



The Unspoken Side of Academic Textbooks on School Management

Shirkoh Mohammadi¹

Abstract

Every year, numerous academic textbooks on school management are published in Iran, yet only a small number of them are well received by academics. A common research method to analyze the content of these popular textbooks is content analysis which identify only the overt messages of the textbooks. However, every textbooks have also a covert messages that may attract such a wide audiences too. Therefore, the unspoken side of the textbooks is as important as the spoken side. Thus, two most popular and frequently published textbooks in the field of school management, namely, 'An Introduction to Educational Management', which has been republished 45 times, and 'Theoretical Foundations and Principles of Educational Management', which has been republished 25 times, were selected and analyzed through symptomatic reading. The results showed that the narration of these two books is based on a rational paradigm which views schools as an integrated and coordinated entities but neglects the game of power that always accompanied by contradiction and tension. Because to preserve of rational rhetoric, the textbooks rely on logic-based principles and only some theories are discussed in the books that are silent about power dynamics. Alagheband's narration (the author of the books) tends to leave everything, related to 'power dynamics', unspoken. This narration would attract two groups of audiences; the first group is schools actors and other practitioners of educational system that are tired of school contradictions and its unfair world. Therefore, rational paradigm which remain unspoken on the game of power acts like as a remedy to tiredness and perceived unfairness. The second group is some educators concerned with the educability of educational management knowledge. They need to simplify the concepts of and detoxify educational management complexities and inconveniences accordingly.

ARTICLE

INFO

Article history:

Received:

01/10/2021

Accepted:

01/05/2022

Available

online:

Spring 2022

Keyword:

symptomatic reading, discourse analysis, the game of power

Mohammadi, Sh. (2022). The unspoken side of academic textbooks on school management, 9(4), 32-43.

1. Assistant professor at the department of Educational Management, faculty of Psychology and Pedagogy, Semnan University – Semnan, Iran.

*Corresponding Author:

Email: sh.mohammadi@semnan.ac.ir

Problem statement

Numerous textbooks has been published in Iran on school management area up to now. However, not all the textbooks has become popular and well-received by many academics. Only a handful of them are frequently published and republished many times. This popularity may leads to some questions. Why other textbooks written in the area have not been so well received? Why many of the textbooks have failed to achieve the maturity required to be presented as an academic textbook? And why they could not reveal the realities that audiences may seek for. Such seemingly simple questions have complex and controversial answers. Because many experts believe popularity is not a virtue. In this regard, Lewis and Thompson, noted that popularity of a story (in this case, academic textbook) is not synonymous with maturity and reality. In contrast, popularity, in many cases, is opposite to the reality. Because in many cases, reality is harsh and unfair and many audiences tend to escape from the harsh and unfair reality. Therefore. They received only some cultural productions (such as textbooks) that present a simplistic narration of the world; a narration that is silent about harshness and unfairness. In fact, because such a cultural productions present simplistic narration of the world that are fare from unfairness, tension and contradiction, so they are well received by the popularity of audiences (Story, 2004). In this regard, as Lewis and Thompson noted, popularity may leads to an addictive tendency to reparation. Such a situation stem from what Lewis points out, that the popular stories make an addiction to fantasy and romantic narrations. Such a widespread tendency towards fantasy narrations, in turn, leads to incompatibility with real life (Story, 2004). Because popular story present a simplistic narration of the world and focus on the less important issues, therefore by discovering what has not been spoken on the textbooks, we can understand what audiences escape from it. In the other words, if we identifying the covert (unspoken) message, we can discover a

reality that audiences avoid to face it. This is possible by using symptomatic reading. In the symptomatic reading, the researcher seeks to know what is left unspoken in the text and try to identify its covert messages. By using the symptomatic reading, a researcher can discover 'deviant world' that is introduced in the text.

