

An Analysis of the Current Situation of Kindergarten Principal' Power and Influence from the Perspective of Micro-Politics

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Abstract: The demand for high efficient leadership in preschool education is further growing, and the research on principal's influence is the need of principal's leadership theory development. According to the micro-political theory, this study analyzes the current situation of compulsory power influence, Incentive power influence and legal power influence of kindergarten principal, so as to arouse the thinking of improving kindergarten management and promoting greater development of the principal's own management ability. In spatial field of kindergarten, power is the premise of principal influence. On the basis of staff in kindergarten whose cognition to the principal conduct and their relationship with the principal, this paper analyzes the contemporary situation of the principal's power influence, and shows a dynamic process that how the principal's influence generates. From the micro-politics, the principal's power influence and onlookers' politics are both based on power relations, establishing interpersonal relationships within the organization, and influencing the positive process of individuals or groups, which have inherent consistency.

1. Literature Review

In 1984, Robert B. Cialdini, a world-famous influence research expert, first put forward the concept of influence. He thought that influence is the power that can make others comply with a will or implement an act, and this power enables others change their psychology and behavior in a form that they are willing to accept [1]. In order to make effective influence results obtained by leaders, it is only temporary for completing tasks by relying solely on the authority given by organizations. Such leadership is pointless, thus influence is crucial to effective leadership. Micro-politics has developed from the micro-level of society, focusing on daily life such as individual desires, families and interpersonal relationship. American scholar Chief and others think that micro-politics is a series of strategies, and it is an act of individuals or groups in an organization seeking to put influence into practice through political strategies to find more benefits [2]. From the perspective of micro-politics, the principal's influence and micro-politics are based on power relations, establishing interpersonal relationships within the organization, and influencing individuals or groups to be positive, which have inherent consistency.

1.1. The Micro-Politics of Kindergarten

1.1.1 Micro-Groups in Kindergartens

In the political relationship, the principal is the entity of power, and the staff is the object of power. However the influence is bidirectional, and there is a relationship between the principal and the staff, so both principal and the staff can be subjects and objects at the micro level. In view of the fact that this paper mainly studies the power influence of the principal, we regard the principal as the power subject at the micro level.

1.1.2 If Power Relations are there in Micro-Groups, there will be Influence

Because of the power given by principal's position, principal can have certain influence inside and outside the kindergarten, while the influence of kindergarten principal on the staff due to the power relations is relatively stable but also changeable.

1.1.3 The Influence of the Principal Is a Micro-Order

The power influence of principal includes compulsory power influence, legal power influence and Incentive power influence, which means that this power influence has certain bondage in the relationship between the principal and staff. And this bondage is also the embodiment of maintaining organizational norms and orders in micro-politics. Therefore, from the perspective of micro-politics, we can better understand the forming of power influence by analyzing the principal influence.

1.2 The Power Influence of Kindergarten Principal

The principal power is a kind of relationship, which is formed on the basis of the communication between the entity, forming a crisscrossing relationship network and being interrelated, for example, the principal's communication with teachers, nurses and support staff. Therefore, the formation and stability of the principal power requires the power subject-the principal who is to have certain power resources, generate information power relations, and putting an impact on the relationship objects, as shown in Figure 1 [3].

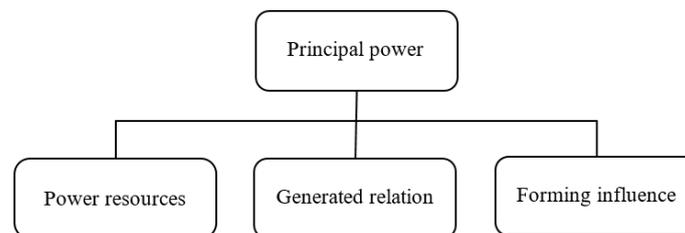


Figure 1: Map of principal power concept

The power influence of kindergarten principal is the influence brought by the authority of principal, which is mainly influenced by principal's position and power, and has nothing to do with his/her personal quality, conduct and professional knowledge of the principal. It is a compulsory influence and controls the working of kindergarten staff and resources. It has the following characteristics: First, it is explicit. No matter who holds the position of principal, the power influence has the same performance. This influence affects kindergarten staff, children and even parents through mandatory orders, kindergarten rules and regulations and other external forces; Secondly, it has timeliness. The size of power influence changes with position changing. Once

losing principal power, principal power influence will disappear; Finally, it is sensible. The influence of power is under laws and rules, determined by the subjective will of the principal and controlled by principal's will.

