World Applied Sciences Journal 3 (4): 639-648, 2008
ISSN 1818-4952

Organizational Cleaner Catfish

[1]Semih İrfaner and [2]Ş. Şule Erçetin

[1]Faculty Academic English Program, School of English Language, Bilkent University, Turkey
[2]Department of Educational Administration, Supervision,
Planning, and Economy, Hacettepe University, Turkey

Abstract: This study aims to put forward the importance of toxic handlers and identify the toxic handlers working in educational organizations. There are many research studies conducted in the field of organizational management regarding the toxic handlers but the ones conducted in educational organizations are quite few. Therefore, in order to find out who shoulders this task at schools, this research was conducted in a vocational school with 130 administrative and academic staff members. In order to identify the toxic handlers in the organization, the characteristics of a toxic handler suggested by Frost and Robinson were used to prepare the observation and interview scales [1]. At the end of the research, it was found out that the cleaner catfish a.k.a. toxic handler is the deputy principal working in the organization.

Key words: Organizational Health · Toxicant · Toxic handler · Catfish · Dedication · Saviors

INTRODUCTION

Industrial revolution marked the history with irreversible and huge changes in the history of organizations and in the field of management. When the definition of the term `organization` is carefully analyzed, it can be easily seen that people and goals of an organization are the two corner stones that need to be found in all organizations [2].

In 1990s, according to Newell, companies were trying to survive in a very fiercely competitive market [3]. Under those conditions, most of them believed that the only way to stay alive and fit was to satisfy their customers for whom price was one of the most important determiners. Consequently company owners reduced the costs and downsized their companies laying off many workers whereas the results of these were quite detrimental for employees and workers.

The fierce market conditions brought about needs of change in companies, which was a wave that affected almost companies of all size; big or small. The main intention behind this wave was to make companies more productive and effective so as to keep them as competitive as possible. Since the previous research studies proved that the ill physical conditions of a workplace led to unproductive and ineffective results which in turn caused financial and material losses. Although an employer would measure the maximum productivity of a machine, it was quite unlikely to do so for employees and as a result increasing the work standard of a human being so as to escalate the productivity turned out to be utopia.

Many studies and surveys were conducted to accomplish the ultimate target called productivity and efficiency, yet the emphasis was always on different ideas rather than the human factor. Newell argued that upon Mayo's Hawthorne studies many scientists and writers directed their focus on efficient organizations; that is to say, human satisfaction and motivation [3].

Başaran and Jones discuss organizational effectiveness under two main headings; internal and external [4, 5]. While internal effectiveness is about making products in conformity with the organizational goals through having set characteristics, which is the productivity of an organization. On the other hand external effectiveness is about the realization of organizational and administrational goals based upon internal effectiveness. Reaching internal effectiveness requires being productive, healthy, fit, and useful. Internal effectiveness, as it can be understood from its name, is related to internal affairs of organizations and quite connected to the contribution of human value. This study is mainly concerned with the health of organizations and the way it can be maintained.

Corresponding Author: Semih İrfaner, Faculty Academic English Program, School of English Language, Bilkent University, Turkey

HEALTHY ORGANIZATION

According to Başaran, an organization should canalize all the attention and concentration on its goals so as to accomplish predefined goals and targets [4]. Otherwise power disintegration becomes evident and in the end gets sick or unhealthy. How a human being fails to accomplish his goals, an unhealthy organization will get into the same condition. According to the writer, the power disintegration is generally observed in human power. Schuyler and Branagan also believe the indispensable role of human in maintaining organizational health [6]. Recalling the conventional techniques used before, they highlight the psychologically damaging effects on individual employees. Besides they cite Argyris's definition to show the importance of healthy human functioning "... a healthy organization is one that enables mature human functioning" [6].

In organizations, it is much easier to coordinate the power of input than that of human power. Likewise it is much more difficult to coordinate the power of individuals to the organizational goals set by management. In order to protect and preserve the health of an organization, the functions to be put into action are as (a) management should integrate each employee's personal goals with the ones of the organization, (b) management should coordinate the power of the employees and orient it to the ones of the organization, (c) management should manage the probable conflicts among and between the employees [5].