Although some researches have examined the content of the educational and academic textbooks, they have only focused on the explicit and overt content of the text and also on the messages that the author has deliberately presented to the audiences. But the unspoken side of the textbooks have been not discovered up to now. Whereas, explaining the textbooks means to show that the text has an unspoken and silence facts (Story, 2004). Therefore, in symmetric reading we need to go beyond the appearance of the text. That's why Macherey Has criticized the traditional way to evaluate the literary and notes that these evaluations showed only the issues which is presented by the author. So the weaknesses of this evaluation is that it has presented the claims made by the author in a clearer and more precise manner but it cannot identify the covert issues. In this regard, symptomatic reading tries to explain the silences and unspoken sides of the text which has not been presented by the author. In fact, criticism means to show what cannot be spoken in the text. Meanwhile what is seemed to be most important in the text is exactly its unspoken side (Story, 2004). If we deeply explore the content of the popular and widely circulated textbooks in one field and identify its unspoken sides, we will better understand the fact that the audience of these textbooks avoided it. Among such books, two of the best-selling ones on the school management were selected which have attracted a considerable acceptance among academics. Both textbooks has been written by Alagheband. One of the textbooks entitled 'An Introduction to Educational Management', reprinted 45 times in Iran until 2014, and has been a sourcebook in almost all universities, workshops and training courses for

school principals in Iran. The second book is 'The Theoretical Foundations and Principles of Educational Management' by the same author, which has been published 25 times in Iran until 2014. It is one of the main sources for the M.A. and PhD entrance exams and has been well-received among academics in the field. The fundamental questions of the current research were, what the audiences might have been escaping from and have received remarkably to the content of such textbooks? And what issues are remained unspoken in the text which yet have attracted such a wide audience?

Theoretical foundation

It has already been explained that the audiences of the popular cultural productions tend to escape from a harsh or maybe unfair reality in one hand and the popular cultural productions have unspoken sides which attract them on the other hand. Unspoken sides can describe the audience's hidden fears, anxieties and tendencies. This issue leads us to the theoretical foundation of the audience's psychological economics. In the meantime, Lacan's theory provides an appropriate framework. The central idea of Lacan's psychoanalytic system is that reality are not perfectly presented to the audiences; rather, there are always silences and unspoken issues in an agent speeches and messages that reveal his/her psychological tendencies (McMillan, 2008). In fact, the reality cannot be said completely, meaning there are always issues in the real world that cannot be articulated through speech. This fact that some realities remain unspoken can be due to incapacity or impossibility (Abazari and Khorshidnam, 2014). In other words, an agent cannot or will not always be able to tell the whole reality; thus, such an unspoken issues that cannot be presented can explain and interpret the audience's psychological orientations. In this regard, the psychoanalytic system can be helpful in the process of symptomatic reading, since the fundamental assumption of psychoanalysis is that reality is not necessarily what the Patients say but the unconscious domain determine the inclinations,

and motivations of the patients. In fact, the unconscious domain is an area of the patient's life which is not perfectly expressed, since it contains tendencies which the patients themselves are unaware of it. Interestingly, it is only the psychoanalyst who can step into the domain by recognizing the unspoken issues of the patients. Symptomatic reading also assumes its fundamental assumption that what is conveyed directly in the text is not necessarily the reality of the whole text, but an important aspect of the text is the aspects and elements might have been left unspoken. Therefore, the text is unable to reflect or retell (McMillan, 2008).

Psychoanalysis has an analytical application in symptomatic reading; since it can reveal the justifications and the tendencies that attract the audience to a particular text. If we return to the fundamental problem of the present research and by relying on the audiences' psychoanalysis, it is possible to understand the pure tendencies of the audience of educational management textbooks. From an economic point of view, the author of these two textbooks has had a great fortune to attract the audiences. Nevertheless, these two textbooks also have unspoken sides that show this stable tendency in the audiences and are tried to explore in the present research.

Many theorists of educational management believe that there is too much emphasis on the effectiveness of the schools to account the technical-economic demands of the environment. That's why academic textbooks are focused on effectiveness and responding to technical-economic demands. Some theorists have also criticized this mechanism of the education system and pointed out that schools have not been established only to meet the economic and technical needs and demands, but they have to institutionalize social and human values (for example, Larsen, 2011). These theorists have also criticized the way principals prepare to enter the school. They believe that the academic courses for preparation of the principals have unnecessarily

focused on the academic achievement and the effectiveness of schools while other human values such as social equality, democratic values and so on have been mostly neglected (Larsen, 2011). This is one of the unspoken issues of organizational and academic education; in which, only teachings and contents are allowed to be tackled that are in line with the issue of academic achievement and school effectiveness. This silence shows that how academic effectiveness and achievement have become the ideological discourse of the current educational system. Discussed by Althusser, ideological discourse creates a closed system, and therefore raises only those issues that can be solved by the discourse. However, in order to maintain these boundaries, ideological discourse is silent on issues that may take it beyond the boundaries (Story, 2004).

