School Leadership Styles and Their Impact on Teacher Attitudes and Job Satisfaction in Israeli High Schools

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Abstract

This paper examines relations between school leadership styles, particularly transformational and transactional leadership, and its impact on teacher involvement and job satisfaction in Israeli high schools. The research sample included 40 high school principals, 324 English teachers, and 212 parents from both Jewish and Arab sectors. Data were collected through questionnaires based on the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) framework, measuring principals' involvement, transformational and transactional leadership styles, and aspects of school management. Multiple linear regression analyses were conducted to predict teacher involvement and job satisfaction based on principal variables.

Results indicated that principal's involvement and close management supervision positively correlated with teacher involvement, while principal's responsibility negatively influenced job satisfaction. However, transformational and transactional leadership styles did not show significant direct effects on job satisfaction. Subgroup analyses revealed differences among Jewish and Arab teachers, with transformational leadership negatively impacting Arab teacher involvement, contrary to its positive impact on Jewish teachers.

While transformational leadership may not directly influence job satisfaction, its interaction with other variables such as cultural contexts and management practices warrants further investigation. Understanding these complexities is crucial for enhancing teacher engagement and satisfaction, ultimately benefiting student learning outcomes.

1. School leadership challenges

1.1 School Leadership

Leadership in education plays a crucial role in shaping the school environment and impacting the performance of both teachers and students. The principal, as the leader of the school, sets the tone and direction for the entire institution (Bello et al, 2016). Leadership styles and behaviors can be another factor that influences teachers' performance. Ultimately, a principal's leadership style sets the tone for the entire school culture and profoundly influences teacher morale,

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commitment, and performance. By cultivating a supportive and empowering environment, principals can enhance teacher motivation, which in turn contributes to improved student outcomes and overall school success (Dou et al, 2016). To further this, teachers' perception of their principals' style of leadership is critical to the students since student performance is reliant on teachers' view of school leaders which in turn affect the performance of learners (Nir & Hameiri, 2016; Husain, 2022). Therefore, though different styles of leadership may be chosen, this research majorly concentrated on transformational and transactional leadership.

1.1.1 Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders are those leaders who adopt exemplary ways to bring together enlightenment and perseverance to drive their subordinates beyond self-serving aims and exhort them to achieve more for the good of the organization. Transformational leaders promote commitment across the whole enterprise by giving consideration to goals and needs of the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Therefore, principals who adopt a transformational leadership style often serve as powerful role models for teachers within the educational organization. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate others by articulating a compelling vision, fostering a sense of purpose and meaning, and promoting collaboration and innovation. (Hyseni Duraku & Hoxha, 2021).

1.1.2 Transactional Leadership

Transactional leaders are concerned with identifying the skills of their subordinates and they use the instrument of promise and punishment to move them to work efficiently (Burns, 1978). Transactional leadership includes a number of actions, from laissez-faire approach to high involvement approach and from managerial by exception, in which the manager reacts to employees' inappropriate behaviours or objectives not met, to supportive approach.

The Transactional leadership style may suggest that the leader does not pay attention to the employee but instead rewards the employee for successfully completing the activities or gives the employee a punishment for the negative behaviors (Bass, 1990).

1.2 Job Satisfaction of Teachers

Rezaee et al., (2020) assessed the organizational atmosphere in schools and its implication to teachers' satisfaction. Job satisfaction relates to the extent that the needs and values of an individual are fulfilled in the workplace (Camp,1994). Job satisfaction can be described as the enjoyable emotions derived from the evaluation of the individual's job and experiences on the job (Danish & Usman, 2010).

The research, however, revealed a significant relationship between the culture of a school and teachers' contentment status. Factors included principals'

leadership, the teaching load, the teachers' decision making and autonomy (Rezaee et al., 2020). It was found that teachers who have an unfavorable perception about the administrative environment report a lower job satisfaction rate.

Among the various factors studied, teachers' satisfaction with the work itself emerged as the most influential aspect although principal leadership also plays a pivotal role in shaping the organizational climate, with significant associations found between principal leadership, job autonomy, and teachers' satisfaction with their work (Abu-Saad & Hendrix, 1995). The principal's leadership accomplished the most in setting the climate of the organization with strong correlations found between principal leadership, job autonomy and teachers' involvement in their job.