In the literature there are also different definitions of a healthy organization sometimes under different names. For instance Hoy, Terter and Bliss encapsulate efficiency and efficacy as organizational health [7]. Can puts the concept as general evaluation of organizational performance [8]. Also Miles defines it as being able to constantly develop itself to be able to cope with probable problems that may crop up around [9]. Likewise, Bruhn's definition of a healthy organization is given under three headings quite similar to human health; body, mind, and spirit. "Body refers to the structure, organizational design, uses of power, communication processes, and distribution of work. Mind refers to how underlying beliefs, goals, policies, and procedures are implemented, how members are treated, and how organizations learn and spirit which is the core of an organization [6].

Moreover, Erçetin in her article discusses the requirements of a healthy organization under the name of organizational intelligence. The competencies of intelligent organizations are given as (a) rapid action and reaction, (b) quickly adapting to changes, (c) flexibility in function, (d) sensitiveness and being predictable, (e) open-mindedness, (f) the use of imagination, and (g) innovativeness. Using these competencies, the author points out the expected and the required characteristics of the workforce in an organization; stressing the fact that effective and efficient workforce makes an organization both healthy and intelligent. Among these dimensions the necessity of adaptability and open-mindedness are the items that are stressed as the major indicators of organizational health [10].

Many other writers in the field of organizational management such as Senge, Rosnay, Childre and Cryer have also studied the dimensions and characteristic features of organizational intelligence where all of them agree on the common denominator that is the utmost importance of human resource in any organization [11-13]. Newell stresses that for a healthy organization, it is important to provide opportunities for employees' needs and satisfaction so that the organization can benefit from the full contribution of a committed and dedicated worker [3]. At the main entrances or halls of big companies, big notice boards greet people where "people are our greatest asset" is written in big and bold characters. It is because humans make the difference between success and failure, believing that success increasingly depends upon utilizing the unique flexibility and creativity of the human mind, to monitor and respond in an increasingly turbulent environment. Thus organizations must rely on the judgments and insight of employees, committed to organizational success. Employees satisfied with their work and the work environment are more likely to show the commitment needed to operate in a proactive way. Whereas according to Pfeffer, most managers do not display such positive attitudes. "Most managers [...] look at their people, they see costs, they see salaries, they see benefits, they see overhead. Very few companies look at their people and see assets" [14].

When all the points are taken into consideration, Herzberg draws the picture of a healthy atmosphere for employees, which includes (a) presence of the number of opportunities at a workplace, (b) presence of personal value of an employee, (c) taking responsibility, and (d) feeling that they have a contribution to what's going on [15].

LACK OF HEALTH IN AN ORGANIZATION

Changes taking place after the burst of technological advancements have had influences on the work and

family life. Childre and Cryer point out the adverse effects of changes in organizations on their workforce. "Many organizations have gotten flatter and the reduction in bureaucratic layers has meant that people have to be much more flexible, have multiple skills, and struggle with roles that often are less defined. As a result the consequences of organizational changes occurred because of changing market, downsizing, merger, change in leadership or simply a series of bad decisions" [13].

According to the research, it was found out that productive work dropped from 4.8 hours per day to 1.2 hours per day, a loss of 75%, and that social chat and gossip increased from 1.5 hours per day to 3.2 hours per day an increase of more than 100% [13].

Özgüven analyzed the most possible causes of stress at work environment and put work satisfaction on top of the list as a requirement of human need. Among the most frequently observed negative feelings that individuals face are conflicts, frustration, disappointment, indifference, discontent/dissatisfaction, and stress [16]. Stress and tension are brought up because of poor management style that does not satisfy the basic needs of an individual in an organization. The most common result because of poor management style on employees in organizations appears as pain or toxicity. The new term, pain or toxicity, has been defined by Stark as "a pain that strips people of their self esteem and that disconnects them from their work" [17]. The symptoms of organizational pain can be given as absenteeism or presenteeism, theft, unproductiveness, and unethical practices. Appelbaum and Roy-Girard suggest that these behaviors do not have to arise from the surrounding of employees but also crop up due to employee's attitude, perception and personality.

Consequences: When the suitable conditions are fulfilled, discomfort and uneasiness are inclined to emerge due to lack of certain generally accepted principles in the management, lack of order in an organization or at a workplace, discontinuity in personal interactions, insufficiency in wages and lack of precautions for occupational safety and health. Erçetin while discussing organizational stupidity lists the consequences that overlap with the above items that are the indicators of organizational unhealthiness [18]. They are (a) waste of energy, time, and resources, (b) conflict, (c) repetitive mistakes, (d) failure, (e) depression. Heerzberg stated that lack of peace and presence of discomfort at a workplace are the important factors that influence employees' productivity level [16].

