were available. Educationally, a role can be viewed as the organized pattern of criteria governing individual's behavior to perform his/her function within the group.
- Principal's Role: procedurally defined as the activities and functions expected from a school principal that contribute to better interaction with female student behaviors.

Variables

The following variables were considered in this study:

a. Independent Variables

Academic Qualification, and has three levels:

- BA or lesser
- Higher Diploma
- MA or higher

b. Experience, and has two levels:

- Less than 10 years
- 10 or more years

c. School Level, and has two levels:

- Primary
- Secondary

Dependent Variable: indicates the role practiced by female school principals Prior Studies Perceptions and evaluations from viewpoints of teachers of the role practiced by school principals have attracted much of the research both domestically and internationally, and some of the relevant studies reviewed were the following:-

Aqbakoba (2017) Study to find out if there is a relationship between Catholic School Principals and teachers' perceptions on principals' leadership styles?", and "Is there an association between decision type and decision-making style used?"The sample included of 11 Catholic School Principals and 179 Catholic School Teachers. Results showed that there was agreement between teachers and principals on how often principals engaged in authoritarian style leadership, but not how often they engaged in participatory or delegative leadership styles. Additionally, there was no association between decision type and decision making style that the principals used.

A study by Waswas and Gasaymeh (2017) aims to identifying the role played by school principals in the Governorate of Ma'an to strengthen intellectual security of the school students; and identifying whether there are statistically significant differences in the roles of principals attributed to the variables: gender, academic level, and years of experience in administration. Data were collected and analyzed by using a questionnaire that determines the role of school principals in the promotion of intellectual security. The questionnaire includes three areas: the role of principals toward teachers, the role of principals toward school activities, and the role of principals toward community service. The study sample consisted of 120 male and female school principals in Ma'an governorate. The results showed that the arithmetic means of the three domains in the questionnaire ranged from (3.547-4.129) with high degree of agreement; where the domain: "the role of principals toward teachers" scored the highest value, and the domain: "the role of principals toward community service" scored the lowest value.

Woods And Martin (2016) examined through the lens of leadership, were the behaviors of a principal as perceived by stakeholders. The following themes emerged: (1) Educating the Whole Child, with the subthemes: (a) providing basic needs; (b) academic interventions based on achievement data; (c) an emphasis on reading; (d) extended academic time; and (e) relationships; and (2) Synergy of Expectations, with the subthemes: (a) consistent student expectations; (b) increased staff accountability; and (c) community involvement. The researchers found that the principal by demonstrating behaviors as a change agent, a creator of vision, and a provider of necessary support and strategies, rather than adopting numerous programs, the school personnel were able to increase and sustain academic achievement of the students of poverty as well as their peers. Implications for principal practices, along with leadership preparatory programs are significant.

Al Ghamidi (2013) sought to identify the role of secondary school principals in improving instructional events as perceived by the teachers at public secondary schools within Al Baha District. A sample of (200) male and female teachers were selected from the population (n=631). Using a questionnaire developed by the researcher to collect data, results indicated that school principals practice their role in improving instructional events at moderate level.

Gimbel, Lopes & Greer (2011) was conducted to investigate perceptions both principals and teachers of the role practiced by school principals in strengthening professional development of teachers. The sample consisted of (476) teachers and (135) school principals. Results revealed differences in perceptions of both teachers and principals regarding the role of school principals in strengthening teacher's professional development. Teachers indicated that the most critical factor in supporting their professional development was the advices provided by the principals, whereas principals considered that listening to teacher's concerns was the most critical factor in supporting professional development of teachers.

To identify the effect of school principal in student behavior management and discipline, Ramzan, Preveen & Gujjar (2011) investigated a case study at primary school in Pakistan. Results revealed that school principals perceive their role in dealing with student behaviors is reflected in the constant and

instant support they provide to teachers in student behavior control in case of misbehaviors. The school principal, therefore, shall serve as role model in school to help extinguish student misbehaviors and reinforce positive behaviors. Therefore, effective reinforcement and rewarding system shall be in place to strengthen positive behaviors in students.