Furthermore, Andriani et al. (2018) supports the positive impact of transformational leadership on the performance of teachers as this style of leadership which focuses on vision, mission, and motivation, significantly influences teacher performance. Motivation, in particular, emerged as a key factor driving improved teacher performance. Transformational leadership can alter teachers' perceptions, enhance motivation, and consequently lead to higher performance levels. Moreover, Orphonos & Orr (2014) reinforced the significance of positive perceptions of principals' leadership on teacher job satisfaction and collaboration.

Baptiste (2019) further emphasized the pivotal role of school leaders in shaping teacher job satisfaction, work performance, student experiences, and overall school climate. Leadership styles, whether transactional or transformational, were noted to profoundly impact school outcomes.

Effective communication, relationship building, open-mindedness, and a passion for education were identified as traits of effective principals, contributing to enhanced staff morale and performance. Aydin et al. (2013) researched the transformative impact of shifting from transactional to transformational leadership styles and underscored the importance of developing transformational leadership skills among school administrators for optimal resource utilization.

2. Methods

The sample consisted from 40 high school principals, 324 English teachers and 212 parents from 40 schools in the Jewish and Arab sectors of Israel. Using a questionnaire developed based on The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), administered under the auspices of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), provides a standardized framework for gathering data.

TALIS is a well-respected international survey that focuses on teachers and school leaders, covering various aspects of teaching practices, school leadership, and the learning environment (TALIS, 2022). Specifically, the following variables were coded from this questionnaire: English Professional Development, English Professional Development Needs, Feedback Effect of Feedback, Teacher's Involvement, Job Satisfaction, School Satisfaction, Principal's Involvement, Transformational Leadership of principal, and Transactional Leadership of principal.

3. Results

Two separate multiple linear regressions analysis were performed, while independent variables were principal's involvement, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, principals' responsibility, school management close supervision and school management improving which all predict teachers' functioning manifested as teacher involvement (model 1) and job satisfaction (model 2). Those regression models were conducted to the whole sample, and for the Jews and Arabs teachers separately.

In the case of all samples, the first regression model showed that the six independent variables accounted for approximately 4.90% of the total variance in the teacher involvement ($F_{(6, 317)} = 2.74$, $p = .01$).

The findings (see table 1, below) show that teacher involvement has positive connection to principal's involvement (beta = .18, $p < .05$) and school management close supervision (beta = .14, $p < .05$). Namely, the greater the school principal's involvement and the closer the management supervision, the greater is the teacher's involvement.

Standardized coefficients to predict teacher involvement by principles' variables

Table 1

	beta	p
Principal's involvement	.18**	.023
Transformational leadership	-.07	.872
Transactional leadership	.07	.913
Principal's Responsibility	-.04	.782
School Management Close supervision	.14*	.036
School Management Improving	-.03	.854

*p < .05, **p < .01

Source: The author

The second regression model showed that the six independent variables did not significantly account for approximately 3.50% of the total variance in the job satisfaction ($F_{(6, 317)} = 1.94$, $p = .07$).

The findings, see Table 2 below, show that job satisfaction has a negative connection to the principal's responsibility (beta = -.13, $p < .05$). The greater the school principal's responsibility, the lower is the teacher's job satisfaction.

Standardized coefficients to predict teachers' job satisfaction by principles' variables

Table 2

	beta	p
Principal's involvement	.06	.762
Transformational leadership	-.04	.892
Transactional leadership	.07	.912
Principal's Responsibility	-.13*	.022
School Management Close supervision	0.01	.953
School Management Improving	.09	.689

*p < .05, **p < .01

Source: The author

In the case of Jews only, the first regression model showed that the six independent variables accounted for approximately 6.80% of the total variance in the teacher involvement ($F_{(6, 235)} = 2.68$, p = .01).

The findings, see table 3 below, show that for Jewish teachers, teacher involvement has a positive connection to principal's involvement (beta = .25, p < .01). Namely, the greater his principal's involvement, the greater the teacher's involvement.

