THE INFLUENCE OF THE LEADERSHIP STYLE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ON THE TEACHERS' HAPPINESS AND MOTIVATION IN ISRAELI ARAB SCHOOLS

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Abstract: *This paper examines the influence of the leadership styles (transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) used by school principals on the happiness, motivation and job satisfaction of teachers in Arab schools in Israel. The article presents the findings of a quantitative analysis, where the impact of the leadership styles was examined. The data was obtained using a questionnaire that was distributed to teachers. The findings show that transformational and transactional leadership style have a low influence on the happiness of teachers, and a strong influence on the motivation of teachers in Arab schools. Their use by school principals enhances the development of collaborative relations between teachers at school, and thus increases their job satisfaction, too. The authors recommend to school principals to learn and practice a mix of leadership styles, such as transformational, transactional, collaborative and empowering is formulated.*

Keywords: *leadership style; transformational; teachers' happiness; Arab Israeli schools.*

JEL Classification: *l20; J28; L39.*

1. Introduction

This paper examines the relationship between the principal's leadership style and the Arab teachers' happiness and motivation to teach, on the one hand, and their impact on teacher job satisfaction, on the other hand. The school principal is expected by teachers to pursue policies of support, inclusion, encouragement and empowerment of them. When the school has a professional cooperative relationship between teachers, it can develop a strong professional culture based on shared values of work. The main hypothesis is that there are

2. Literature review

"Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish the shared objectives" (Yukl

& Lepsinger, 2004: 7). In this regards, J. M. Burns was the first to describe the terms "transformative" and "transactional" in the political field based on historical leadership figures, such as John Kennedy, but emphasized that transformative leadership is also possible in other areas (Khanin, 2007). The latter stimulated the research group around Bass to transfer these concepts to the economic sector.

There are various value-oriented management approaches that school development research deals with. On the one hand, school development research differentiates between transactional, transformational and laissez-faire leadership. The social exchange theory is a theoretical approach that is used to explain power gain or power loss. This theory is often brought into connection with transactional leadership in the literature. The social exchange theory tries to explain the reciprocal process of collaboration and the exchange of rewards and pleasure between manager and employees.

2.1. Transactional Leadership

"Transactional leadership refers to the exchange relationship between leaders and followers to meet their own self-interests" (Bass, 1999: 10). Transactional leadership is based on a reinforcement-based exchange relationship between manager and employee. The basis of the contract is a reward (in the form of money, promotion, praise, appreciation) in connection with the performance or punishment for non-performance. The motivation is primarily extrinsic. Transactional executives focus on the "how" than the "what." They are considered good process optimizers and stand for good quality of the product / service.

The basic principles of transactional leadership are the achievement of the goal is rewarded, and corrective measures are taken if the goal is missed. Two factors play a role: first, Contingent Reward (path - goal clarification as well as performance-related awarding of rewards) and second, Management by Exception (those being led to fulfill their work according to the goals of the leader and receive the desired reward for this). This management approach can certainly lead to clarity of roles and also to job satisfaction in clearly structured companies with hierarchies.

2.2. Transformational leadership

Under a transformational leadership, the school management "transforms" the values and motives of the teachers to a higher level. According to many studies, the concept of transformational leadership represents a suitable leadership concept for school principals in the current situation characterized by several changes and requirements for schools Oplatka & Arar, 2017, Ng & Rivera, 2018). The focus of transformational leadership is on the development of goals and visions that are closely related to the motivation of those being led. In view of the increasing demands on the school organization and the associated pressure to implement innovations, this management concept turns out to be suitable, as it is designed to implement changes. The transformational leadership style is characterized by a strong orientation towards the beliefs and values of the employees, the manager "transforms" also the behaviours and practices of members of the organization (Stewart, 2006). The manager should convey visionary purpose and goals, stimulating work content and thereby achieve the emotional involvement of the organization's members in terms of the common goals.

2.3. Laissez-faire (passive) leadership

Laissez-faire (passive) leadership style or "not leading" is described as the least successful leadership approach (Bass, 1999). It can be reduced to two basic forms: the first, passive, also known as management by exception and the second form, laissez faire. In both cases the manager holds back and avoids actively intervening with the work of subordinates. The former is shaped by the very famous credo "If it's not broken, don't fix it" (Bass, 1999), i.e. to only react in extreme emergencies. Laissez faire, on the other hand, describes a major misconduct of a manager, since the process and employees are not only left to do their tasks on their own, without the involvement of the manager, but the manager delays making the needed decisions which may result in further ineffectiveness.

