



Research Article

© 2023 Haxhihyseni et al.

This is an open access article licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

Received: 12 April 2023 / Accepted: 11 June 2023 / Published: 5 July 2023

Impact of Principals' Leadership Styles on Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Motivation in Elementary Schools

Shqipe Haxhihyseni¹

Jonida Tirana²

Eva Ndrilo de Carvalho³

¹University "Aleksandër Moisiu",
Durrës, Albania

²University of Tirana,
Tiranë, Albania

³Luso Illyrian Foundation for Human Development,
Portugal

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2023-0101>

Abstract

This research paper intends to elucidate and ascertain prevailing leadership styles that principals of elementary education employ, along with their influence on the overall degree of motivation and teachers' job satisfaction. Quantitative method has been used in order to describe the relationship among the leadership style, motivation and job satisfaction. This study has been conducted with 700 elementary-school teachers respectively in the districts of Tirana, Durrës and Elbasan in Albania. In the findings of this study, the passive leadership style and the active leadership style dominate in the same values in the teachers' perception as the most widely used styles of their headmasters/principals in the basic education. From the regression analysis, it turned out that the active and passive styles are statistically valid predictors of satisfaction and motivation of teachers at work. There is a positive moderate relation between the active style (transformational/contingent reward) and job satisfaction. The findings of this paper will facilitate additional studies that must be conducted in the quest for broadening the leader's responsibilities and approaches to enhance working conditions, cultivate greater teacher motivation, and foster satisfaction within the environment they operate.

Keywords: job satisfaction, headmaster-teacher relationships, headmaster's behavior, leadership style, motivation

1. Introduction

Education is the nation's main sector for the advancement and sustainable development of society. Albanian society, and in particular the education sector over the last decades, has undergone numerous and radical changes where it is comes to be increasingly difficult to determine what students should be taught, what their educational goals will be, what role teachers and headmasters would have, what role would the curriculum play and how the teaching methods will be assessed.

The greatest challenge remains, without any doubts, the improvement of education quality and the need for continuous trainings of leading staff (school directors) and teachers in order to ensure

an efficient education system.

Different scholars (Cheng, 2002) Leithwood & Jantzi (1999), Starrett (1993) consider the leadership style as one of the main factors that affects directly the organizational and academic performance of teachers and indirectly that of students.

1.1 Problem statement

The rapid changes in our society and the dynamics of the education sector have changed the role of the school directors whose responsibilities are added and the objectives that should be fulfilled are increased in order to ensure higher quality of the school s/he runs. According to the Ministry of Education, Sport and Wellbeing, a strategic document, the National Strategy for Pre-University Education (2014-2020), clearly is stated that education reformation today is moving towards quality enhancement, education decentralization, school autonomy and all of these imply more autonomy of school directors in decision-making process, financial resource management, staff selection, infrastructure and technology upgrades, etc.

According to Liu and Ramsey (2008), school is an institution where teachers and students behave according to the image of the leader (director) and high-level performance cannot be achieved without an effective leader.

This study is therefore of particular importance because by finding out the degree of influence that different leadership styles have, can be designed work programs in order to increase motivation level and have more satisfied teachers at school.

1.2 Statement of Purpose

The primary purpose of this study is to establish the correlation between leadership styles, motivation, and teacher satisfaction within the educational institution. Additionally, this research seeks to recognize the prevailing leadership styles employed by primary school principals while gauging the overall level of satisfaction and motivation among primary education teachers in Albania.

1.3 Objectives and research questions

Objective 1. Determine the comprehensive degree of satisfaction and motivation exhibited by educators in educational institution, along with the extent of utilization of leadership styles by elementary school principals/directors.

Research questions for objective 1:

Question 1.1. What is the overall extent of job satisfaction and motivation displayed by elementary school teachers?

Question 1.2. What is the degree of using leadership styles from school principals taking into consideration teachers' perceptions?

Objective 2. Identify the relationship between leadership styles and the level of motivation and teachers' job satisfaction.

Research question for objective 2:

Question 2.1. What relationships exist between teacher's job satisfaction, motivation at work, and the leadership styles used currently by school principals/directors?

2. Literature Review

Literature review aims to summarize the most important perspectives regarding different styles of leadership, motivation and job satisfaction.

To evaluate the correlation between leadership styles and the degree of motivation and teachers' job satisfaction within the educational setting, which constitutes the focal point of this

study, it is rational to consider diverse leadership style to be considered/reviewed and to address the opinions of different authors on definitions regarding job satisfaction and motivation.

Taking in consideration that nowadays the leader is required to become a professional figure equipped with not only leadership but also managerial qualities, there's the need to first focus on these two basic concepts that are often confused or that are used as synonyms for one-another.