Such a silence is not only limited to human values or social equality, but any doctrine which counters the ideological discourse is seemingly left unspoken through the text; whether this silence be related to gender differences (for example, Blackmore, 2005); cultural and ethnic diversities (for example, Bates, 2005) or the politics and power dynamics (for example, Watkins, 2005). Accordingly, nowadays, the field of educational leadership and management is focusing on concepts and issues such as transformational leadership, distributed leadership, instructional leadership, and effective management and leadership and so on which totally concentrate only on the positive, simple, and routine aspects of the system (Harris and Jones, 2018). This is because a large part of the literature on change leadership has focused on the transformational leadership theory which depicts a formal and powerful version of leader - a leader who can make positive and significant changes in the education system (Leithwood and Sun, 2012). Being silent about the issues that are harsh, hard and maybe anxious cause to popularity of such narration. These optimistic and simplistic reports of leadership and educational management avoids to

speaking about the dark side of the organization and prefer to be silent about them (Harris and Jones, 2018). The academic textbooks in the field also rarely speak about the negative and harmful effects of the leaders of the educational system or many of the texts are silent about the leader mistakes and dysfunctions. In this regard, some researches have estimated that only 5 percent of the organizational researches have addressed the negative and dark sides of the organizations (Wardy and Weitz, 2004). Of course, such a small number of researches which examined the dark side of the organization have opened new windows for the audiences. For example, most recently, Samier and Milley (2018) have explored the concept of 'maladministration' in education focusing upon examples of weak or toxic leadership and management practices. They describe 'maladministration' as the phenomena of harmful administrative and organizational behaviors in educational systems. They outline a range of destructive practices that occur in educational organizations, such as negligence, the mistreatment of people, professional dishonesty, fraud and embezzlement, abuse of power, and corrupt organizational cultures.

The 'black box' of destructive or punitive leadership needs to be explored in greater depth in order to capture the experiences of those who find themselves at the sharp end of certain leadership behaviors and practices. More research studies are required that provide insights into the organizational contexts, cultures, and conditions that enable and, indeed, reinforce negative leadership and management behaviors. The available research evidence would suggest that 'dark-side' leadership traits are closely related to greater employee stress (Furnham 2017), reduced job satisfaction (De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia 2017), and significantly lower levels of personal well-being (Mathieu et al. 2014).

Methodology

The present research aimed to identify the unspoken sides of the school management

textbooks in order to analyze the reasons of the audiences' acceptance of the textbooks. Due to achieve the aim, symptomatic reading was conducted. Symptomatic reading seeks to find and to understand the controversial issues on the text. Understanding the controversial issues requires a double process of reading the text. First, the reading of the appearance content and messages to know the explicit meaning of the text. Second, the reading of the messages that are remained silent on the text to discover the unspoken side of the text. It should be noted that the controversial issues on the text does not indicate a deficiency of the text but it indicate the hidden issues neither can nor is possible to be presented on the text (Abazari and Khorshidnam, 2014). In this regard, the fundamental assumption of the symptomatic reading is that a special text, in order to escape from the factors which cannot and should not speak about, tries to introduce the issues that can be solved by the text (Young, 2017). Symptomatic reading is inspired by Althusser's methodology; based on his methodology, symptomatic reading is due to find the controversies of an answer that is inconsistent with any other question. That is, the same issues that are unwittingly in the text and affects the content of the text.

In symptomatic reading, sampling is not required since the researcher does not assume that there is a determined population which is able to generalize the findings of the sample to them. Rather, each component of the text can be equal to the whole through its hegemony (Abazari and Khorshidnam, 2014). Anyway, the best-selling and most widely published textbooks on school management were selected. The basis for this selection was the number of publication periods; based on this selection, two books of the school management which were introduced earlier, were selected and analyzed. To do this, first, the spoken

content of the books were identified and categorized. Then, the content of the books reread several times in order to explore the unspoken side which is not presented. By summarizing and carefully reviewing the unspoken messages, the forgotten and neglected side of the book was identified. In total, three general categories of spoken and unspoken sides of the books were identified. Disconfirming evidence method was used to validate the research data. It is the process where investigators first establish the preliminary themes or categories in a study and then search through the data for evidence that is consistent with or disconfirms these themes (Creswell and Miller, 2000). In this regard, after identifying the forgotten theory in the text, the text of the books was read several times to add to the details of this interpretation or to eliminate the researcher's misunderstandings.