2. Research Methods

This study adopts the interview method as a research method, which is a very important method of collecting data in qualitative research, and can dig deep into the research questions and obtain the meaning of behavior. Through in-depth interviews with kindergarten principal and other teaching staff, the interpersonal relationship between kindergarten principal and staff, kindergarten management environment, etc., daily affairs and other aspects that are closely linked. It is to understand the values behind the influence of kindergarten principal power, deeply analyze the influence, and provide evidence for improving kindergarten management efficiency.

2.1 Research Object

The interviewees selected in this study are mainly from public kindergartens, and the teachers and staff of different positions who had close contact with the kindergarten directors were finally selected as the interview subjects after fully considering the characteristics of the kindergartens and the personal information of the interviewees.

2.2 Data Collection and Reorganization

The main contents of the interview include the following two aspects: (1) The time spent working with the principal; (2) The performance of the principal power and influence in management working. After the interview, the data is summarized and sorted out in timely manner. In order to prevent the forgetting of valid information, the recordings and transcripts were sorted out in a timely manner, the text data was formed, and they were encoded, as detailed in Table 1:

Table 1: Sheet of interviewee's basic information

No.	Gender	Educational background	Major	Term of service	Position	Total number of the staff	Place
N1	Female	Undergraduate	Preschool education	2 years	Teachers	60	Guangdong
N2	Female	Undergraduate	Music education	8 years	Teachers	44	Guangdong
N3	Male	Undergraduate	Preschool education	6 years	Middle-level leader	50	Guangdong
N4	Male	Junior college degree	Management category	6 years	support staff	53	Guangdong
N5	Female	Junior college degree	Administration	3 years	Administration officer	60	Guangdong
N6	Female	Junior college degree	Preschool education	5 years	Nurse worker	58	Guangdong
N7	Female	Undergraduate	Preschool education	30 years	Principal	60	Guangdong
N8	Female	Undergraduate	Preschool education	25 years	Principal	44	Guangdong

3. Results and Analysis

3.1 The influence of compulsory power: accompanied by the emergence of negative emotions

The organization gives the leader the power to restrain others, so that it has a coercive effect on the subordinates, can affect the working conditions, status and even change the fate of the leader, causing the leader to have a sense of awe for the leader. And the more power a leader has, the

deeper the sense of awe and the greater the influence [4].

Respondent N2: The current principal is partial to be strong and dignified. He is transferred down from above and has a certain background, so his style of working is more vigorous, and work efficiency is relatively high. But not all teachers are willing to follow his arrangements. Many of our teachers feel that they are a little more stressed than other kindergartens, and there are some complaint from the colleagues.

Respondent N3: I think it's better to be approachable. I am always too serious for kindergarten, how tired I am!

N3, as a kindergarten middle level leader, is clearly understand the end of the serious leadership, put himself on airs can not build the leadership. N2, although as the head of the kindergarten, is young and promising, but the easy punishment and command have great limitations. A leader is impossible to fully understand or know all the work done by all subordinates, no leader can have such knowledge and enough control. Formal authority cannot bond the sense of resistance, compulsory power is isolated. Simple compulsory power cannot give a positive influence. Based on "reciprocity", when implementing compulsory power, it is easy to make the followers convinced with a positive, stable influence.

Respondent N7: I think my success should be that my relationship with colleagues, is quite good. Basically, both the old and young give kind of respect.

Director N7 believes that his management is quite successful by the good relationship with faculty and staff, and staff obedience is better in management.

This study considers that the threat component of compulsory power influence can cause some negative manifestations such as mistrust and resentment between principals and the staff. A smart principal will clearly understand that exerting his/her power effectiveness, who needs to maintain good interpersonal relationships in the kindergarten network. In the relatively closed power of kindergarten field, the principal uses the power capital given by the position to give employees favors in terms of behavior or material, and employees will also contribute their loyalty and stability. Kindness is an exchange behavior in interpersonal communication in Chinese society, so in an organization, the leader's kindness investment is conducive to the formation of a stable organizational structure. [5] It is this power in the hands of the leader that invests in the kindness of the leader in advance, and with the help of the use of power, in exchange for the return.