Cooper puts forward a term to better show the consequences of these at a workplace. "Employees come to work but due to stress and unhealthy organizational climate, they can never contribute to or do little which cause great loss in terms of cost and resources, which is defined as `Presenteeism`" [19].

Also researches conducted in the field presents that there is a strong correlation between organizational health and organizational performance. Ransom, Thrasher, Hoy and Woolfolk, all highlight the fact that organizational health has a positive impact on employees and the other way around is also true [20, 21, 7].

Toxic Workplaces: Toxicity is a reality in all organizations, yet this does not mean that it has to be observed in all organizations. Bacal as well as Dobrian have defined toxic organizations as not only destructive but also ineffective for their employees due to their policies on finding solutions to problems appearing in organizations [17]. The most common features of toxic organizations can be given by Bacal as (a) failure to fulfilling goals and objectives, (b) fearful exposure to problem-solving process and not coming up with productive solutions, (c) ineffective internal communication, (d) huge amount of waste due to poor decision and lots of rework, (e) manipulative and self-centered agendas in interpersonal relationship [17].

Hence, the toxic organizations, naturally, cannot show the features of healthy organizations due to the points raised by Bacal. It is not likely to find a team spirit in such organizations, as there is high interdependence between and among the employees. As a result of this there is little or no communication at all between them. Besides employees' personal agenda is much more important than the overall aim of the organization that they belong to, which prevent them from serving to the general goals of the organization. This brings up the issue of low performance that in turns threatens their job security that is not present in all situations, though.

People in toxic organizations do not turn out to be toxic carriers by themselves. On the contrary, there are factors that make both organizations and their employees toxic. The most powerful factor that spread out the toxins are merely the managers or the directors of an organization.

As seen in Figure 1, lack of empathy, conscience and personality traits are not enough to define a person as toxic rather the leadership role models together with anxiety, depression and impulsivity contribute the person

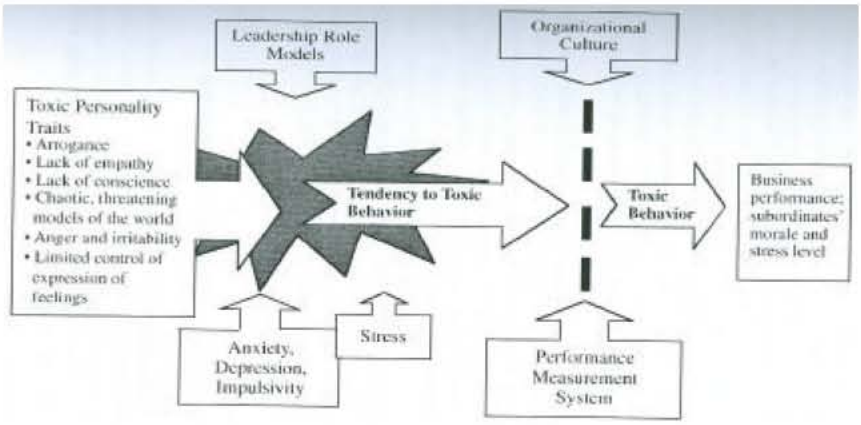

Fig. 1: How Toxic Behavior Occurs Source: Lubit, 2004: 9

to develop toxic behaviors that may affect the organizational climate negatively [22].

ORGANIZATIONAL SAVIORS: ORGANIZATIONAL CLEANER CATFISH

Frost and Robinson conducted a survey to find out how organizations and employees stand on their feet without getting hurt despite the continuous attacks by the people who spread out their toxicants across the organizations and make people sick or emotionally disturbed or loaded [1]. Organizations are always under attack due to many factors either internally or externally or sometimes both. Especially since the beginning 1990s due to the fierce market conditions, organizations at all costs have tried to survive in such conditions and consequently employees have been under great stress to enable them to stand firm and strong. The CEOs and managers are also under great compulsion to make profit and protect their companies against the aggravated market conditions. As a result of this, the stress factor negatively influences the employees and put on them an enormous amount of emotional burden, which affects their performance negatively. Despite these adverse conditions and effects of stressful working atmosphere, employees can still stand and keep on working maintaining the same performance. This brings up the question; how come organizations and employees can bear with these unfavorable conditions? If organizational health is so important and the peace and comfort of workers are of utmost importance to maintain the productivity and successful performance of organizations, how come most of the organization can still survive and manage to stand firm? It can be assumed that conflicts, problems in interpersonal communication between staff members, managerial hiccups, and failures are inevitable. In such cases there should be something or someone that maintain the balance between and among the management and subordinates. What is or who is that takes away the psychological load or burden of people at workplaces?