Findings

However, Alagheband has categorized the content of the book 'An Introduction to Educational Management' in two sections and fourteen chapters, as well as the content of the book 'Theoretical Foundations and Principles of Educational Management' in ten chapters, but all these content can be organized in three basic sections; a) the concepts and definitions through which the reader can acquire a comprehensive knowledge of the basic ideas; b) management principles which includes the requirements that every manager must pursue; in other words, they are a guidelines to effective and efficient management of the schools, and c) Theories that include some theories of educational administration which explain the mechanism of the schools and their leadership. The spoken and unspoken sides of these three sections are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The spoken and unspoken sides on the textbooks

	Spoken side (rational view)	unspoken side (political view)
Concepts and Definitions	organization, management, decision making, planning, organizing, coordination and etc.	the dynamics of the power and politics, the game of power game and its typology, organizational contradictions and tensions, etc.
Principles	supervision domain, coordination, command unity, official concentration and lack of concentration	Techniques of achieving power, the principles of power game, employees' incompatibility management strategies, etc.
Theories	Political, critical, power and politics in an organization, etc. theories	Classic, neoclassic, recent, organization acquired, school-oriented management, etc. theories

1. Concepts and definitions

One of the unspoken sides of the books is reflected through the concepts and definitions; this is exactly where the author tries to provide a popular definition of concepts and functions related to school management. Alagheband's definition of organization is that "organization is created when some people 1) have a common goal, 2) can communicate with each other, and 3) are willing to cooperate to achieve the shared goal "(2009, p 7 and 8). In fact, the organization is "the rational coordination of a number of individuals who work continuously to achieve a common goal through the division of tasks and the establishment of regular and logical relationships" (2009, p 8 and 9). This 'rational coordination' is only possible through management. Based on Alagheband's description, management can achieve such coordination through relying on specific functions such as decision making and planning, organizing, communicating, leadership and control. Based on the rational paradigm, the best model for decision-making is rational model which has specific and determined steps and is implemented through a calculated process (Alagheband, 2009, p. 16). Likewise, organizing is "the process of ordering the jobs and activities and dividing the jobs between the staffs in order to achieve the certain goals" (Alagheband, 2009, p. 25).

Based on the rational narration of the organization, "the first goal of communication in organizations is to create coordination and integration in organizational activities" (Alagheband, 2009, p. 38). Also, the purpose of leadership is "guiding the subordinates in order to better understand the goals of the organization and to motivate them to perform effectively" (Alagheband, 2009, p. 42). In this regard, leaders need to have three basic abilities which are recognition, adaptation and communication (Alagheband, 2009, p. 44). The last management function is 'control', which seeks to determine the extent to which the actions and activities of the organization have done in the direction of predetermined goals and standards (Alagheband, 2009, pp. 46 and 47). These are all spoken sides of the textbooks that are clearly presented in the descriptions and definitions theme; in fact, the spoken sides of the textbooks in the descriptions and definitions theme are based on rational narration. What has been remained unspoken in the narration is the structure of power and politics which is created and shaped by members and groups of the organization. Alagheband's narration is silent about the game of power between staffs and practitioners which is accompany with tension and contradiction. Based on these definitions and descriptions of management and its functions, the schools are coordinated and integrated entities

which is far from tension and contradiction. Accordingly we do not need the political skills such as negotiation, networking and so on. That's why the author neither says about political competencies nor networking abilities when he describes the leadership's competencies. In fact, due to maintain a rational rhetoric, the author tries to eliminate any other concepts which disrupts such a rhetoric. Due to this situation, the duties of educational administrators are reduced to simple and routine duties that can be done only by relying on three management skills which includes perceptual, human-resource, and technical skills.

