

Good cop, bad cop: Exploring school principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours

Izhak Berkovich

Department of Education and Psychology, The Open University of Israel, Ra'anana, Israel

and

Ori Eyal

School of Education, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel

Abstract

Research on school principals' behaviours that affect teachers' emotional state is limited. Currently, the focus is primarily on extreme manifestations of mistreatment and emotional abuse; normative daily behaviours, such as emotionally manipulative ones, have yet to be explored. The purpose of the present study is to investigate primary school principals' manipulative behaviours, i.e., principals' actions aimed at enlisting others to advance their goals by stimulating emotions. Based on the self-report scale of Austin et al. (2007), we developed a modified other-report scale to explore principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours with both negative and positive orientations. The scale was used in a cross-sectional field survey, in which teachers rated their principals' manipulative behaviours. We found support for the prevalence of both types of principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours and of their effects on teachers' negative and positive emotions arising from interactions with the principals. We also found that principals who ranked higher in negative and positive emotionally manipulative behaviours self-reported having greater controlling tendencies. The findings and their implications are discussed.

Keywords: Emotional manipulation, controlling tendency, emotion, principals, teachers

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Introduction

The beginning of research on the emotional aspects of educational leadership can be traced to the early 1990s, when emotions become a legitimate object of research (Zembylas, 2015). Despite the progress made since, our knowledge about principals' behaviours that affect teachers' emotional state is still limited (Berkovich and Eyal, 2015). A large part of what is known about this topic is related to the construct of principals' mistreatment of teachers. The research on principals' mistreatment focuses on abusive behaviours that "teachers experienced as seriously harmful when repeated over the long run" (Blase and Blase, 2003: 367). These behaviours have considerable psychological/emotional effects on teachers' wellbeing. Some of these behaviours often appear to be intended as emotional abuse (Blase and Blase, 2007). This portrayal, however, seems to be of extreme manifestations that are less likely to be relevant for most normative school leaders. As an alternative focus, we suggest to explore principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours.

Emotional manipulation is described as an effort to use one's emotional abilities as tools to further one's interests (Huy, 1999). Review of the relevant literature reveals that emotionally manipulative behaviour involves the following components: (a) a veiled agenda; (b) an element of disinformation (i.e., involving the quantity, quality, manner, or relevance of the information communicated); (c) the manipulator evoking emotions in the target in order to make the target more compliant with the request; and (d) the manipulator bundling the request with the emotional appeal (Austin et al., 2007; Kligman and Culver, 1992; McCornack, 1992; St. Clair, 1966).

Scholars repeatedly stressed that leaders' emotional influence on subordinates is significant. The assumption that "leadership is influence" is widely accepted in the literature (Lichtenstein and Plowman, 2009; Van Knippenberg et al., 2005; Yorges et al., 1999). Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2004) argued that "the primary job of leadership is emotional" (p. ix). Popper (2005) also adopted this assumption and argued that "leadership... is essentially emotional influence on people" (p. 63). Albrow (1992) went so far as to suggest that in organisations "the concentration of power in a few hands does not depend on knowledge or secrecy but on emotional manipulation" (p. 310). In education, school leaders' emotional influence on teachers seems even more extensive than in business organisations. School leaders have few formal measures to drum up teacher support for their initiatives (Oplatka, 2007), and most of the time teachers operate individually behind closed doors (Eden, 2001).

Given the supervisory complexity in school management, principals' ability to exercise emotional influence is viewed as imperative (James and Vince, 2001). For example, in a qualitative study, Eden (1998) describes how principals "exert influence by using latent strategies" to make teachers behave both in and out of role domains in a manner that principals view necessary for school transformation.

The objective of the present study was to investigate principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours. First, we examined the prevalence of principals' negative and positive manipulative behaviours. Second, we investigated whether the two types of principals' manipulative behaviours were indeed associated with different affective outcomes among the targets of manipulation (i.e., teachers). Third, we examined whether principals who frequently use negative and positive manipulative behaviours differ in their controlling tendencies (as reported by the principals themselves), as these are associated with manipulative behaviours (Buss, 1987).