According to the survey performed by Frost and Robinson, there are people in every organization that keep the health and motivation of the employees at the expense of losing their psychological and physical health, sacrificing their family peace at home. As a consequence of this survey, these people were given the name `toxic handlers` since their main but unofficial responsibility is to handle the toxicants spread out by the toxic managers and executive individuals in a company. These people assume such responsibility on voluntary basis that they do not expect to be paid in return but at the same time get hurt psychologically and sometimes physically due to the psychological damage [1].

In order to get their functions in organizations understood better, a metaphor can be used at this point. Those toxic handlers can be likened to `cleaner catfish` that is quite common to biologists interested in the sea world. They commonly live on coral reefs in the Indian and Pacific Ocean. They live on parasites, mucus, scales they can find in host fish and eat remnant food particles from the shark's teeth, yet their activity is not specific to sharks. According to different sources, a cleaner fish can clean more than 2300 fish a day from over 130 species, which means that they can eat 1200 parasites each day [23]. This symbiotic relationship is known to be quite important, as two species are dependant on each other for a specific task. In this mutual relationship one party, client fish is pleased since this fish group regularly cleans his mouth. Considering the fact that cleaner fish satisfies

his appetite with the stuff in the client's mouth, it is likely to accept that the cleaner catfish is also pleased with this relationship as his survival depends on this symbiotic relationship.

According to the writers, toxic handlers take the heat of the workers as well as the managers and executive body members so as to absorb and soften the emerging emotional pain through different ways but at the same time they, just like sponge, get hurt in different ways.

Similarly toxic handlers are just like cleaner catfish on coral reef as they take the heat of the employees in the organization through different activities such as through talking, listening, calming down and sucking the negative emotions. When their relationship is analyzed, maybe it cannot be defined as symbiotic as the one between the cleaner fish and the client fish due to the fact that cleaner fish resembling toxic handler is psychologically harmed due to the negative emotions. Whereas, since employee's toxicant and negativity have been cleaned by the cleaner fish and in turn can better function as he is rectified emotionally, it can be interpreted that the cleaner fish reaches his goal and is satisfied as a result of this relationship. Because of their resemblance, toxic handlers are collectively termed as cleaner fish in this research. In order to understand those people more, it would be better to have a look at some of their distinguishing features from other employee working in an organization.

While fulfilling their own responsibilities that are derived from their job descriptions, they also never refrain from taking other employees' heat working in the same organization. Frost and Robinson, during their survey, have come across with many examples and cases where they would notice people who assumed the responsibility of toxic healers and handlers [1]. These people's positions range from managers to mid level executives, yet all of them are described as the organizational heroes by their colleagues and work mates.

Frost and Robinson also observed different organizational situation where they had the chance to know the toxic handlers on site. The characteristic features of these organizational cleaner fish are (a) listening emphatically, (b) suggesting solutions, (c) preventing pain, (d) carrying the confidences of others, and (e) reframing difficult messages [1].

Using these listed five characteristics, organizational cleaner catfish diminish the organizational pains that emerge in organizations due to stress and discomfort. The above items, in fact, are the qualities of a successful leader. When the articles and conducted research are carefully analyzed, it is likely to understand that these features of cleaner fish are also the qualities of a leader in real sense. A good leader should listen to their subordinates and work mates emphatically without making judgments and interrupting what they have to say. A good leader always suggests solutions since listening is not always enough as they come to you to look for a solution in problematic cases. A good leader is long-sighted who can envisage the approaching burn out or organizational pain and takes the necessary precautions in advance. A good leader is a reliable and trustworthy in the eye of his subordinates and workmates. He knows that the secrets confided to him will never be revealed or discovered. A good leader softens the messages that are already abusive and obnoxious.