3. Happiness and Unhappiness of Teachers and its Association with Job Satisfaction

Given that the leadership styles of transformational and transactional are the most prominent leadership models, this paper will analyze and discuss the impact of the leadership style on teachers' happiness and their impact on teacher's job satisfaction. Yet, there will be a reference to the type of passive leadership how it affects teacher's motivation and job satisfaction. The teacher's job satisfaction is also influenced by factors such as teachers' autonomy at school, empowerment, inspiration, teamwork and team collaboration, participation in the decision-making process, conflicts at school (Oplatka, 2007; Eyal & Roth, 2011, Lee et al.,1991).

In as much as transformational leadership encompasses elements such as personalized and customized considerations, intelligent stimulation, and inspiration by encouraging articulating one's vision, researchers suggest that transformational leadership behaviour is autonomy accommodating (Eyal & Roth, 2011: 257). It asserts that a school principal who is presenting a compelling vision of their school future and involving them fully in its implementation process and progress will give a better meaning to their work. It is fair assuming that more autonomous teachers, who assign meaning to their work, are happier of their job, and vice versa (Warr, 2011).

In contrast, transactional leadership, which encompasses conditional rewards and management by concessions, has been described as manipulating and as obstructing followers' autonomy (Eyal & Roth, 2011: 259). These researchers contend that transactional leadership underlines extrinsic rewards and supervising subordinates' work outcomes. This will generate a controlling environment in which the teachers experience high compulsion and low self-autonomy, which eliminate any sense of motivation to initiate new vision by teachers. Teachers in this situation are concerned about the outcome of satisfying the principal's expectations, rather than doing what in their view is right. Warr's research concluded that workers' perceptions of their manager's autonomy-supportive policy predicted their satisfaction at work and performance (Warr, 2011: 21). Also, teacher's job satisfaction derived from their autonomy, internalization of the significance of the working practices and values, and intrinsic motivation. Under the transactional

leadership style, teachers perform tasks set by the principal, without creativity. This type of management does not make teachers feel happy about their work; they just perform tasks to please the principal.

4. Research methodology

The research population consisted of 209 teachers selected by the easily accessible sampling method among the teachers working in public schools in Israel. The data were obtained by using a questionnaire with a part about demographic data, the Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5) by Bass and Avolio (1990), and a third part about happiness at work in school, relations with colleagues at school, work motivation and job satisfaction of teachers. Since data showed normal distribution, the researcher performed the analysis of frequency and Spearman correlation.

5. Findings

The results of the research are presented in Table 1, below.

Table 1. Spearman correlations rank (rs) between research variables

Variables	Relations with Colleagues at Work	Happiness At work in school	Motivation of teachers	Work satisfaction Of teachers
Laissez-faire leadership style	-.279**	.043	-.291**	.009
Transactional leadership style	.532**	.295**	.405**	.490**
Transformational leadership style	.611**	.300**	.499**	.486**

Note **p<0.01.*
***Source**: Author*

The findings show that there is an average positive correlation (rs=.499) between the transformational leadership style of the school principal and the motivation of teachers, and that there is an average positive correlation (rs = .405) between the transactional (rewarding) leadership style of school principals and the motivation of teachers working in the school. This indicates that this two-leadership style when used by school principals in managing their school are increasing the motivation of the teaching staff of their school. On the other hand, the researcher found that the laissez-faire leadership style used by school principals is negatively and weakly correlated (rs = -.291) to the teachers motivation, indicating that the more this style is practiced by school principals the lower the teachers' motivation. The findings point to the fact that laissez-faire leadership style of a school principal has negative effect on a teacher's motivation and is not influencing the teachers' satisfaction at work. (rs = .009).

About the impact of leadership styles used by school principals on the variable "happiness of teachers at work in school", the findings, presented in Table 1, above, indicate that both the transformational (rs=.300) and transformational leadership style (rs=.295) have a weak and positive influence on the happiness of teachers at work, while the laissez-faire style has no significant impact on the happiness of teachers at work (rs =.043).

Also, the findings presented in Table 1, above, indicate there is a strong positive correlation (rs= .611) between the transformational leadership style of school principals and the variable "relations between colleagues (teachers) at work", indicating that the school principals using this style create and stimulate the development of better relations between teachers in the school. The transactional leadership style used by the school principals is only average and positively correlated (rs= .532) with the variable "relations between colleagues at work", while school principals using the laissez-faire leadership style impact (rs = -.279) weakly and negatively and the development of the relations between teachers at work, meaning that the more they use this leadership style less intense relations will exist between teachers in their school. Under these circumstances, teachers may enjoy much autonomy, but less satisfaction of their job and less self- efficacy. Teachers working in such a school environment are not happy, especially that under such circumstances, disciplinary measures are loose too, which result in a negative impact on the teachers' mood.