Yavuz & Bas (2010) conducted a study for evaluating the educational leadership role of a school principal from viewpoint of elementary school teachers. The randomly selected sample consisted of (16) teachers; one teacher from each of the (16) schools was recruited. Using semi-structured interview with the participants, results from content analysis revealed five themes of the educational leadership behavior among school principals; goal-setting, teaching management, student assessment, teacher support, and creation of a structured teaching-learning environment.

Shoupe & Pate (2010) investigated teacher perceptions of the leadership styles among school principals, and perception regarding the school climate. In addition, the study sought to reveal the relationship between school climate and student achievement. The sample consisted of (170) teachers attending public middle school in the Midwest, Georgia. Findings found a relationship between the school climate and student achievement. There were statistically significant differences in teacher perceptions of principal's leadership style attributed to years of experience in teaching and gender.

Awwad (2007) conducted a study for purpose of finding out obstacles facing teachers when they use effective strategies in dealing with misbehaving students, order such obstacles by their intensity, and finally identify the impact of some variables hindering teachers from using effective strategies with student misbehaviors. The sample consisted of (160) male and female teachers recruited from a population of (420) teachers attending secondary public schools within Northern Districts in the West Bank. Participants were asked to respond to 70-item questionnaire measured on Likert 5-point scale. Findings showed that (18) of problems viewed as obstacles were estimated at a high degree versus other (18) obstacles estimated at low degree. However, (34) obstacles were estimated moderately. Furthermore, results revealed no statistically significant differences in identification of the obstacles hindering teachers from using effective strategies in dealing with student behavioral problems attributed to some variables: educational rehabilitation, years of experience, sex and interaction between them. Finally, school environment was placed top among obstacles of using effective strategies as rated by teachers. However, obstacles related to students were rated secondly, and that related to teacher were rated thirdly and obstacles related to community was placed in the fourth rank with poor effect.

Jaradat (1997) investigated the role practiced by secondary school principals in improving the organizational climate in Irbid Governorate as perceived by the educational supervisors and teachers. The sample consisted of (144) educational supervisors and (474) teachers of both sexes, and used a 72-item questionnaire distributed on seven domains: student affairs and needs, administrative affairs and policies, positive relations within the school organization, school-community relationship, teacher affairs and professional development.

Additionally, results demonstrated that the most frequently practices roles by school principals were as moderator of the organizational climate. However, from the standpoint of educational supervisors, school principals most often practice roles related to relationship between boss and subordinates, administrative affairs, school building and equipment, positive relations inside the scholastic organization, student affairs and their educational needs, relationship between the school and local community and finally teacher affairs and professional development.

To summarize, the review of the related literature reveals that most international and domestic studies were focused on teacher's perceptions of the leadership roles expected from school principals (T=Yavuz & Bas, 2010), the role he/she plays to enhance professional development of teachers (Aqbakoba, 2017&Gimbel et al., 2011), the leadership style of school principals (Shoupe & Pate, 2010), the role of school principals in improving the instructional events (Waswas & Gasymeh 2017, Al Ghamidi, 2013) and improving the organizational climate (Jaradat, 1997). However, dearth of previous studies investigated the teacher perceptions of the role of school principals in dealing with student behaviors, but one study (Ramzan et al., 2011) was focused on self-reported perceptions of the role of school principals in dealing with student behavior.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

To achieve the study goals, the descriptive statistical approach was used due to appropriateness with the study nature.

Population and Sample:

Population consisted of all female teachers (n=4095) at the public schools within Irbid Educational Directorate during the academic year (2017/2018), out of which selected a sample of (390) female teachers. Table (1) shows distribution of participants by independent variables.