The toxic handlers and organizational cleaner fish are of course not new to the organizations. For a very long time they have been present in organizations, our neighborhoods whereas the awareness of them has been quite recent. When the literature is read through, it can be seen that their presence in an organization has been recently figured out. Moreover due to the number of research taking place in firms and companies, there may be a false assumption that they do not exist in educational organizations such as high schools, colleges, or universities. The researches have shown when there are organizational pain a.k.a. toxicants; the necessity and the presence of an organizational cleaner fish is inevitable since somebody should take the heat of the workers suffering from organizational pain, stress, burnout, and discomfort.

PROCEDURE

In this study, the main aim is to determine whether organizational cleaner catfish is at work in organizations and if so who those people are, what they do to fulfill this task and whether the management body is aware of these people in the workplace. As mentioned above that the previous research studies have been conducted in firms or companies whereas educational institutions have not been picked up to study organizational cleaner catfish. There may be a lot of reasons for this, one of which could be that educational institutions do not resemble the characteristics of industrial organizations and also they are regarded as the organizations giving service where students are not considered to customers. However, educational institutions are also the organizations where organizational pain is frequently observed even if hierarchy is not strictly observed and implemented.

In this study, cleaner catfish group has been analyzed in educational organizations and the following questions have been addressed.

1- Who are the employees or executive body members who work as organizational cleaner fish in an educational organization?
2- a- Are they aware of the fact that they work as a cleaner fish in an educational organization?
   b- To what extent are they influenced physically or emotionally by this post?
3- How do they carry out this mission in an educational organization?
4- What is the outcome of their fulfillment for the educational organization that they work for?

METHODOLOGY

The population of the study is Ismet Paşa Vocational High School. The specific school was chosen because of the school's proximity to the researcher, the number of the staff in the school, and the positive attitude of the school's executive body towards the research. 130 staff members of the school were involved in the research, 5 of whom are school administrators such as the principal and the deputy principals, 120 school teachers, 5 administrative secretaries, and 5 auxiliary services staff. Except for the teachers, the administrative staff members were present at school between 9 am to 5 pm.

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

In this study, two main data collection tools have been used; observation and interviews.

The observations took place within the school corridors, teachers' lounge, administrative secretaries' rooms, cafeteria, principal's room, and deputy principal's rooms. The observations were conducted by the researchers for three months, four days a week and four hours each day. The researchers created an observation form to focus on the main areas while observing the samples in the study. Each observer used the same format to follow the same criteria while determining which member(s) of the staff was an organizational cleaner fish or not. The form was designed in line with the criteria set in order to find out to what extent they displayed the behaviors stated in the criteria.

Interviews constituted another important part of the study as most of the data were collected during these one to one conferences. Three open-ended questions were prepared for the interviews. Each interview lasted around 15 minutes. During each interview, the structured questions were directed to each interwee. With the participant's prior consent, the interview session was recorded and the data were collected using the information picked up in each conversation with each employee. The data were organized according to the features of an organizational cleaner fish set by Frost and Robinson, which were assigned as dimensions. As a result, the interview questions were created using these dimensions. The interview process lasted for four months due to the number of samples involved in the interview process.

ANALYSIS

The interviews were conducted over the four-month time and each interview recorded to audiotapes carefully and labeled with a special code to maintain the confidentiality of the data. Then the audiotapes were deciphered by the researches and then computer processed. The printouts of the interview data were analyzed according to the research questions set at the beginning of the research.

The observations were conducted according to a set criteria prepared beforehand. Over the four-month time, the school corridors, the cafeteria, playground, and the teacher's lounge were observed and notes were taken using the criteria. Then at the end of the time allocated, the data were collated and analyzed according to the research questions.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The data were collected over 4-month time through interview and observation sessions conducted at the high school and analyzed in the light of the research questions set at the beginning of the research study.

1- Who are the employees or executive body members who work as organizational cleaner fish in the educational organization?

The data show that there is organizational catfish in this organization. At the beginning of the survey the assumption was that cleaner fish did not have to be a member of the administrative body but eventually according to the criteria suggested by Frost and Robinson, suggesting solutions and reframing difficult messages, it was discovered that the deputy principal works as organizational cleaner catfish at the school [1].