6. Discussion

The study of (Lee et al., 1991) demonstrate that laissez-faire leadership style contributes to increase the stress level of teachers in trying to handle the daily problems of teaching and engenders a reduced sense of self-efficacy and satisfaction. In contrast, extrinsic control in hierarchical organizations, access to information about one's performance mirrors the authority's structure of a rewarding style of the principal. In bureaucratic organizations such as schools. A rewarding principal aspires to maximize subordinates' efficiency and productivity while minimizing the dissatisfaction of workers over their absence of autonomy. On the basis of the type of interaction that takes place over the technical structure in school organizations, two types of authority structures can be identified: the first type, loosely-coupled and, the second type, the cohesive or integrated (Geijsel, et al., 2003). Both are hierarchical structures which may operate under organizational structures that promote loose coupling, instead of incorporation. Thus, it is the cultural relations—the culture of social communication between school staff within the school—that either submit to a bureaucratic strict hierarchy or allows a more room for collaborative policy, situation in which teachers report both higher motivation to teaching and higher satisfaction (Assor et al., 2005). Data from Table 1, above, shows that the influence of a transformational school principal on the work motivation of Arab teachers is somewhat higher than the influence of the transactional school principal on teachers' job motivation.

The researchers' findings about the influence of the leadership style of school principals in Arab schools in

Israel on the level of happiness of teachers were confirmed by some studies, done in several Middle East countries, including Israel. The study of İşeri (2024) found that school principals' transformational leadership and transactional leadership style, is directly and moderately correlated with the happiness at work of Turkish teachers. The study of Şahin & Özgenel (2020) found that teachers happiness at work in school was at a high level only when the school principals were using transformational leadership style at high level, and when they used the transactional leadership style at an average level, and also, when their level of use of the laissez-faire leadership stye is low, while significantly predicting the teachers' happiness. The study of Kılıç et al. (2023) found that the transformational leadership style of school principals is strongly correlated with the level of happiness at school of teachers. Their qualitative findings indicated several factors which influenced the happiness level of teachers such as the nature of the relations with the school principal, the relations with their fellow colleagues at school, and quality of the working conditions for teachers. In addition, a study about schools in Israel (Hiba, 2023) reached similar conclusions based on findings indicating the positive and strong influence of all the three leadership styles of school principals on the level of commitment of Arab teachers, while stronger in the case of the correlation intensity between the transactional leadership style and the affective commitment.

Studying the correlation between the leadership style (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire) of school principals and the satisfaction at work of teachers in Arab school in Israel, Bsoul (2022) found the same conclusions about the transformational and transactional leadership style that both are directly correlated with teachers' satisfaction. However, they found that while the laisssez-faire leadership style is indirectly correlated with the job satisfaction of teachers, in the case when teachers prefer a large work autonomy, they also are more satisfied at work. The same results about a strong positive correlation between the laissez faire leadership style of Israeli Bedouin school principals and the job satisfaction of teachers, also explained by the freedom enjoyed by teachers in their teaching activities, while school principals execute mostly the administrative tasks related to school management (Aburkayek, 2022). About the transformational leadership style, the findings indicate a positive moderate correlation with the job satisfaction of teachers and about the transactional leadership style the correlations found was weak and positive. These findings were explained mostly by the very conservative, traditional culture of Bedouin society from Negev area, in the south of Israel (Aburkayek, 2022).

The comprehensive study of (Oplatka & Arar, 2017) about the educational leadership and management in the Arab world over a twenty years period (1990-2015), found that the dominant, mostly used leadership style of school principals was the authoritative style, highly transactional. They explained this by the cultural values and behaviours and social structures specific to traditional Arab society, which are quite compatible with this leadership style, and therefore allow for the effectiveness of school processes, despite their negative impact on the happiness at work of teachers.

The way a school is organized and the dynamics of interaction between the principal and teachers strongly influences teachers' overall satisfaction at work (Bottery, 2003; Warr, 2011). Thus, differences in the way formal authority exists in

schools reflect on the type of relationship and on achieving consensus on school goals. Loose coupling refers to an organizational hierarchy, where the activities of employee "A" have slight bearing on employee "B"'s functioning, and vice versa. This type of loose coupling is mainly a reflection of the principal leadership style that exists under a school principal using the laissez-faire style. It could also prevail under a school principal using the transactional style, working with each teacher individually without attempting to foster teamwork. Consequently, teaching activities in a typical school are loosely connected to the school's hierarchical structure and to the school principal, in particular.