The unspoken sides on the textbooks continues even in reviewing the conceptual evolution of management. The author points out that, the school management was, basically, a simple job which was done only by having some experiences. But, after the transformation of the social and cultural structures as well as the educational and instructional mechanisms, some concepts such as leadership, supervision, reform and change has been emerged (Alagheband, 2009, p. 63). Even in the reviewing the conceptual evolution only some concepts which is compatible with the rational view are noted and some concepts related to power and politics is neglected. It is only in *Theoretical Foundations and Principles of Educational Management* book that some concepts which are related to power and politics has been discussed in the three sections. First, 'pressure concept' which is discussed in the first chapter of the book. The author's meaning of the pressure indicates only to external pressure which is done by the environment to control the school's mechanisms. But the book says nothing about the internal pressure which is made by the school's members and groups and also continuously affects on the school's mechanisms.

Second section is related to the concept of the power structure which is described as a coherent, integrated and coordinated process which is far from the tension and contradiction. Based on the definition which is presented in the book, the power structure regulates the organizational behavior

(Alagheband, 1391, p. 70). Therefore, tension and contradiction which is along with the power structure has been unspoken.

Third, is related to the concept of the contradiction. The author's meaning of the contradiction includes three types of conflicts that occurs in the relationship between individual and organizational position. The conflicts includes a) role-personality conflicts, b) role conflicts and c) personality conflicts (Alagheband, 2012, pp. 148 and 149). None of the conflicts is related to tensions and contradictions between members and groups to pursue their own wishes. In addition, by considering the way that the content is organized, we finds out that the author argues the integrity and unity first and then speaks about conflicts and contradictions. This shows that the main concern of the author is to preserve the unity and cohesion of the organization and tries to present smooth image of the school. It is only in a marginal manner which conflicts and contradictions is discussed.

Principles

The Alagheband's textbooks has presented some principles on school management. These principles have focused on maintaining the coordination and integration of the organization; one of the fundamental principle is related to span of control. Based on the span of control principle, Time spent on supervision, mental ability and adaptability, work and position complexity, extracurricular responsibilities, stability of operations and competence of subordinates are all factors that should be considered in determining the scope of control (Alagheband, 2009, pp. 29 and 30). All these principles seem to be designed based on logical calculations and estimates. Another principle that is introduced in these two books is the way of managing. Based on the narrative of these two books, we are faced with two types of managing: a) centralized management and b) decentralized management. The effectiveness of which one depends on the logical estimates and it requires a reasonable consideration. In this regard, the size and dispersion of the organization as well

as the importance of the decision are all factors that should be considered on managing. For example, when we have a large organization or an organization with the geographical dispersion, the decisions should be decentralized in order to make the decisions easier and faster. But when the decision is about important issue, it should be centralized. Based on the rational principles, it is better to manage financial and legal affairs in a centralized manner, however the affairs related to the duties of employees appear to be well decided in a decentralized manner (Alagheband, 2009, p. 91).

By identifying each of the principles of these two books, we find out that these principles are all designed on the basis of a logical rhetoric; according to these principles, the more complicated and the more perceptual the situation, the more senior managers have competent to make decisions. In this way, the senior managers of the organization would make the strategic decisions and impose their decisions on the lower-level employees.

These principles also assume that the schools are coordinated and integrated entities which all its mechanisms rely on the logical bases, but what is left unspoken is how to deal with employees conflicts, contradictions and their resistance to change. These issues should only be analyzed and interpreted in the game of power between different groups. In the contradictory situation many of those logical principles fade and become incompatible with the realities of the organization, since such principles presuppose the harmony and unity of the organization and has not anticipated any conflict or tension in organization. Due to protect the rational rhetoric, both books do not have the capability and the possibility to present the unspoken side.