Standardized coefficients to predict Jewish teacher involvement by principles' variables

Table 3

	beta	p
Principal's involvement	.25**	.021
Transformational leadership	-.04	.892
Transactional leadership	.04	.781
Principal's Responsibility	-.01	.982
School Management Close supervision	.13	.591
School Management Improving	-.09	.722

*p < .05, **p < .01

Source: The author

The second regression model showed that the six independent variables did not significantly account for approximately 2.90% of the total variance in the job satisfaction ($F_{(6, 235)} = 1.16$, p = .33).

The findings, see Table 4 below, show that job satisfaction has no connections to management styles for Jewish teachers. Although management style was found to have a direct influence on the satisfaction of employees in previous studies, it is possible that in the current study, this correlation is not significant because teachers were more affected by their colleagues in school and by social norms than the leadership style of their manager.

Moreover, intrinsic motivation can lead teachers to develop a strong sense of personal agency and autonomy. Teachers with high levels of autonomy often create their job satisfaction by shaping their work environment to fit their teaching style and educational philosophy. In such cases, unless a management style is particularly oppressive or restrictive, it may have little bearing on their overall job satisfaction. This autonomy allows teachers to navigate and mitigate less-than-ideal management practices, maintaining their satisfaction through self-determination and the pursuit of their teaching goals.

Standardized coefficients to predict Jewish teachers' job satisfaction by principles' variables

Table 4

	Beta	p
Principal's involvement	.07	.882
Transformational leadership	-.06	.912
Transactional leadership	.06	.752
Principals Responsibility	-.10	.491
School Management Close supervision	.02	.894
School Management Improving	.09	.769

*p < .05, **p < .01

Source: The author

In the case of Arabs only, the first regression model showed that the six independent variables did not significantly account for approximately 13.50% of the total variance in the teacher involvement ($F_{(6, 64)} = 1.67$, p = .14).

The findings, see table 5 below, show that for Arabs teachers, teacher involvement has a negative connection to the Transformational leadership **style of the principal** (beta = -.30, p = .03). The greater the principal's transformational leadership style, the lower is the teachers' involvement.

Also, teacher involvement is positively and averagely correlated with transformational leadership (beta = .30, p=.012), transactional leadership (beta = .27, p=.024), and with school management close supervision (beta = .22, p=.021).

Standardized coefficients to predict Arab teacher's involvement by principles' variables.

Table 5

	beta	p
Principal's involvement	.08	.822
Transformational leadership	.30*	.012
Transactional leadership	.27*	.021
Principals Responsibility	-.11	.388
School Management Close supervision	.22*	.021
School Management Improving	.12	.622

*p < .05, **p < .01

Source: The author

The second regression model showed that the six independent variables did not significantly account for approximately 2.90% of the total variance in the job satisfaction ($F_{(6, 235)} = 1.16$, p = .33).

The findings, see table 6 below, show that job satisfaction has no connections to management styles for Arab teachers. Same comment as above, in the case of Jewish teachers.

Standardized coefficients to predict Arab teachers' job satisfaction by principles' variables

Table 6

	beta	p
Principal's involvement	.07	.722
Transformational leadership	-.06	.834
Transactional leadership	.06	.932
Principals Responsibility	-.10	.492
School Management Close supervision	.02	.762
School Management Improving	.09	.869

*p < .05, **p < .01

Source: The author

4. Conclusions

This research aims to analyze the interplay between school leadership styles, namely transformational and transactional leadership, and their impact on teacher involvement and job satisfaction in Israeli high schools. The findings underscore the significance of principal involvement and interactive management in fostering teacher engagement. While transformational leadership did not directly influence job satisfaction, its effects varied among Jewish and Arab teachers, which emphasize the importance of considering cultural contexts in leadership style. These insights are crucial for educational policymakers and school administrators in crafting effective leadership strategies that promote teacher well-being and, by extension, enhance student learning outcomes. Continued research in this area should look into the nuanced dynamics of leadership styles, cultural influences, and management practices to inform evidence-based strategies for creating positive school environments conducive to teacher success and student achievement.

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