Table (1): **Frequencies and percentages participant responses by independent variables**

Variable	Levels	Frequencies	Percentages %
Academic Qualification	BA or lesser	319	82.1
	Higher Diploma	38	9.6
	MA or higher	33	8.3
Total		390	100.0
Experience	Lesser than 10 years	215	55.0
	10 or greater	175	45.0
Total		390	100
School Level	Primary	235	60.0
	Secondary	155	40.0
Total		390	100.0

Instrumentation

A questionnaire consisting of (26) items in its final versions was developed as a result of the literature review of prior studies on the role of school principals in dealing with student problems. Principally, the instrument consisted of two parts:

Part One: collected demographic information about the respondents including their academic qualifications, experience, and school level.

Part Two: Included final version of the items measuring the role practiced by school principals in dealing with the behavioral problems among female students. Likert 5-point scale (High Degree, High, Moderate, Low, Very Low) was used.

Correction Method:

Responses to the questionnaire were measured on Likert 5-point Scale, where each estimation degree was given the following weighs: Very High=1, High=4, Moderate=3, Low=2, Very Low=1.

To judge on the role practiced by school principals in dealing with student problematic behaviors, the following criterion was adopted: $\geq 1 < 1.5$ indicates very low, $\geq 1.5 < 2.5$ indicates low degree, $\geq 2.5 < 3.5$ indicates moderate degree, $\geq 3.5 < 4.5$ indicates high degree, and ≥ 4.5 indicates very high degree.

Each questionnaire was attached with clear instructions sheet demonstrating purpose of the study and how to respond to items. Respondents were asked to complete the demographic section related to study variables.

Validity Test

The instrument was validated by computing corrected item-total correlation coefficient on a pilot study of (60) female students at public schools within Irbid Educational Directorate and results shown in table (2).

Table (2) Corrected item-total correlation coefficient Item-Total Statistics

Item No.	Corrected item-total correlation coefficient
1	.311
2	.567
3	.302
4	.743
5	.781
6	.727
7	.668
8	.324
9	.580
10	.609
11	.768
12	.715
13	.703
14	.614
15	.595
16	.470
17	.669
18	.844
19	.636
20	.692
21	.759
22	.783
23	.735
24	.777
25	.576
26	.638

Table (2) shows that all corrected item-total correlation coefficients were statistically significant at ($\alpha=0.05$). The researcher accepted coefficient (.030) as criterion for evaluation of the items, so all instrument items (n=26) were retained.

Reliability Test

Reliability was ascertained by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficient (.85) on a pilot study of (60) female students at public schools within Irbid First Educational Directorate and was considered acceptable for the purpose of this study.

Statistical Processing

To answer question one, means and standard deviations of the estimates of teachers regarding each of the instrument items and the overall instrument were computed.

Similarly, to answer question two, means and standard deviations of the estimates of teachers with the overall instrument were computed to measure the role practiced by female school principals in dealing with student behavior by the variables (academic qualification, experience years and school level). Three way analysis of variance ANOVA was used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results related to question one "What is the degree of female teacher's estimates of the role practiced by female principals in dealing with female student behaviors?"

To answer this question, means and standard deviations were computed for female teacher's estimates regarding each of the instrument items and the overall instrument as shown in table (3).

Table 3: Means and standard deviations of teacher's estimates on each its and overall instrument in descending order by means