Theories and models

In both books, the author has divided management theories into two separate sections; one section describes management theories in three categories: classical, neoclassical, and modern theories, while the second section describes emergent theories. The latter includes total quality

management theory, information and communication technology, learning organization, and school-based management. It is in the first part of the theories that the implicit message of classical theories, especially scientific management theory, makes it possible to make organizations more efficient and rational. In order for an organization to achieve rationality, it can be achieved only through the application of scientific methods and planning in the design of organizational tasks (Alagheband, 2012, p. 55). Neoclassical theories also seek to make the organization more efficient and rational, but to achieve such an important goal, it uses the satisfaction of employees and their participation. That is why in such theories, coordination is still the main concern, with the difference that there is a more dynamic view of coordination which can be based on the social participation of managers and employees (Alagheband, 2012, p. 64). In modern theories, two theories have been proposed, namely, 'System Theory' and 'Contingency Theory'; in any of each, organization is supposed as an integrated whole and proceeds on the basis of logical relations. It is on this basis that the main focus of contingency theory is to understand the interdependence of the elements of work, people, tasks, management, etc. (Alagheband, 2009, p. 58). To take a closer look at these theories, it can be found that these theories even, remain silent when it comes to power and its dynamics in an organization. Even when rational view is on the textbooks, the criticisms are still logical. So that the alternative theory is only a modified version of the previous theory. For example, when ideal rational model of decision-making is criticized, such criticisms are made which includes the inability of individuals and employees so as to gather sufficient information; the inability of the human mind to use available information and different prioritizations of individuals. In this regard and based on these critiques, the alternative theory which is proposed is Simon's theory, which is also a modified theory to the rational model (Alagheband, 2009, p. 19).

More interestingly, one of Simon's criticisms of the ideal rational model is that it ignores the flow of power (as in Chapter 2 of Simon's book, 1997). But such a critic is not mentioned in Alagheband's books. In this regard, some critics to modern theories of educational management (such as Greenfield and vilwor critics) have been presented. However, the critics that reveal the dynamics of power and politics have not been proposed. While an important part of Greenfield's critic to modern theories is neglecting the power flow (Greenfield and Ribbins, 2005), such criticisms are not addressed in Alagheband's books. In the section of emergent theories, it has presented only some theories that have also remained silent about power and politics in the organization.

The unspoken side of the textbooks: political view of the organization

The fundamental assumption of rational view is scarcity of resources and the infinity of human needs. This view, in one hand, considers the available resources of the organization as scarce and limited resources, and on the other hand, considers the expectations to organization as unlimited and unsaturated expectations. Based on such an assumption that rational and logical choice make sense. In fact, when we assume that resources are limited and needs are unlimited, therefore a rational choice must be made; a choice that should be efficient and effective. In this view, management is also a conscious and rational effort to mobilize resources and coordinate all the forces of the organization to achieve the goals. The rational view also assumes that the strategic orientation of organizations is determined by the senior managers and other top policy makers in the organization; since they are the thinking brains of the organization that can choose the most logical and appropriate strategy.

Such a view is almost popularly accepted in all academic management textbooks, especially in the two textbooks discussed. Nevertheless, the point that is overlooked in this view is the power struggle between individuals and groups to pursue the

limited resources. It is obvious that the limitation resources per se creates a power struggle between different individuals and groups and puts them into the game of power. Accordingly, many researches have shown that when the fiscal resources such as budget is small, as a result, the power struggle is increased as well as the size of the organization is decreases, and even many staffs are fired in the organization (Pfeffer, 2010). In contrast to the notions of rational theorists which view the organizations as an integrated entities, the flow of power and political game in the organization is undeniable (Hatch, 2013). The basic premise of the political view is that the actors of the organization have wishes and needs that they pursue (Bush, 2010). As a result, the actors enter into the game of power; the game between managers and employees, managers and experts, supervisors and employees, teachers and principals, schools and ministry, etc. What is clear is that each side of the game follows its own desires and as Cruzie has noted the strategic direction of the organization is the result of the game of power between diverse actors. Likewise, these actors learn some of the skills which needed for the game. These skills are techniques and political skills which is needed for managers and other school's practitioners (Pugh and Hickson, 2007).

This power struggle is always accompanied by contradiction and conflict. In the meantime, there are only two solutions to this contradiction. The first is to resolve the contradiction through the organizational hierarchy in which the senior managers of the organization by relying on the power of logic and understanding the circumstances, make strategic decisions of the organization and impose them on the lower layers. In this approach, there is no opportunity for other actors in the organization to hear their voices and play in the arena of power; this approach, however, only leads to oligarchy that has long-term destructive effects (Pfeffer, 2010).