Respondent N1: On big issues, she is very dignified and majestic. For example, in the preparation for the kindergarten opening under the epidemic, even the colleague made a little mistake, was severely criticized by her. However, as normal, she prefers to forgive and even take the initiative to care about who occasionally make a small mistake that has not effect on work.

Respondent N5: I can't get into the official frame, and there is under great economic pressure in my family. I was asked to go to a private kindergarten with higher salary. The principal didn't want me to leave, and I went anyway. But then I really wanted to come back. I liked the working environment here very much, and I might feel more secured. I called back the principal, and the principal promised to give me another chance, so I back again, and have been three years with a blink of eyes.

The principal of N1 not only shows concerns for the small mistakes made by the staff, but also the staff, while N5's principal sympathizes with employees and give an understanding when they encounter poverty, illness or other life problems, also tries to help them, and uses the power of their position to "do human feeling things". Especially when N5 went to another kindergarten and wanted to come back, the principal used the own personnel power to provide N5 an opportunity again, which made N5 very grateful. The principal also knows that N5 is an experienced nurse, and her kindness to N5 not only affected N5, but also affected other employees, and her power was consolidated. Leaders give favors to employees at the material or behavioral level, in exchange for

the leader's return to the leader for "doing a good job" and "working with mind and peace".

Compulsory is a very sensitive part in the influence of power, both an indispensable part and a resistance by everyone. It means that the using of power is restricted by the masses to some extent. If the influence of compulsory power is absolutized, the influence of power will become becomes an illegitimate "despotism". However, the inappropriate "threat" component of compulsory power will not only produce psychological and physical stresses on employees, but also bring certain physical and mental pressure to leaders, resulting in mutual suspicion and even negative effects such as resentment [6]. Therefore, in the daily management of the principal, the most suitable use of compulsory power is to face endangered behaviors in kindergartens, such as the activities threatening the rights and safety of children or staff members or illegal, theft and other behaviors that harm others, and disobeying legal requests. For kindergartens, the most basic institution for educating children, it is difficult for using compulsory power, which is impossible without using. Instead, we should pay attention to the ways and means with using a "rule", otherwise which is easy to bring negative effects.

3.2 Incentive power influence: control the resources that others want or need

Leaders play the role of resource controllers in an organization, who not only allocates resources according to the followers performance at work, as well as various expected gains and losses based on their networks [3].

Respondent N1: The principal will still attach great importance to the professional development of each teacher. If any teacher gives greater contribution, he will definitely give priority for promotion.

However, as the controllers of kindergarten resources, the principal will often consider the allocation of resources given by him/herself and the possible returns of the staff. Also the principal even considers the network of the staff, the scope of his/her influence on it, and how much influence these staff can have on themselves, and estimate their own gains and losses to weigh.

Respondent N2: With the reward, everyone is working very actively. Although the principal sometimes makes staff feel a little strong, no one will hate the money. In particular, our principal is still newly appointed. If the reward is not enough, I think no one will be willing to follow his arrangement of work.

Respondent N3: There are also many reward systems in our kindergarten. After the new principal came, there was the increasing amount of rewards by him, which is to mobilize the enthusiasm of well-done teachers and supporting staff.

Because the principal of N2 and N3 are newly appointed, it is that reward is the most direct way for the principal to quickly stimulate the enthusiasm of employees. Most of the resources in kindergartens are limited, and how the principal allocate resources is crucial for working motivation and that how teaching staffs performs. Incentive power intrigues the effect under certain circumstances, which can upgrade the staff's work efficiency. It is also a manifestation of leaders' management style and personal values. Some social psychologists believe that the essence of power influence is also a process of social transaction [7]. The main reason why rewarding power can influence others is that the leader has gained the power to control resources, and the leader can expect some reward for his actions. The authors observed that the use of the right to reward in the management activities of kindergartens is relatively common, but when the exercise of the right to reward is combined with the right of coercion, the right to reward does have a negative effect. If rewarding right is not used properly, once there is no reward, the staff sometimes even recognizes it as punishment for themselves, which has a negative impact. Therefore, although the rewarding right has the effect of improving the enthusiasm of staff, which also needs to be used rationally.