No.	Item	Rank	M*	SD	Estimation
21	I keep track of student absence and identify reasons	1	4.04	1.10	High
11	I may direct teachers to importance of teaching their students listening to others and respect them	2	3.83	1.11	High
10	I advise female teachers on instilling moderate Islamic beliefs in students	3	3.82	1.13	High
7	I respect individual's privacy when dealing with a problematic behavior	4	3.78	1.09	High
6	I take instant action in case of any problematic behavior	5	3.73	1.17	High
23	I encourage female teachers and students to employ the school broadcast to enhance positive behavioral rules.	6	3.72	1.17	High
24	I keep order in situations critical to teachers and students	6	3.72	1.09	High
13	I monitor and keep track student misbehaviors	8	3.66	1.10	High
8	I maintain flexible approach when teaching problematic behaviors	9	3.65	1.06	High
20	I apply instructions regarding behavioral and discipline rules	10	3.57	1.15	High
22	I always strengthen social relations among students	10	3.57	1.15	High
18	I give attention to student problems individually	12	3.41	1.24	Moderate
19	I plan to engage students in extracurricular activities and events	12	3.41	1.22	Moderate
17	I make student alert to consult adults regarding their problems	14	3.38	1.17	Moderate
2	I direct teachers to use appropriate verbal language when deal with problematic behaviors	15	3.24	1.22	Moderate
25	I give sufficient time for female student is situation embarrassing both teachers and students	16	3.22	1.12	Moderate
26	I work on reinforcing independence and self-dependency among female students	16	3.22	1.20	Moderate
1	I hold workshops to raise awareness for teachers to deal with behavioral problems	18	3.21	1.20	Moderate
14	I always review student records to learn about problematic behaviors	19	3.12	1.14	Moderate
3	I encourage the role of school counselor to deal with student problems	20	3.08	1.28	Moderate
12	I use case study approach for behavioral problem solving	21	3.02	1.12	Moderate
9	I am aware to the importance of media, social media and Internet and relationship with behavioral problems.	22	2.80	1.19	Moderate
4	I keep reading education research on behavioral problems	23	2.70	1.15	Moderate
15	I contact with various professionals to hold educational courses to avoid behavioral problems among students	24	2.70	1.24	Moderate
5	I may ask principals at other schools for assistance on dealing with problematic behaviors	24	2.41	1.18	Low
16	I used to prepare leaflets on problematic behaviors for students	26	2.30	1.17	Low
	Overall		3.32	0.76	Moderate
	*Maximum degree (5)				

Table (3) shows that item (21) stating "I keep track of student absence and identify reasons" was placed top (M=4.04, SD=1.1.) with high estimation degree. In the second rank was placed item (11) " I may direct teachers to importance of teaching their students listening to others and respect them" (M=3.83, SD=1.11) with high estimation degree. However, item (16) stating " was placed in the last rank (M=2.30, SD=1.17) with low estimation degree. The mean estimation of teachers on the overall instrument was at a moderate degree (M=2.30, SD=0.76).

Table (3) shows that out of (26) items, (11) (42.3%) were highly estimated, and (13) items (50.0%) were moderately estimated and only two items (7.7%) were estimated low.

The results that indicated high estimation by respondents to items can be accounted by the fact that such items describe routine practices of school principals such as monitoring student absence and instill Islamic beliefs in students and the like. However, the items that describe nontraditional practices like researching about behavioral problems looking for specialized information were estimated at a moderate or low degree. This could be due that school principal preparation programs implemented pre and in-service are concerned with technical aspects in teaching rather than providing them knowledge and experience about student problematic behaviors which they can employ in classroom situations.

Results from the current study generally agrees with Al Ghamidi (2013) that confirmed that school principals practice their role of improving the instructional events moderately.

Results related to question two "Does the degree of female teacher's estimates of the role practiced by female principals in dealing with female student behaviors vary by the academic qualification, experience years and school level?"

To answer this question, means and standard deviations were computed for female teacher's estimates with the overall instrument regarding the role practiced by female school principals in dealing with student behaviors by the variables (academic qualification, experience years, and school level) as shown in table (4).