The second solution is the game of power. According to which it is accepted that individuals

and groups have different and maybe contradictory demands which couldn't resolve through the oligarchic hierarchy. In fact, the senior managers may ignore the lower level employees. But this ignorance makes more catastrophic contradictions and tensions in the long term (Lumby and Coleman, 2007). So that subordinates implicitly or explicitly resistance to the determined policies of senior managers. Thus, regarding the second approach, it is accepted that all organizational groups have their own desires and goals that create an uncomfortable and contradictory but realistic situation that are inevitable unfair world in which success in job performance does not per se guarantee the position of the individual in the organization. According to Pfeffer (2010), the position of individuals in the organization depends more on their power skills than on their job abilities and professional performance. Such an issue is most likely to make organizations an unfair world. Accordingly, many scholars have constantly called to avoid the assumption of fairness in organizations mechanisms (for example, pfeffer, 2010).

Alagheband's narration tend to accept the first assumption to see and resolve the potential diversities and therefore, it is silent on power and its belongings. This silence leads to reduce power only into hierarchical authority.

Conclusion and discussion

Academic textbooks have a significant impact on the students and graduates thoughts and abilities. The textbooks, however, shapes the mentality of students and prepares them to enter the operational and real situation at work. Accordingly, by analysis of such textbooks, we can identify their strengths as well as weaknesses. But the analysis should not only focus on the explicit content of the textbooks but also the unspoken sides of the textbooks should be studied. The present research was aimed to analyze the two popular textbooks in the field of school management through symptomatic reading method. The findings showed that both books seek to draw a logical view which see schools away from tension and contradiction.

Thus, what remains unspoken in this narrative is a political view of the organization. Although identifying the unspoken side of the textbooks is crucial but its importance is rooted from the perspective of the audience's psychological economy. In fact, the fundamental question is that why these two textbooks and the books like them, in spite of being silent about many realities of the organizational live, have been so popular by their audiences?

This question can be answered from two perspectives. The first is based on critical perspective. It assumes that the audiences which are tired from the unfair world (in this case, schools) tend to addictive reparation manner. Namely, in order to compensate the tiredness, the audiences appreciate only the cultural products that are far from the perceived unfairness and the current contradictions in the schools. If we want to think like Žižek (one the critical scholars), we have to say that only by not paying attention to and being silent on the dynamics of the power game and its roughness, these two textbooks have made it possible for their audiences to compensate. Thus, the audiences who are tired and bored of organizational struggles find such narratives a cure for all of these boredom and tediousness. Accordingly, the author, has recognized the needs and tendencies of his audiences and to attract them to his narration, only has offered a narration that are popular. That is why the textbooks detoxify the contradictions and tensions in the organization and offers a view away from tensions and contradictions. In fact, because narrating an unstable and unfair world in organizations may lead to reduce the sales and audiences' acceptance of an academic textbooks, therefore, academic textbooks are silent on the violent and unfortunate aspects of organization and maybe speaks about them marginally. Nevertheless, an inevitable part of any organization is the power relations between different individuals and groups.

The second perspective is based on genetic perspective. Neurological researches have showed

that the brain's response to good and bad news is not the same. So that whenever we find a favorable and optimistic information, a group of neurons are activated in a left part of the frontal of the brain. In contrast, whenever we receive unpleasant and undesirable information, another group of neurons in the homogenous region of the right hemisphere of the brain is activated. The activation of neurons in left part of the frontal of the brain is the same for all people; that is, the time we see world as beautifully and pleasantly entity. But the activation of neurons in the right hemisphere, which is related to unpleasant news, are different for different people (Sigman, 2021 p. 93). In short, human's genetic structure always tends to attract good, pleasant, and stress-free news. Therefore, because

the political perspective views the organization as harsh, uncomfortable, and unfavorable entity, it is in contrast to the natural tendency of popularity to focus on simplicity and pleasure issues. That is why textbooks on school management try to pursue the natural tendency of humans in search for optimistic and simplistic narration. This is also the reason why the author of these two books has also tried to make the atmosphere of schools and educational systems more beautiful and pleasant than it really is. Accordingly, audiences who are concerned with educability of the knowledge of educational management need to simplify the concepts and deconstruct the complexities and inconveniences of management until the readers will be attracted to the narrative provided.