Literature review and hypotheses

Principals' negative and positive emotionally manipulative behaviours and their affective outcomes

Manipulation in general and emotional manipulation in particular are frequent in many interpersonal settings, including kinship, friendships, and romantic relationships (Austin et al., 2007; Buss, 1992; Foshee, 1996). Emotional manipulation is also highly relevant in understanding intra-organisational relationships, specifically leader-follower relationships (Dasborough and Ashkanasy, 2002; Huy, 1999). The ability to manipulate others successfully is important to individuals because it increases their chances to survive and prosper by enabling them to acquire resources and to maintain relationships (Buss et al., 1987). To date, the literature has focused on emotional manipulation linked with shaping negative emotions, such as guilt and shame (Austin et al., 2007; Grieve, 2011; Grieve and Mahar, 2010). Negative emotional manipulation undermines the self-confidence, self-worth, and self-efficacy of the targeted individual in order to promote the manipulator's goals. An example of principal's negative emotional manipulation may be playing on the idea that a teacher's objection to a new state initiative prevents the school from obtaining necessary funds. This type of manipulation is expected to elicit a feeling of shame in the teacher. Another example may be that of a principal instigating a professional conflict between two teachers in order to accuse them later of unprofessional and

irresponsible behaviour, finally soliciting their support for the principal's own solution as a middle-ground option. Such accounts have been documented in the literature. For example, Eden (1998) described how principals use a subtle threat that creates fear or humiliation in order to manage the routine at school and make teachers comply with their demands. It should be acknowledged that a high frequency of negative manipulation or specific forms of it might border on emotional abuse. For example, Blase and Blase (2003) reported that some principals blame teachers for problems in front of students, a practice that is viewed as abusive.

Manipulators also attempt to promote their interests by fostering positive emotions in others. Positive emotional manipulation includes attempts to shape emotions such as pride, which validates the targeted individual's ego, in order to promote the principal's hidden objectives. For example, Simon (2010) argued that manipulators can charm or overtly support others to promote their own will. Similarly, Stengel (2000) argued that praise and flattery may be used in an instrumental way to stimulate positive emotions with the aim of promoting the manipulator's goals. In work settings, managers use tactics of ingratiation and praise to make employees cooperate (Yukl and Tracey, 1992). An example of principal's positive emotional manipulation may be promoting a teacher to a leadership position within the teaching staff with the aim of enlisting the teacher's public support for a problematic bureaucratic change that has been forced upon the school and that is likely to cause dissatisfaction and resistance among the teachers. Another example may be easing a teacher's sense of guilt with regard to the circumstantial mistreatment of a problematic student, so that the teacher remains engaged and high performing. Positive manipulative behaviours might also be used to promote teachers' persistence in desired conduct. Educational research reported on similar phenomena. According to Blase and Blase (2000), "teachers reported that principals gave praise that focused on specific and concrete teaching behaviours" (p. 134). We anticipate that principals' positive emotionally manipulative behaviours are more prevalent in education than negative emotionally manipulative behaviours because it is a care-focused profession and because teachers' wellbeing is perceived to be connected to that of the students (Wentzel, 1997). Prior research findings support this idea. Cossairt, Hall, and Hopkins (1973), who compared in an experimental study the effects of various experimenters' communications (instructions, feedback, or feedback plus social praise) on teacher's verbal praise for student behaviours, found that of the three conditions, only feedback

plus social praise to teacher produced more teacher praise for student behaviours.

Based on these theoretical arguments, we hypothesise:

Hypothesis 1: Principals' positive emotionally manipulative behaviours are more prevalent than principals' negative emotionally manipulative behaviours.

We hypothesise further that the frequency of the principal's negative behaviours can predict the frequency of negative affect experienced by the teacher in social interaction with principal, and that the frequency of the principal's positive behaviours can predict the frequency of positive affect experienced by the teacher in interaction with principal.