Table 4: Means and standard deviations of teacher's estimates on the overall instrument regarding the principals' role in dealing with student behaviors by variables (academic qualification, years of experience, and school level)

Frequencies and percentages participant responses by independent variables

Variable	Levels	Count	M	SD
Academic Qualification	BA or lesser	319	3.34	0.75
	Higher Diploma	38	3.22	0.85
	MA or higher	33	3.26	0.83
Experience	Lesser than 10 years	215	3.34	0.70
	10 or greater	175	3.29	0.83
School Level	Primary	235	3.36	0.69
	Secondary	155	3.26	0.86

This table shows superficial differences among mean estimates of female teachers on the overall instrument regarding the role of female school principals in dealing with student misbehaviors as perceived by teachers attending public schools within Irbid First Educational Directorate by such variables as (academic qualification, years of experience, and school level). To identify statistical significance of such differences, Three way Analysis ANOVA test was used as shown by table (5) below.

Table (5): Results from three way analysis of variance ANOVA of the teacher's mean estimates on the overall instrument of the role of school principals in dealing with student behaviors by the variables (academic qualification, years of experience, and school level)

Source of Variance	Total Squares	Freedom Degrees	Mean Squares	F-Value	Significance α
Academic Qualification	0.407	2	0.203	0.348	0.706
Experience	0.164	1	0.164	0.280	0.597
School Level	0.781	1	0.781	1.338	0.248
Error	221.788	380	0.584		
Total	223.140	384			

Table (5) shows that:-

- There were no statistically significant differences at significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) among mean estimates of teachers on the overall instrument regarding the role of female school principals in dealing with student behaviors attributed to academic qualification ($F=0.348$, $\alpha=0.706$), attributed to (years of experience) ($F=0.280$, $\alpha=0.597$), and to the (school level) ($F=1.338$, $\alpha=0.248$).

This result can be due to the observation that school principals in different educational environments at female schools exercise similar roles, hence the teacher's estimates of school principal's roles were also similar irrespective of variation of the academic qualification, years of experiences or school level (primary/secondary).

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the earlier results the following were suggested:

- To organize workshops for school principals on dealing with student behaviors at schools.
- The need school principals to strengthen the relationship between school and parents to provide them insights about behaviors of their students and how to deal with them.
- To share the knowledge about female student behaviors with the public by taking advantage of the traditional media, pamphlets, and the social media.
- The need to make available academic/counseling professionals to help school principals understand the behaviors of their students and how to deal with and reduce misbehaviors.

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Questionnaire

Part One

Demographics

Please put (X) against the statement most describes your case

1. Academic Qualification:

BA or less Higher Diploma MA or higher

2. Years of Experience

Less than 10 More than 10

3. School level

Primary Secondary

No.	Item	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
1	I hold workshops to raise awareness for teachers to deal with behavioral problems					
2	I direct teachers to use appropriate verbal language when deal with problematic behaviors					
3	I encourage the role of school counselor to deal with student problems					
4	I keep reading education research on behavioral problems					
5	I may ask principals at other schools for assistance on dealing with problematic behaviors					
6	I take instant action in case of any problematic behavior					
7	I respect individual's privacy when dealing with a problematic behavior					
8	I maintain flexible approach when teaching problematic behaviors					
9	I am aware to the importance of media, social media and Internet and relationship with behavioral problems.					
10	I advise female teachers on instilling moderate Islamic beliefs in students					
11	I may direct teachers to importance of teaching their students listening to others and respect them					
12	I use case study approach for behavioral problem solving					
13	I monitor and keep track student misbehaviors					
14	I always review student records to learn about problematic behaviors					
15	I contact with various professionals to hold educational courses to avoid behavioral problems among students					
16	I used to prepare leaflets on problematic behaviors for students					
17	I make student alert to consult adults regarding their problems					
18	I give attention to student problems individually					
19	I plan to engage students in extracurricular activities and events					
20	I apply instructions regarding behavioral and discipline rules					
21	I keep track of student absence and identify reasons					
22	I always strengthen social relations among students					
23	I encourage female teachers and students to employ the school broadcast to enhance positive behavioral rules.					
24	I keep order in situations critical to teachers and students					
25	I give sufficient time for female student is situation embarrassing both teachers and students					
26	I work on reinforcing independence and self-dependency among female students					