In addition, school teachers perform their teaching activities in separation from the school principal and also from their peers. This restricts their awareness of school activities outside their own classroom and affect their motivation to teach and their overall job satisfaction. The natural separation of teaching from the school principal is a buffering zone that allows schools to function as educational institutions. The school can react to external factors without modifying their core functioning, that is education. This means that teachers do enjoy some level of autonomy, yet an autonomy that could be accompanied with dictated policies by the school principal. According to the findings of this study, the loose-coupling between teachers and the principal is related largely to the principal leadership style (Oplatka, 2007). By the same token, major difference between a public and a private school turns public schools into far more likely to conduct both high internal complexity and distant association between the school principal and teachers, given the low external pressure applied on the school by its external constituency. The study asserts that the bureaucratic organization of public schools renders more inclined to react to the political climate within the school itself. The market orientation of private schools, by contrast, encourages responsiveness to students and their parents' demands, usually oriented towards academic performance. These arguments suggest that loosely coupled organizational structures are more typical of the public than of private schools and it is possible also that the passive management style of avoiding is more prevalent in public schools than in private ones.

In Israel, loosely coupled organizational structures are more associate of Arab than of Jewish schools and that laissez-faire leadership style of school principals is more prevalent Arab schools than in Jewish ones. In this sense, teachers in Arab schools do enjoy more autonomy by default but enjoy less an internal environment of collaboration. In Arab schools run by school principals using the laissez-faire the daily classroom teaching activities are demarcated from long-term planning. Furthermore, teachers are separated from one another, so that each teacher functions in a vacuum and unawareness about the whole organization. A result of such ambiguity is the absence of consensus about goals and tasks in these schools. Teachers may set separate goals for their classes, which may be incongruent with the goals of the principal (Oplatka, 2010).

Moreover, in loosely-coupled schools, close interaction among parties may result in a strife, since various goals may naturally require different means to resolve daily problems (de Lima, 2007). Accordingly, tension and dispute at schools are caused by disagreements and by the existence of various groups with like-minded teachers based on failure in finding common understanding, which result in tension and ideological quarrels (Göksoy & Argon, 2016: p.197). Teachers who experience such

a crisis and clashes develop negative feelings such as stress, sadness, and anxiety and may develop dislike to their professions. Such psychological outcomes certainly result in low motivation and low self-efficacy (Göksoy & Argon, 2016: p.204). In such a school environment charged with the creation of like-minded groups and conflicts, the professional interaction among the school teachers is limited, is less collaborative, which results in low happiness at work and lower work motivation

In contrast, schools under the leadership of a transformative principal may display a robust sense of a central goal, and a shared principle about education, a cohesive environment (de Lima, 2007). Integrated schools function under a unified purpose and an agreed set of organizational goals, creating a better cooperation and agreement among the teachers and the school principal about the educational mission of the school. Typically, unified goals, and integrated cultural relations are more likely to be found in private than in public schools and in Jewish than in Arab schools. In schools with unified purpose, principals often seek to link the procedural core operations with this purpose of the school. It should be noticed, however, that in private schools, principals have more authority in dismissing teachers, who are not integrated in the school system, which bestows on school principals more clout than in public schools. Thus, teachers in private schools are under more pressure to monitor operations at a larger scale than their own classroom (Tyler, 1987).

7. Conclusions

In conclusion, the researchers found that the transformational leadership style of the school principal has an average positive impact on the motivation of teachers, and that the transactional (rewarding) leadership style of school principals has a moderate impact on the motivation of teachers working in the school. This indicates that these two leadership styles when used by school principals in managing their school are increasing the motivation of the teaching staff of their school. On the other hand, the researcher found that the laissez-faire leadership style used by school principals is negatively and weakly correlated to the teacher's motivation, indicating that the more this style is practiced by school principals the lower the teachers' motivation.   The researcher concludes that both the transformational and transformational leadership style have a low impact of the happiness of teachers at work, while the laisses-faire style has no significant impact on the happiness of teachers at work. An important conclusion is that a single leadership style used by school principals is insufficient to adequately impact teachers' happiness at work. Integrating several leadership styles by school principals, such as transformational, transactional, collaborative, empowering and distributive, allow for better relations between colleagues and increased motivation of teachers. Consequently, the researcher recommends school principals to learn and use a mix of transformational and transactional leadership approach to increase the happiness level of teachers at school.

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