Hypothesis 2: Principals' positive emotionally manipulative behaviours predict teachers' positive affect in interactions with the principal, whereas principals' negative emotionally manipulative behaviours predict teachers' negative affect in interactions with the principal.

Principals' controlling tendencies and manipulative behaviours

Buss (1987) suggests that individuals' attempts to manipulate the social environment is related to their high need of exercising control. Two traits seem to be highly relevant when exploring controlling tendencies in the workplace: obstinacy and orderliness. Obstinate individuals tend to be opinionated and uncompromising because they are convinced of the superiority of their beliefs; highly orderly individuals are compelled to be methodical, well organised, and unable to delay or procrastinate in performing tasks (Mudrack, 2004). These traits reflect the desire to govern both work goals and processes. In educational literature, principals' controlling inclinations are viewed primarily as negative. For example, scholars suggest that controlling principals lower teachers' collaboration, trust, and commitment (Johnson et al., 2005) and hinder learning in schools (Geijsel et al., 2010). Sinden, Hoy, and Sweetland (2004) proposed that principals' controlling inclinations might lead them to pass down their errors to the teachers and increase the risk of maladaptive or irrelevant teaching behaviours.

The negative scholarly view of educators' need of control seems to be associated with a perception of control as a bureaucratic orientation (Woolfolk and Hoy, 1990). This negative image of principals' controlling tendencies stems partly from Blase's (1991) perception of "closed school principals" who are authoritarian, egoistic, indecisive, and inflexible. This portrayal places principals' controlling inclination in a broader context of problematic behaviours, but research suggests that principals' need of control is normative. Compulsive tendencies of control are part of the normal range of human nature (Macdonald and De Silva, 1999). The literature suggests that one key motivation of managers is their desire or need to feel in control (Braiker, 2004). Managers' need for control is seen as driven by their perception of "an increasingly complex and dynamic inner and outer organisational environment" (Ernst and Kieser, 2002: 67). Education seems to take this managerial complexity even further. For principals, school management in post-industrial era takes place in a more complex work environment (Crow, 2006). Some researchers suggest that post-bureaucratic organisations are no less controlling, because subordinates' thoughts, emotions, and identities are targeted for instrumental purposes (Maravelias, 2003). For example, Alvesson and Willmott (2002) suggested that organisational control in a post-bureaucratic context is linked with identity regulation associated, among others, with emotional aspects. We expected principals identified as frequently using manipulative behaviours in general to report higher controlling tendencies, proving that both types of manipulative behaviours have a shared antecedent. Therefore, we hypothesise that:

Hypothesis 3: Principals who demonstrate higher frequency of emotionally manipulative behaviours are more likely to have higher controlling tendencies (i.e., obstinacy and orderliness) than principals who demonstrate lower frequency of emotionally manipulative behaviours.

Method

Sample and procedure

The data of the present study is part of a large survey database on school leaders and emotions, but the variables and hypotheses discussed in this article haven't been introduced before. The data are based on a random sample of 69 primary schools in the Israeli public school system. Primary schools are an ideal organisational setting for examining emotional processes because they have a flat hierarchical structure

(Huber, 2004), which is less centralised than vertical hierarchal structures are in other organisations (Hannan et al., 2003). The sample included 69 principals (74% female) and 656 teachers (92% female). An average of 9.5 teachers ($SD = 2.27$) reported to each principal. The mean age of principals was 51.09 years ($SD = 6.91$) and of teachers 41.62 years ($SD = 10.20$). We obtained ethics committee and administrative approval for the study. Principals' and teachers' participation was voluntary. Participating principals were recruited by phone, using random sampling of a list provided by the Ministry of Education (64% recruitment rate), and participating teachers were approached on site and asked to participate in a paper-and-pencil survey. Participants were promised anonymity and confidentiality. Principals self-reported on their controlling tendencies, and teachers reported on the frequency of principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours and on the emotions they experienced when interacting with the principals.