3.3 The influence of legal power: the obedience of the dominated object to the principal

Legitimacy power is the basis and limits within which a leader exerts other powers on the leader. In today, when people are accustomed to challenging authority, the effects of power abusing are far from being seen. First of all, leaders rely on employees to get their work done; Secondly, almost no one in modern organizations will follow orders because someone is the "leader" [8]. It can be seen from the respondents that can unconditionally obey and support their reasonable work arrangements and policies for the principal, but when they think it is unreasonable, there will be against opinions and even protest.

Respondent N1: If there are some unreasonable arrangements, we will give advice in time. At present, there are no inappropriate situations arranged by him, so we usually obey unconditionally.

Respondent N2: Generally, I will tell him my thoughts and reasons, communicate with him, and generally will not directly refuse. If you really feel unreasonable, you can choose a suitable time to put forward your own views and suggestions to the leaders.

Respondent N3: If the work arrangement is unreasonable or inappropriate, I will bring it up in private, so as to bond everyone in a unite.

Respondent N4: I will certainly obey at the meeting, and in private I will generally tell him my thoughts and reasons, communicate with him, and generally do not reject directly.

Respondent N5: Is it a bit hard to be unconditional, right? Now the working assignment is relatively much, and sometimes it has to work overtime. I will try my best to show my positive attitude to the leaders, and what I can do will follow up. If it is a really challenge, and I will say it clearly. After all, you have to work and live.

If it was arranged publicly at the meeting, I would refuse directly, because there were just the only two administrators in the office, and I thought it was snitching behind my back.

Respondent N6: Yes, my job is already quite large. Unreasonable work arrangement may be something I am not good at, and reluctantly doing it will also affect the work results, so I usually refuse it directly.

Six staffs, N1, N2, N3, N4, N5 and N6, all indicated that they would refuse the arrangement when it is unreasonable work arrangement by the principal. Among them, three staff, N2, N3 and N4, indicated that they would find another suitable time or put forward opinions on the unreasonable arrangement in private, on the premise of respecting the principal. Two staffs, N5 and N6, one is an administrative officer and the other is a nurse. Both of them said that their workload is already very heavy. If there are unreasonable work arrangements, they will refuse the arrangement of leaders and consider their work more.

The exercise of legal power is generally an order, an instruction, or a request, which display method can be oral or written. The degree of influence of the influence of the legitimate power is determined by the way the influence is used by the influencer [9]. If the demands on the affected are in the form of orders, then there is an emphasis on status and power relations, implying unequal dependence between superior and inferior. If the influencer makes a request to the affected person in a polite way with a reasonable explanation for the request, it will help to internalize the influencer's goal into the affected person's demand. However, it is important to note that polite requests, which do not mean that the influencer should humbly plead, also with a clear and reasonable explanation of the target requirements in an appropriate way. But in times of crisis, orders and coercive orders are necessary, but this requires sufficient knowledge and talent on the part of the influencer, otherwise a misjudgment will cause a negative impact.

4. Conclusion

Based on the above analysis, it is concluded that the power influence of the kindergarten

principal is the influence brought by the kindergarten principal's authority, which is mainly affected by the position and power of the kindergarten principal, having nothing to do with the principal's personal quality, conduct and professional knowledge. It is a mandatory influence that controls the operation of the whole staff and resources in kindergarten. Specifically, there are the following characteristics: First, it is explicit. No matter who holds the principal position, he/she has the same performance. And this influence causes effects on kindergarten staff, children and even parents through mandatory orders, kindergarten rules, regulations and other external forces; Secondly, it has temporal line. The power influence changes with the changing of position. Once the principal loses the power, the power influence will disappear; finally, it is sensible. The influence of power is under law and rules, determined by the subjective will of the principal and controlled by principal's willing.

In human society, from a country to a field, an organization and even an individual behavior is bound by power. In traditional society, "being an official" means having supreme power. Since then the one has power, wealth and reputation all together. In modern society, this perception still exists. While being appointed as the principal, he/she has the power brought by the position, which makes the staff have a certain "dependence". This "dependence" is only for the power, not on the specific person. And this influence based on administrative power is the foundation, but not the whole.

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