Ethical considerations

During the implementation of this research and the preparation of the article, all national laws and principles of professional ethics related to the subject of research, including the rights of statistical community, organizations and institutions, as well as authors and writers have been observed. Adherence to the principles of research ethics in the present study was observed and consent forms were consciously completed by all statistical community.

Sponsorship

The present study was funded by the authors of the article.

Conflict of interest

According to the authors of the present article, there was no conflict of interest.

This article has not been previously published in any journal, whether domestic or foreign, and has been sent to the School Administration Quarterly for review and publication only.

Resources

Abazari, Y., & Khorshidnam, A. (2014). On Ekhrajiha. *Cultural Studies and Communication*, Vol 10, No 34, 11-32, [in Persian].

Alagheband, A. (2009). *An introduction to educational management* (fifth edition). Tehran: Ravan Publication.

Alagheband, A. (2014). *The theoretical foundations and principles of educational management*, (sixth edition). Tehran: Ravan Publication.

Bates, Ch. (2005). *Leadership and the Rationalization of Society*. In Smyth, J. (Eds). *Critical perspectives on educational leadership*. (88-106). New York & London: Routledgeflamer.

Bates, Ch. (2005). *Leadership and the Rationalization of Society*. In Smyth, J. (Eds). *Critical perspectives on educational leadership*. (88-106). New York & London: Routledgeflamer.

Blackmore, J. (2005). *Educational Leadership: A Feminist Critique and Reconstruction*. . In Smyth, J. (Eds). *Critical perspectives on educational leadership*. (63-88). New York & London: Routledgeflamer.

Bush, T. (2010). *Theories of educational management and leadership* (third edition). London, New Delhi: Sage publication.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry, *Theory In to Practice*, 39:3, 124-130.

Greenfield, Th., & Ribbins, P. (2005). *Greenfield on educational administration: Toward a human science*. London and New York: Routledge.

Harris, A., & Jones, M. (2018). The dark side of leadership and management, *School Leadership & Management*, 38:5, 475-477.

Hatch, M. J. (2013). *Organization theory: modern, symbolic and postmodern perspectives. (Third edition)*. London: Oxford university press.

Larson, C. L. (2011). Responsibility and accountability in educational leadership: keeping democracy and social justice central reform. *Scholar-Practitioner Quarterly*. Volume 4, Number 4.

Leithwood, K., & J. Sun. (2012). The Nature and Effects of Transformational School leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of Unpublished Research. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 48 (3): 387-423.

Lumby, J., & Coleman, M. (2007). *Leadership and diversity: challenging theory and practice in education*. London, New Delhi: Sage Publication.

Mcmilln, Ch. (2008). Symptomatic readings: Žižekian theory as a discursive strategy. *International Journal of Zizek studies*. IJŽS, Vol 2, 1. 1-22.

Pfeffer, J. (2010). *Power: Why some people have it and others don't*. Harper business.

Pugh, D., & Hickson, D. (2007). *Great writers on organization. (The third omnibus edition)*. British library: Ashgate.

Samier, E. A., & Milley, P. (2018). *International Perspectives on Maladministration in Education*. London: Routledge.

Simon, H. (1997). *Administrative behavior: a study of decision-making processes in administrative organizations*. London and New York: the free press.

Sogman, M. (2021). *The secret life of the brain*. Translated by Mandana Farhadian, Tehran, Asim and No publication, [in Persian].

Story, J. (2004). Popular stories. Translated by Hussian Payande, *Arghanoon*, No 25, 1-44, [in Persian].

Vardi, Y., & Weitz, E. (2004). *Misbehavior in organizations: theory, research and management*.

Mahwah, New Jersey and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Watkins, P. (2005). *Leadership, Power and Symbols in Educational Administration*. . In Smyth, J. (Eds). Critical perspectives on educational leadership. (7-27). New York & London: Routledgeflamer.

Young, R. (2017). *Rereading the symptomatic reading*. In Nesbitt, N. (Eds). The concept in crisis: reading capital today. Durham and London: duke university press.



I am Shirkoh Mohammadi, the faculty member of Semnan University at educational management group. I graduated BA and MA at the Kurdistan University and I was ranked first in the overall entrance of the course. I also obtained my doctorate degree at the Tehran University. I am currently researching on arbitrary model of organizational behaviors.

Email: sh.mohammadi@semnan.ac.ir