Measures

Emotionally manipulative behaviours. To compare principals' negative and positive emotionally manipulative behaviours, we use the emotional manipulation scale developed by Austin et al. (2007). After reviewing empirical studies reporting on the factor analysis of the scale (Austin et al., 2007; Burns, 2013; Hyde and Grieve, 2014), which conceptualise negative emotional manipulation, we selected six items that demonstrated consistent high loading across studies. We rephrased the six items, based on self-report, according to their ability to be converted into other-report on behaviours, in order to avoid social desirability bias, which may occur when individuals report about themselves (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). A sample item was "My principal makes people feel anxious so that they will act in a particular way". Furthermore, we constructed a mirror scale for principals' positive emotionally manipulative behaviours. The identical item in the positive scale became "My principal makes people feel safe so that they will act in a particular way". The complete list of items covering both negative and positive emotional manipulative behaviours is presented in Table 1. At the beginning of the questionnaire, we added the following introduction: "To promote school goals and/or his/her personal goals, my principal..." Teachers were asked to indicate the frequency of their principal's emotionally manipulative behaviour on a five-point Likert scale (1 = never, 5 = always). Internal reliabilities of the negative and positive scales were good ($\alpha = .87$

and $\alpha = .84$, respectively). The factor analyses of this dual emotionally manipulative behaviour (dual-EMB) scale are reported at the beginning of the Results section below.

Affect in interactions with principal. The Job Emotions Scale (Fisher, 1998) describes 16 relevant emotions at the workplace, 8 negative (such as anger, embarrassment, and worry) and 8 positive (such as enthusiasm, pleasure, and pride). We modified the instructions and asked the teachers to report the frequency of experiencing these emotions not at the workplace in general but specifically in interactions with their principal (1 = never, 5 = always). In the present study, internal reliabilities for the negative and positive affects were excellent ($\alpha = .87$ and $\alpha = .94$), consistent with earlier findings (Fisher, 1998).

Controlling tendencies. Controlling tendency was measured using two subscales, assessing obstinacy and orderliness, from Mudrack's (2004) obsessive-compulsive measure. Other subscales in the measure did not fit our study because they conceptualised controlling tendencies as being linked with a sense of moral superiority and involuntary behavioural compulsion, therefore they were not included. We selected three items in each subscale, most suited to describe managerial controlling tendencies. A sample item for obstinacy was "I do not usually back down from opinions, even when others argue with me", and for orderliness "Everything I do must be precise and accurate". Participants (principals) were asked to self-report on the extent to which the items describing controlling tendencies represented them on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). Exploratory principal component analysis with varimax rotation indicated two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.00, explaining 64% of the total variance. Prior research reported internal reliabilities of .52 for the full obstinacy subscale and .74 for the full orderliness subscale (Mudrack, 2004). The present research showed similar results for the short scales, with $\alpha = .50$ for obstinacy and $\alpha = .68$ for orderliness.

Covariates. Principals' and teachers' demographic data were used as controls. We focused on gender (coded 0 = male, 1 = female) and age, because according to the literature these are possible factors linked with the ability to manipulate and with the complexity of manipulative behaviours (Grieve and Panebianco, 2013; Simon, 2010).

Analytic strategy

The analytic strategy included two stages. In the first stage, before testing the hypotheses, we performed exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses to test the item loadings of the dual-EMB scale, and we explored the possibility of aggregating the scores of principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours. In the next stage, we tested the hypotheses. First, we conducted dependent t-test analysis to determine whether principals' positive emotionally manipulative behaviours are more frequent than their negative emotionally manipulative behaviours. Second, when research data are nested, the literature recommends a hierarchical/multilevel approach (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). Therefore, we conducted two multilevel mixed modelling analyses to assess whether the principals' negative and positive emotionally manipulative behaviours predict the teachers' affect (negative and positive emotions) experienced in social interactions with the principal. Third, we used two independent t-tests to determine whether the means of principals' controlling tendencies are higher for principals who engage in emotionally manipulative behaviours more frequently than for those who do so less frequently.

