

# Chapter 6

## Principals' Views on Stigma Tendency

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Stigma takes place as a concept in the literature that affects individuals' lives negatively as well as can disrupt chemistry of organization and inhibit organizational behavior. Stigma is a concept that ostracizing individuals or groups because of their features that are not accepted by society and restricted their life on all areas. Studies on stigma have been increased during twenty years. Although school principals play the lock role and the most affecting actor in positively or negatively to school, studies on principals' stigma tendency are extremely limited. Stigma tendencies of principals' can affect chemistry of organization much more than stigma tendencies of teachers. The purpose of the study is to determine stigma tendencies of principals' by using quantitative research methods. According to research results; principals' stigma tendencies are significantly different according to seniority, level of religious feelings and health status.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Stigma takes place as a concept in the literature that affects individuals' lives negatively as well as can disrupt chemistry of organization and inhibit organizational behavior. Stigma tendencies of principals' can affect chemistry of organization much more than stigma tendencies of teachers.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-0460-3.ch006

According to Link and Phelan (2001) stigma is a force that allows the emergence of labeling, stereotypes, divisions, status loss and discrimination. Jones et al. (1984) defines stigma as relationship between an “attribute and a stereotype” to produce a definition of stigma as a “mark” (attribute) that links a person to undesirable characteristics (stereotypes). Elliott, Ziegler, Altman and Scott (1982) emphasized the social interaction in stigma and defines stigma as a form of deviance that leads others to judge an individual as illegitimate for participation in a social interaction. This is thought to affect a judgment on person’s dangerousness and unpredictability. When one time individual are considered as illegitimate, it is not expected to show normal social behavior, that individual may be neglected or isolated from the group. An attribute of stigmatized person makes them different in the eyes of others and discredit the person. Furthermore, according to Parker and Aggleton (2003) stigma causes some groups to be devalued and others to feel that they are superior. To sum up, stigma is isolation of individuals or groups which have features that unacceptable in society and also restriction of individuals’ or groups’ lives in all areas.

When the history of stigma is explored, it is seen that stigma concept has been experiencing since the oldest societies. Ongoing caste system in India since ancient times can be an example of stigma. There have been stigmatizing attitudes of higher caste groups in interaction of scheduled and higher caste groups and stigma affect especially scheduled caste groups in terms of psychological, social and physical health (Jaspal, 2011).

However stigma to individuals that different from society is particularly more clear and obvious when diseases are in question. While epilepsy was known as feared disease in Ancient Greek and Rome ([www.turkepilepsi.org](http://www.turkepilepsi.org)), leprosy and plague were also perceived as an evil given by God. People who suffered from syphilis which emerged in Europe are doomed and also patients with tuberculosis, with cancer, AIDS sufferers (Oran & Şenuzun, 2008) and the stigma against those with mental illness (Üçok, 2003) has a remarkable history. In addition, the stigma were first developed for people with mental illness in many societies (Kocabaşoğlu & Aliustaoğlu, 2003).

In 1930s there had been law regulations as restriction on not to got marriage, not to had children, given as adopt of epilepsy patients and also closure to mental health hospital to epilepsy patients who had even frequent bouts in the UK ([www.turkepilepsi.org](http://www.turkepilepsi.org)). This situation can be considered as a proof that stigma of epilepsy. Likewise, hundred and eighty thousand psychiatric patients in Nazi Germany during six years between the years of 1939-1945 murdered under the supervision of psychiatrists, after Hitler came to power in 1933, he arranged the law for prevent of hereditary diseases, thus began the discriminatory process (Bilge & Çam, 2010).

In the 1980s, theory and research began to challenge traditional perspectives on how stigma affects self-esteem and academic performance, among other outcomes

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