The data obtained from the observations and interviews done with teaching and administrative body pointed out two teachers since they possessed most of the characteristics of cleaner catfish. During the recess

times at the cafeteria, teachers' lounge and corridors, they received constant visits both from students, other teachers and administrative staff. The observation notes showed that during those informal talks and meetings, some students confided in their problems about their boy or girl friends and about other teachers. Whereas they could not go beyond listening to people since they did not have the authority to suggest any solution or reframe difficult messages. Just like a tape recorder, they recorded what others shared with them and tried to calm them down through soaking their emotional heat. As they were not able to prevent pain, suggest applicable solutions or their solutions could not be worked out due to their positions, and reframe difficult messages, they were not defined as cleaner catfish.

However, unlike those two teachers, the deputy principal spent most of his time in his room due to the never-ending meeting requests coming from teachers and the administrative staff as well as the principal himself. As well as listening to the staff having problems, he suggests solutions on how to handle problems particularly caused by the principal and his hard talks. He clarified and reframed messages of the principal. He stood as a buffer zone between the principal and teachers and tried to prevent pain that may have been caused because of his unsound demands and requests.

2- a- Are they aware of the fact that they work as a cleaner fish in an educational organization?

In fact the deputy principal was not aware that he was cleaner fish having not heard of this term before. Yet he strongly believed that he needed to help people through listening to their problems and suggesting solutions. He described these conversations as `help` believing that this was the basic need of becoming a workmate working in the same organization. On the other hand, interestingly enough that the deputy principal described himself as `agony columnist` due to the number of people he had to talk to about their problems that they experienced at work. He stated that he had to listen to the staff members' concerns and complaints regarding mainly the work environment, unreasonable demands of the principal and students' parents and care givers as well as tons of administrative duties, financial complaints, and intolerable workload. During the interviews, he stated that he mostly listened to the principal after he had hard talks with the officials from the ministry or local authority and wanted to reflect it to the teachers through yelling at them, telling teachers off for unsound reasons, and preached down the administrative assistants for their minute errors.

Besides, at least 10 teachers also identified themselves as `agony aunt` quite similar to the deputy principal. The findings indicate that they are aware that they listen to others' problems, complaints, and disturbances at the expense of their break time but they did not express this as a complaint rather it is something that they should do as an essential necessity of friendship and work mate. However, during those conversations they did not come up with suggestions that did not have any power of sanction. Also they could not reframe messages coming from the administrative body.

b- Both during the observations and interviews, it was noticed that the cleaner fish looked and sounded exhausted and frustrated. During the 10-minute recess time, the deputy principal, identified as cleaner catfish, after having had conversation either with the principal and other teachers, felt quite exhausted and extremely tired. He described these conversations more tiring than teaching and coping with grading 50-60 exam papers and administrative duties. The common expression caught while deciphering the interview recordings is "after listening to my friends, I feel wretched because I always like a member of Peace Corps trying to maintain the peace between the conflicting parties". He continued, "whenever they are told off by the principal or have a hassle with others, they come to me to pour out their troubles. It is unbearable but they are so hopeless that I can't help doing it. Most of the times I try to stop the invisible fight between them, but sometimes it just gets out of my control and happens". He described his unofficial duty, as "The principal is new in this post which makes him a lot more aggressive than the former. He frequently argues with his superiors and feels the need to blow out to me. Of course I have to listen to him and call him down. Otherwise he would take the revenge from either one of the teachers or the administrative staff. I am like a buffer zone between them, which is really tough sometimes." The deputy principal expressed the aftermath of being cleaner fish as physical and psychological breakdown. He complained that he has to recover from the headache after these conversations that take at least an hour or so with each teacher or the principal himself. "Not only do they take much of my time but also suck my energy. At the end of two or three conversations, I feel completely exhausted and wretched and long for going home to take a rest". He once tried going to a psychiatrist since this negatively affected his piece and comfort at home with his family. The exhaustion continues at home. "When I get home, feeling fatigue, I cannot find any

energy to show care to my children or to my wife. My wife complains about the current situation that I cannot spend enough time with my family. I have had nightmares and wake up in the middle of a night soaked".

3- How do they carry out this mission in an educational organization?