Results*Preliminary analyses*

First, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis on the modified emotionally manipulative behaviour items. The exploratory factor analysis, using varimax rotation, yielded two factors, eigenvalues greater than 1.00, explaining 59% of total variance. The item content of each factor indicated that they can indeed be labelled negative and positive emotional manipulation. The correlation between the two factors was $-.27$. The low correlation suggests that teachers' individual perceptions of the two types of principals' manipulative behaviours are quite distinct. Factor loadings are shown in Table 1. Second, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis using the AMOS 17.0 programme to further check the fit of the data to the structure. The results of the confirmatory analysis indicated a good fit of the data to

the theoretical two-factor model of principals' emotional manipulation (i.e., one negative behaviours factor and one positive behaviours factor).¹

Table 1. Exploratory factor analysis of the dual emotionally manipulative behaviours (dual-EMB) scale (N=656).

To promote school goals and/or his/her personal goals, my principal ...	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
1. ... uses his/her emotional skills to make others feel guilty	.808	-.123
2. ... makes others feel uneasy	.800	-.222
3. ... embarrasses people to stop them behaving in a particular way	.790	-.118
4. ... makes people feel ashamed about something they have done in order to stop them from doing it again	.788	-.139
5. ... makes people feel anxious so that they will act in a particular way	.783	.076
6. ... plays two people off against each other	.599	-.186
7. ... makes others feel at ease (mirror item #2)	-.227	.793
8. ... makes people feel safe so that they will act in a particular way (mirror item #5)	-.124	.775
9. ... compliments people to get them to behave in a particular way (mirror item #3)	.010	.762
10. ... gets two people to make peace with each other (mirror item #6)	-.142	.733

¹ The fit indices of the structural model were: χ^2 (df = 50) = 170.37, $p < .001$; GFI = .96, AGFI = .94; NFI = .95; CFI = .96; RMSEA = .061 (90% CI = .051-.071); all item loadings on their respective factors emerged significant at $p < 0.001$.

11. ... makes people feel proud about something they have done in order to get them to do it again (mirror item #4)	-.189	.727
12. ... uses his/her emotional skills to make others feel less guilty (mirror item #1)	-.046	.655

Note. 1 = Negative emotionally manipulative behaviours; 2 = Positive emotionally manipulative behaviours.

After investigating the structure of the dual-EMB scale, we explored the possibility of aggregating the scores of principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours, given that employees are not always exposed to the full range of the managers' behaviours, therefore the mean score reflects a wider range and a more accurate representation of managers' behaviours (Ostroff, 1993). Because multiple raters reported on the principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours, we computed intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC[1]) to check the suitability of averaging the individual scores into aggregated scores. The average ICC[1] value was .17 for negative emotional manipulation and .18 for positive emotional manipulation, well above the minimum .06 cutoff value (Gelfand et al., 2011). The analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the two emotional manipulation types indicated that the group effects were significant ($p < .01$), providing additional justification for aggregating the variables. Therefore, we calculated average scores for each principal and used these scores in the study analyses. The correlation matrix is presented in Table 2. The correlation between the aggregates of the principals' negative and positive emotionally manipulative behaviours was -.44, a moderate correlation indicating that the two constructs are distinct but have a common association.