The knowledge gained from the numerous studies performed on management on how to program, manage and control the organization has become very important for any profession: "Management is not just a profession but almost every profession has a managerial element inside. This happens because differently from the past, exertion of all professions takes place within an organization or depends on it: management is the profession that transforms any institution of modern society into an effective institution and allows every individual that works within an institution to be as efficient as possible".

Essentially, management focuses mainly on planning, fulfilling, controlling, and taking responsibility against the results to be achieved, while a leader should know how to orientate, manage, encourage, motivate, and to evaluate others. We are dealing with an activity focused on people and in defining strategies. On this point, Barker (1997) states that the leadership function lies in creating change whereas management function is to create stability. The leader should create new action schemes and new trust systems, this way creating change, while the manager must anticipate change by favoring the adaptation to it.

According to Ubben, Hughes and Norris (2001) the main characteristics of management are maintaining standards and a sustainable environment referring to a well-defined model. What worries a manager the most is maintaining the current situation of activities that take place in the institution. The manager is problem oriented and maintains the current system. On the other side, leadership focuses mainly on continuous change and progress and also it ensures to constantly improve the needed standards to achieving goals. According to Baker (1997), "Managers are individuals who carry out just/accurate actions, whereas leaders are individuals who execute the appropriate action."

In the current times, there's the need that a good leader should have a combination of both skills, managerial and also leadership skills in order for the organization to function according to contemporary requirements and to withstand the constant changes that characterize today's society.

The theoretical framework of the term "management" is very rich and there are different definitions by many researchers. The five main orientations that are found in almost all the literature dedicated to the field of management are:

- a) Theory of personality traits
- b) Behavior Theory
- c) Randomness Theory (of Contingency)
- d) Situation Theory
- e) Theory of Interactive and transformative direction

2.1 Theory of personality traits

In the second half of the twentieth century (XX) studies were focused on traits (features), motivations and skills of "Great People" with the conviction that some people possess special characteristics that turn them into "natural leaders". The main idea of this individualistic approach is that leaders are born not made, so there are people who naturally have the ability to lead and some do not. Theory of personality traits is limited to a descriptive list of qualities a leader should have, without taking into account the influence that those qualities exert on group members. The merit of this approach lies in the care given to the figure of the leader, but on the other hand it fails to explain how persons with "leader traits" are such in some situations and not in others, without taking into account the other elements of this process (Hollander, 1985).

Also Stogdill reached the conclusion that a person cannot be considered a leader only because of his traits as the latter may change according to the situation. So the situation should also be taken into account, not only the elements that describe the greatness of a leading person.

One of the most notable representatives of the situation theory, Hemphill (1949), managed to shift attention from person to the situation. In fact, the basic hypothesis that has guided all the research of the supporters of situational approach lies in the fact that a good or a bad leadership depends on the characteristics of the situation where the leader acts and exerts his function. According to them, it is the ability to face the demands of the situation that determines whether the leadership is efficient or not. According to Harsey and Blanchard an ideal leadership style which can be valid for all occasions, does not exist. For them a true leader is the one who after doing a detailed analysis, manages to adapt his leadership style according to the situation where he acts and exerts his function. However, even this theory has been criticized for being limited on the situation and that it does not take much into account how and why a leadership style is born, kept or fallen. So even in this case just as in the theory of personality traits, a whole process gets ignored (Hollander, 1985).

The behavior-based direction approach can mainly be schematically presented as in the following table:

	Individual in the center	Job in the center
Michigan University	Concentrated in individual	Concentrated in job
Ohio University	Supportive	Realization
Texas University	Interest toward individuals	Interest toward output

The approaches addressed so far have dealt with each of the above aspect as elements separated from one-another: at first with Personality Traits, then with Situation and continuing with Behavior. Randomness models try to surpass this limit by creating a relationship between leadership style and situation, in order that a "good leader" to be considered the one who comes as a result of different factors such as social, cultural and economic circumstances in a certain historical period. Fred F. Fiedler thinks that leadership style should be consistent and on one hand reflect the personality of the leader and on the other hand his behavior. For this reason the leader has the opportunity to partially not totally modify his behavior based on the situation, because the dominant style will stand out. According to the decision-making model developed by Vroom-Yettonn-Jago, the leadership style used is selected by the way decisions are made. As it was seen in Feidler's case, these authors support the idea that there is no single leadership style suitable for every situation, but depending on the situation it is possible to determine a more effective directional style than another.

Overcoming of the situational leadership style approach is mainly due to a new context that is increasingly being characterized by uncertainty and where change seems to be the only regulatory element of life. Leaders are required new skills to achieve organization objectives and to motivate the persons who are part of it.