During the interviews it was found that he carried out his mission in different ways depending upon the circumstances. The deputy principal works as the cleaner catfish since he listens to the principal and soothes him especially after the principal has had stressful telephone conversation with the officials at the ministry. The deputy principal described these tense as "the principal hangs up the phone and furiously drops in my office to burst his anger. Quite frequently, he immediately attempts to reflect these emotions to the rest of the staff but I prevent him from doing that since he bursts out his whole anger quite furiously. His anger is occasionally reflected to his staff i.e. the teachers and the administrative staff; therefore, I have to suck his negative feelings just like a piece of sponge".

According to the deputy principal, as stated before, the principal is quite an enthusiastic and aggressive manager. He tries to accomplish his own objectives without considering the well being of the teachers and the administrative staff. According to the observation and interview data, one of the administrative staff member stated that the principal ordered the office secretaries to come to work at weekend to clean up their offices. The deputy principal described what happened after this announcement. "That is bad news for the administrative staff since weekend is quite sacred for almost all of them. They immediately dropped in my room and started grumbling about this request. I immediately went up to his room to find out what the situation was all about but the principal did not discuss the issue with me and told me that he wanted see all of them on Saturday morning. We discussed about this about an hour and eventually persuaded him that this was not a logical decision. When I got to my office, there was a crowd waiting for me to hear the good news. I explained the situation to them in a different way since I needed to maintain the authority of the manager in their eyes. But all these are very tiring".

As stated above, there are two groups of toxicants that the organization cleaner catfish has to deal with; the administrative staff and the teachers working in the organization. During the observations and interviews, it was noted that the deputy principal identified as the cleaner catfish had to soothe the teachers coming in with anger and frustration. The cleaner fish just listens to them without making any comment. The teachers just talk and sometimes yell about the discomfort they complain about but no comment has been ever made by the cleaner fish. These unofficial meetings are held sometimes along the corridors or at the cafeteria with a cup of coffee or outside at the playground. "Even if the request is unsound, I just try to explain the reason behind the decision and help them see the issue from a brighter side."

4- With the help of the interviews, this question was asked to the teachers who suffered from the emotional pain. The deputy principal assumes that he teachers visiting him to talk and share their problems and complaints leave with comfort and satisfied. He believes that they can hardly work with stress and negative emotions. "They are filled up with anger and stress and they look for a person to blow up. This may be a student or a parent or a member of an administrative staff. Their visits to me help them to avoid blowing out at somebody else. He believes that by this way their motivation increases and that they concentrate on their duties more. If they are not able to share their pain with somebody else, then they may ask for a move to another schools due to their discomfort and the growing emotional tension within the organization. Another most frequent consequence is that the teachers go in their classes and bully their students for no reason. "That is something not professionally acceptable but that happens at this school since the teachers are not comfortable. This emotional pain is so dangerous that you can never know where it is going to hit".

He also identifies himself as the buffer zone between the principal and the teachers and the administrative staff. When the principal wants to take the revenge from the teachers, he always interferes and prevents the staff from being hurt emotionally.

The answers elicited from the teachers interviewed reveal the similar results since they also states that their conversation with the deputy principal helped them to find comfort and ease in the organization. They stressed the importance of his presence at school. Without going into the details of their conversations with the deputy principal, they shared the nature of these conversations as peaceful and mediating since the deputy principal does not interfere what they are going to say and listen to each of them until they finish. Then he emphatically explains the reason behind the problem, mostly suggests solutions, and helps us to look at the point from a different point of view. The couple of teachers working at the school stated "We are aware of the fact that he is also

the member of the administrative staff but his presence at school avoids me resigning from this profession."

The members of the administrative services who answered the question believed that the presence of the deputy principal is invaluable due to his irreplaceable post as a mediator. One of the administrative services staff used the term "buffer zone" couple of times during the interviews to describe the importance of the deputy principal. "I would not have continued working here for another minute if the deputy principal were not here. Last year I gave a petition to ask for a move to another school but the deputy principal invited me to his room for a cup of tea to queer about the reason for my petition. He told me that the principal is not a bad guy and that I have to understand the situation he is in at the moment. At the end of the conversation, I changed my mind and withdrew the petition".