Table 2. Bivariate correlations (N=656).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Principal's negative EM (aggregate)	1							
2. Principal's positive EM (aggregate)	-.444**	1						
3. Teacher's negative affect in interactions with principal	.315**	-.277**	1					
4. Teacher's positive affect in interactions with principal	-.291**	.470**	-.587**	1				
5. Principal's gender	-.033	.034	-.043	.074	1			
6. Principal's age	-.084*	.001	-.064	.040	.267**	1		
7. Teacher's gender	-.036	-.030	.004	-.069	.156**	.139**	1	
8. Teacher's age	-.001	.009	-.003	.078	.055	.190**	.038	1

Note. EM = emotional manipulation. Aggregated scores of principals' negative and positive EM derived from teachers' individual scores were reassigned to the respective teachers. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Testing of hypotheses

To test Hypothesis 1, we conducted a dependent t-test, comparing the frequency of principals' positive emotionally manipulative behaviours and the frequency of principals' negative emotionally manipulative behaviours (see Table 3). There was a significant difference in the frequency scores for principals' positive emotional manipulation ($M=3.66$) and principals' negative emotional manipulation ($M=2.28$). These results suggest that the frequency of principals' positive emotionally manipulative behaviours is higher than that of negative emotionally manipulative behaviours. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was confirmed.

Table 3. Dependent t-test comparing frequencies of principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours (N=69).

Principals' positive EM	Principals' negative EM	<i>t</i> (<i>df</i> =68)	<i>p</i>
3.66 (<i>SD</i> =.42)	2.28 (<i>SD</i> =.44)	-15.75	0.000

Note. EM = emotional manipulation. $p < .05$ one-tailed.

To test Hypothesis 2 and determine whether each type of principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours predict their matching teachers' affect in interactions with the principal, we conducted multilevel analyses using a mixed modelling procedure in SPSS software. Mixed modelling helps investigate hierarchical data and allows accurate assessment of parameters and errors (Peugh and Enders, 2005). Table 4 reports the full multilevel mixed modelling analysis in which teacher's negative affect served as the dependent variable at Level 1. We specified the cross-level direct effects of aggregates of principal's negative and positive emotional manipulation on teacher's negative affect. Teacher's gender and age, and principal's gender and age were incorporated as control variables. The model explained 34% of the variance in teachers' negative affect in interactions with the principal. Higher principal's negative emotional manipulation and lower positive emotional manipulation, particularly in the case of younger principals, predicted teachers' negative affect in interactions with the principal.

Table 4. Multilevel mixed modelling results: Teacher's negative affect in interactions with the principal.

	Estimate	SE	<i>t</i>
<i>Level-1</i>			
Teacher's gender	.010	.111	.094
Teacher's age	.001	.002	.508
<i>Level-2</i>			
Principal's gender	.003	.069	.053
Principal's age	-.008	.004	-2.014*
Principal's negative EM (aggregate)	.264	.066	3.979***

Principal's positive EM (aggregate)	-.240	.076	-3.136**	R ² =.34
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Note. EM = emotional manipulation. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. R² total = R² within-group \times (1 – ICC[1]) + R² between-group \times ICC(1). The ICC(1) for negative affect in interactions with principal is .11.

To investigate which emotional manipulation predicts teacher's positive affect in interactions with the principal, we performed another multilevel mixed modelling analysis, this time with teacher's positive affect as the dependent variable at Level 1 (see Table 5). Similarly to first model, we specified teacher's gender and age and principal's gender and age as control variables with effects on teacher's positive affect. We also specified the cross-level effects of aggregates of principal's negative and positive emotional manipulation on teacher's negative affect in interactions with the principal. The second model accounted for 44% of the variance in teacher's positive affect in interactions with the principal. Only higher principal's positive emotional manipulation predicted the teacher's positive affect in interactions with the principal. Taking the multilevel mixed modelling results together, Hypothesis 2 was confirmed.

Table 5. Multilevel mixed modelling results: Teacher's positive affect in interactions with the principal.

	Estimate	SE	<i>t</i>	
<i>Level-1</i>				
Teacher's gender	-.250	.135	-1.843	
Teacher's age	.004	.003	1.388	
<i>Level-2</i>				
Principal's gender	.126	.090	1.396	
Principal's age	.004	.005	.719	
Principal's negative EM (aggregate)	-.110	.086	-1.287	
Principal's positive EM (aggregate)	.901	.100	8.984***	R ² =.44

Note. EM = emotional manipulation. *** $p < .001$. R^2 total = R^2 within-group \times (1 – ICC[1]) + R^2 between-group \times ICC(1). The ICC(1) for positive affect in interactions with principal is .21.