While in the 80's "interactive" leadership style the models were based on the interaction that exists between the leader and the followers, where the leader supports teacher's motivation through rewards or punishments, in the "transformative" leadership style, the aim is to emphasize the symbolic behavior of the leader in visionary and inspiring messages, in non-verbal communication, in restoring values, in encouraging and motivating teachers on an intellectual and emotional level.

3. Methodology

In this work, it is used the quantitative research method. As Durrheim (2004) points out, important in the quantitative research approach entails the examination and exploration of the interconnection between variables. Therefore, this methodology is regarded as appropriate to look closely at the leadership style of elementary school principals/directors from teachers' perception.

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, taking the opinion of teachers regarding the

influence of leadership styles on motivation and job satisfaction during the exertion of their profession is realized through a structured survey comprising four sections: Demographic Information, Direction Style, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction.

Questionnaire on the Leadership Style translated and adapted in the Albanian context by field specialists (The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire - Bass and Avolio 2004). The MLQ consists of 45 Likert-type statements divided into eight main parts that include: 5 dimensions of Transformative Leadership Style and 3 dimensions of Interactive Leadership Style (Transactional).

A structured questionnaire with four sections was used for this study. In the initial section, the survey incorporates the demographic information of teachers. In the subsequent section, the questionnaire contains 45 indicators of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire which measures school leadership style. In the third section, 32 indicators of the Job Motivation Questionnaire are included which assesses and measures teachers' level of motivation at work, and in the fourth section 23 indicators of the "Job Satisfaction Index" are included that measure the overall level of teachers' job satisfaction.

The population from which the sample for this study was chosen consisted of teachers in elementary schools, specifically for the academic year 2022-2023, within the initial three months of the school year. This study was conducted in the major cities of the country, where the number of public schools is particularly substantial. Moreover, teachers were interviewed simultaneously. The sample selection process was executed through the implementation of the group-based sample selection technique.

In this case the design effect should be taken into account, which means that group based selected sample should be multiplied with design effect digit, generally having a range of 1-3 (Shackaman, 2001:55). By referring to similar studies, it was decided to double the size of the sample selected by the group based technique: $353 \times 2 = 706$ teachers. A total of 28 middle schools were chosen at random, selecting 28 numbers from the container where middle school identifiers were placed. Subsequently, all the teachers from each selected school were encompassed within the study sample. After data screening, the ultimate sample size comprised 700 teachers.

4. Results and Discussion

Upon completion of the data gathering process, a database containing the collected data, along with their processing and analysis, was established. Considering the descriptive, correlational, and predictive characteristics of the study, the data are examined utilizing the software tools SPSS 17.0 and Excel. All the data is scanned for accuracy as well as lost values. Also, the assumptions that serve for a more complete statistical analysis are analyzed. For evaluating the results of all statistical tests, the level of statistical significance .0.5 is set for use.

4.1 What is the overall extent of satisfaction and motivation displayed by elementary school teachers?

The data indicate that the overall degree of satisfaction and motivation in the workplace surpasses the average level, measured on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents the lowest level of satisfaction and 5 represents the highest. The mean job satisfaction is recorded as 2.84, with a standard deviation of 1.46, while the mean job motivation is 2.94, with a standard deviation of 1.39.

According to the table, the average job satisfaction is reported as 2.84, with a standard deviation of 1.462. Similarly, the average job motivation is noted as 2.94, with a standard deviation of 1.390. These figures provide an overview of the overall level of job satisfaction and motivation among the surveyed elementary education teachers.

Table 1. Overall extent of satisfaction and motivation displayed by elementary school teachers

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard Deviation
1.Job Satisfaction	601	1	5	2.84	1.462
2.Job motivation	601	1	5	2.94	1.390
Scale of 1 (low level) to 5 (high level)					

Table 2 shows the percentages reflecting levels of job satisfaction and motivation in the workplace. Approximately 48% of the teachers report a low level of job satisfaction, whereas 37.3% indicate a high level of satisfaction. Additionally, 40% of the teachers express a low level of motivation at work, while 37% express a high level of motivation.

Table 2. Percentage of job satisfaction and motivation at work

Level	Job satisfaction	Motivation at work
Subpar level	47.8	40.0
Moderate level	15.0	22.7
Elevated level	37.3	37.2

4.2 *What is the level of use of leadership styles from school principals according to teachers' perception?*

The level of use of active leadership style from school principals is above the average (on a scale from 1 to 5 the average is 2.80 and standard deviation is 1.38).

Also at the same level is the use of passive/avoidant style (the average 2.84, standard deviation, 1.39). (Table 3)

The data of this study showed that the level of use of active style is above average (on a scale of 1 to 5 the average is 2.80 and standard deviation is 1.38). Also at the same level is the use of passive / avoidant style (average is 2.84, standard deviation is 1.39).