DISCUSSION

The health of an organization depends mostly on the well being of the human resources. In order to maintain the health of an organization, its people should be taken care of so that productivity and efficiency could become sustainable. It is needless to state that recent harsh conditions of competitive market unfortunately dominate almost all organizations particularly in the field of sales or education. While organizations try to stand on their feet firm enough, they sometimes ignore the health of their resources and do not give the necessary importance, which may give a way to cause infections among the personnel and appear toxicants that give damage to the entire organization. In the 21st century, it is hardly likely to find an organization that is completely fit and perfect whereas thanks to certain people functioning in all organizations as saviors and eradicating the more severe damages, organizations maintain their survival. Frost and Robinson define them as toxic handlers, yet in this study their name has turned out to be organizational cleaner catfish so as to avoid any misunderstanding [1]. Since the study was conducted in an educational organization, a vocational school, it was believed that the term `toxic would not be an appropriate to define organizational uneasiness. Thus a metaphor was used to display the symbiotic relationship in an educational organization. The deputy principal in the vocational high school sacrifice himself for the sake of the welfare of the organization. On top of the academic and administrative roles, he also shoulders a task to mediate the employees who suffer from emotional pain caused by toxic environmental conditions. In this sense their role is quite significant as they are defined as the organizational heroes. Therefore managers and employers should be aware of their presence and pay special attention to their health and welfare otherwise their failure may cause detrimental consequences in organizations.

REFERENCES

1. Frost, P. and Robinson, S. "The toxic handler, organizational hero and casualty", Harvard Business Review, July-August 1999, pp: 97-106.
2. Senior, B., and J. Fleming, 2006. Organizational change. Essex: Prentice Hall.
3. Newell, S., 1995. The healthy organization (C. Fletcher, Ed.). London: Routledge.
4. Baþaran, E.I. 2000. Eğitim yönetimi: Nitelikli okul. Ankara: Feryal MatbaasI.
5. Jones, R.G., 2007. Organizational theory, design, and change. New Jersey: Pearson.
6. Schuyler, G., and L. Branagan, 2003. The power line: A model for generating a systemic focus on organizational health. Sociological Practice, 5(2): 77-88.
7. Hoy, Wayne K., C. John Tarter and James R. Bliss, 1990. Organizational Climate, School Health and Effectiveness: A Comparative Analysis, Educational Administration Quarterly, 26(3): 260-279.
8. Can, H., 1992. Organizasyon ve yönetim. Ankara: AdIm YayIncIIIk.
9. Miles, M., 1969. Planned change in organizational health: figure and ground, in Carver, F.D., Sergiovanni, T.J. (Eds), Organizations and Human Behavior, McGraw-Hill: New York.
10. Erçetin, Ş.Ş., B. Çetin, and N. Potas, 2007. Multi-dimensional organizational intelligence (Muldimorins). World Applied Sciences Journal, 2(3): 151-157.
11. Senge, P., 2006. The fifth discipline: The art & practice of the learning organization. New York: Currency Doubleday.
12. Rosnay, D.J., 1975. The macroscope: a new world scientific system. New York. Harper & Row.
13. Childre, D., and B. Cryer, 2004. From chaos to coherence: The power to change performance. California: Heartmath LLC.
14. Robbins, S.P. and N. Langton, 2004. Fundamentals of Organizational Behaviour, Canada: Pearson Education Canada Inc.
15. Herzberg, F., 1968. One more time: How do you motivate employee? Harvard Business Review 46(1): 53-62.

16. Özgüven, İ.E., 2003. Endüstri psikolojisi. Ankara: Pdrem YayInlarI.
17. Appelbaum, S.H., and D. Roy-Girard, 2007. Toxins in the workplace: affect on organizations and employees. Corporate Governance, 7(1): 17-28.
18. Erçetin, Ş.Ş., 2004. Örgütsel zeka ve örgütsel aptallIk. Ankara: Asil.
19. Altun, S.A., 2001. Örgüt sağlIğI. Ankara: Nobel.
20. Ransom, M.P., 1991. A study to determine the relationship between elements of participative management and organizational health. Dissertation Abstract International, 51 (Il), (UMI No.3587-A).
21. Thrasher, B.J., 1980. Relationship between administrative stress and organizational health. Dissertation Abstracts International, 41(5): 1888-A.
22. Lubit, H.R., 2004. Coping with toxic managers, subordinates... and other difficult people. New Jeersey: Prentice Hall.
23. Grutter, A. (n.d.). Cleaner fish do clean. Retrieved December 4, 2007, from http://www.cleanerfish.com/cleaner%20fish%20do%20clean/cleaner%20fish%20do%20clean.htm