To explore whether there are differences within the two types of controlling tendencies (obstinacy and orderliness) between principals with different frequencies of manipulative behaviours (i.e., Hypothesis 3), we performed a series of independent t-test analyses (see Table 6). Principals with high frequency of negative emotionally manipulative behaviours scored significantly higher on orderliness ($M=3.32$) than those with low frequency of negative emotionally manipulative behaviours ($M=3.00$). Principals with high frequency of positive emotionally manipulative behaviours scored significantly higher on obstinacy ($M=2.88$) than did those with low frequency of positive emotionally manipulative behaviours ($M=2.58$). In light of these findings, we concluded that Hypothesis 3 was confirmed as well.

Table 6. Independent t-tests comparing controlling tendencies of principals with high and low frequencies of emotionally manipulative behaviours.

	High negative EM behaviours (N=34)	Low negative EM behaviours (N=35)	$t(df=67)$	p
Orderliness	3.32 ($SD=.63$)	3.00 ($SD=.70$)	-1.967	0.27
	High positive EM behaviours (N=34)	Low positive EM behaviours (N=35)	$t(df=67)$	p
Obstinacy	2.88 ($SD=.53$)	2.58 ($SD=.57$)	-2.218	0.15

Note. EM = emotionally manipulative. $p < .05$ one-tailed.

Discussion

To date, our knowledge about principals' behaviours that affect teachers' emotional state has been scarce, focusing mostly on mistreatment and abusive behaviours (Berkovich and Eyal, 2015), which are less relevant to normative principals. The present research greatly expands this knowledge base by investigating principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours. The results of the study confirm the relevance of investigating emotional manipulation in principal-teacher relations. The findings support the idea that social interactions at work are often goal-oriented, and emotions are a common currency in these interactions. The modified dual-EMB scale shows ecological validity in that the principals' manipulative behaviours predicted the teachers' affect. Moreover, principals who were reported by others to frequently use manipulative behaviours were found to differ from those who did not frequently use such behaviours on their controlling tendencies based on their self-report, further supporting the argument of a shared component at the basis of the two types of emotionally manipulative behaviour.

The present findings contribute to the educational leadership research specifically, and to emotional manipulation research in general, in several ways. First, by conceptualising and operationalising emotional manipulation as a dual construct, with negative as well as positive orientations, and by focusing on observed behaviours, the study has produced findings that suggest a broad relevance of emotional manipulation in work settings. The narrow definition of emotional manipulation as negative, to the exclusion of the conventional dichotomy in the study of emotions (Izard, 1991), has led the researchers to focus on negative emotional manipulation (Austin et al., 2007; Selfridge, 2008) and ignore positive emotional manipulation. Exploring negative emotional manipulation as a self-trait "predisposes" the exploration of individuals to the study of psychopathic and Machiavellian characteristics (Austin et al., 2007; Grieve and Mahar, 2010). This focus seems to be counter-productive in workplace research, especially in view of the current study reporting a significantly higher prevalence of principals' positive emotionally manipulative behaviour in schools. Our findings also emphasise the centrality of positive emotional manipulation in principal-teacher relations. Both principals' high negative and low positive manipulative behaviours predicted teachers' negative affect. This finding suggests that positive emotionally manipulative behaviours are a key

element in productive social interactions, and the lack thereof may be an indication of a relationship gone awry. The key role of principals' positive emotionally manipulative behaviours in both types of teachers' affective experience (negative and positive) may be linked to the individuals' inclination toward self-enhancement, which leads them to expect that others will treat them in a positive manner (Swann et al., 1987).

Second, the findings propose an alternative perspective on controlling school leadership. Although the traditional claim in the literature is that principals' controlling is a hierarchical, autocratic form of leadership (Reitzug, 1994), the present work demonstrates that principals' controlling can take various forms. The results showing the link between principals' controlling tendencies and emotionally manipulative behaviours support the theoretical claim that the need for control is at the root of emotionally manipulative behaviours (Braiker, 2004). It seems that opinionated individuals and those who feel compelled to maintain a strict routine appear to be more likely than others to engage in manipulative behaviours of either type. The findings indicate that not only controlling principals can be non-autocratic, but that they can also develop and empower others as part of their controlling behaviour. This idea is consistent with the critical scholarly stream of research suggesting that empowerment can be viewed as a manipulative way of controlling teachers (Reitzug, 1994). Our findings may be viewed as expanding the conceptualisation of alternative post-bureaucratic model of emotional leadership (Bush, 2014).

Practical implications

The insights of the study have several practical implications. First, the findings contribute to principals' training and development processes. As opposed to the central body of literature on leadership antecedents, which focuses on characteristics that are difficult to change (Bommer et al., 2004), such as emotional intelligence (Schutte et al., 2001), the present study focuses on principals' behaviours that can be altered with reflection and training (Cooke and Apolloni, 1976). Incorporating simulations of principal-teacher interactions in leadership development programmes, in which feedback focuses on emotional dynamics (i.e., the manner in which emotions are exhibited and dealt with), can help individuals better understand their personal inclinations and experience the effects of attempts at emotional influence as targets,

when fellow trainees practise on them. Second, principals' emotionally manipulative behaviours reflect a functional approach to promoting goals. These behaviours are particularly important in specific policy contexts and times of uncertainty. Post-bureaucratic educational systems and organisations rely less on formal, rigid, bureaucratic control (Leithwood, 1996) and more on alternative forms, such as emotional influence (Eden, 1998). It may also be the case that principals' manipulative behaviours are more valuable in periods of change and reform. It has been suggested that positive affect of school staff is one of the key factors that promote change in educational organisations (Geijsel et al., 2003). Third, acting principals who wish to be perceived as transformational leaders and produce transformation-related outcomes must pay attention to their emotionally manipulative behaviours. Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2002) maintained that manager's negative manipulative attempts can harm subordinates' perception of the manager as a transformational leader. At the same time, the use of positive emotionally manipulative behaviours, such as praise, can generate transformation-related outcomes, such as organisational citizenship behaviours (Somech and Oplatka, 2014), as teachers tend to reflect to students the positive behaviours to which they have been subjected (Cossairt et al., 1973).

Study limitations and future research

The present study has several limitations. First, it explored only teachers' affect in interactions with principals; the effectiveness of emotional manipulation in cultivating or discouraging specific behaviours and promoting desired goals in schools is unknown. We view these topics as promising directions for future research. Second, the reliability of the used measure of obstinacy is poor, but because no better measures are available (Mudrack, 2004), we chose to use this established one. Development and validation of a different measure of obstinacy could be an important direction of research. Third, the study does not address other variables that may enhance or mitigate the effectiveness of the emotional influence processes, for example, trust, which has an emotional component (Pillai et al., 1999). Given that in most workplaces attempts at emotional influence occur in ongoing relationships, trust can moderate the associations between the principal's emotional manipulation and teachers' affect. Further study is therefore required on this issue. Fourth, it is possible that at various educational levels, structural and role constraints motivate or enable

principals to engage in manipulative behaviours with different frequencies. Future studies may consider exploring this issue. Fifth, the present study did not address the ethicality of applying emotional manipulation in principal-teacher relations. Although a utilitarian perspective may justify these behaviours if their results promote student development, from the deontological perspective they might be objectionable. Yet, if positive manipulative behaviours are an extension of the principal's authentic viewpoint, they may be regarded favourably by deontologists as well. This important ethical discussion requires further elaboration. Despite the limitations mentioned above, the current study represents an important step in the attempt to expose the black box of emotional influence in school leadership. The present study offers new understandings of emotional manipulation in principal-teacher relations.

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