Table 3. The level of use of leadership styles from school principals according to teachers' perception.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard deviation
1.Passive style (avoidant / lack of direction-guidance)	600	1	5	2.80	1.377
2.Active style (transformative/conditional reward/ lack of direction-guidance)	600	1	5	2.84	1.388
Scale of 1 (low level) to 5 (high level)					

4.3 *What relationships exist between teachers' job satisfaction, motivation at work and leadership styles that are actually used by school leaders/principals?*

The data show that between motivation at work and job satisfaction exist a positive substantial relationship ($r=.52, p<0.01$). Between motivation at work and passive/avoidant leadership style exists a negative substantial connection ($r= -.57, p<0.01$). Meanwhile between motivation at work and active leadership style exists a positive substantial and significant relationship from a statistical point of view ($r=.66, p<0.01$). Between job satisfaction and passive/avoidant leadership style exists a moderated negative connection ($r=-.39, p<0.01$). Meanwhile between active style (transformative/conditional reward) and job satisfaction exists a moderated positive connection ($r=.36, p<0.01$) (Table 4)

Table 4. Pearson correlation coefficient between linearly related variables job satisfaction, motivation at work, active and passive/avoidant leadership styles

	Motivation at work	Job satisfaction	Passive/avoidant style	Active style (transformative/conditional reward)
1. Motivation at work		.521**	-.572**	.662**
2. Job satisfaction			-.399**	.366**
3. Passive/avoidant style (transformative/conditional reward)				-.678**
4. Active style (transformative/conditional reward)				
Reward				

** The correlation is statistically valid at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In conclusion we can say that our model that includes active style (transformative/conditional reward) and passive/avoidant style explains 27% of the teachers' job satisfaction variety where passive style has the highest contribution (beta=-.37 and the style that comes next (beta =.19). These data show that with the increase in use of active style by leaders, job satisfaction will increase too. On the other hand, the increasing of passive style usage space would further reduce the level of teacher's job satisfaction. Conversely the reducing of passive / avoidant style usage space by leaders would lead to an increased level of teacher's job satisfaction.

The data of this study showed that the overall level of job satisfaction and job motivation is above average in a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is the lowest level of satisfaction and 5 the highest level) the average job satisfaction is 2.84, the standard deviation is 1.46 and the average motivation at work is 2.94, the standard deviation is 1.39. If expressed in percentage, divided in two levels: the low and high level of satisfaction and motivation, we have this result: about 48% of elementary school teachers are characterized by low level of satisfaction, 37.3% by a high level of satisfaction, about 40% of teachers show a low level of motivation at work while 37% show a high level of motivation.

5. Conclusion

Regarding the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction, motivation at work, and the leadership styles currently used by principals, the analysis of our study though the data showed that there exists a positive correlation between job motivation and job satisfaction, which is significant ($r = .52, p < 0.01$), indicating a substantial relationship between the two variables. So the more motivated the teachers are, the more satisfied they will be with their teaching activity. This study also revealed that active leadership style has a substantially positive and statistically significant relationship in teacher motivation and job satisfaction, while there is a substantially negative relationship between passive / avoidant leadership style and teacher motivation and job satisfaction. The more teachers perceive the use of active leadership style by the school principal/director where they work, the higher the level of motivation and overall satisfaction of teachers at school. The more space available for the use of passive leadership style by school principals, the lower the level of motivation and overall satisfaction of teachers at school.

6. Recommendations

1. It is recommended to carry out analogous studies employing identical measurement instruments to investigate the impact of motivation, job satisfaction, and leadership styles on student achievement.
2. It is recommended a larger scale study which could be carried out involving secondary schools as well.
3. It is recommended to be carried out a study in order to identify the deepening of the difference between the perception of leadership styles by teachers and the perception of leadership styles by school directors.

References

- Ahmed, I, & Islam, T. (2011). Relationship between Motivation and Job Satisfaction: A Study of Higher Educational Institutions. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*. Vol. 3, Nr. 2, pp. 94-100
- Anderson, T. D., Ford, R. & Hamilton, M. (1998). *Transforming Leadership: equipping yourself and coaching others to build leadership organization*
- Avolio, B.J. & Bass, B.M. (1994), *Evaluation of the Impact of Transformational Leadership Training at Individual, Group, Organizational and Community Levels*. Binghamton, NY: Binghamton University
- Barker, A. (1997). *How can we train leaders if we do not know what leadership is?* *Human Relations*, 4, pp. 343-362
- Bass, B.M, (1985) *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations*, New York: Free Press
- Cheng, Y. C. (2002) *The changing context of school leadership: Implications for paradigm shift*. In K. Leithwood & P. Halinger. *Second international handbook of educational leadership and administration*. Kluwer Academic Publishers, USA:
- Durrheim, K. (2004). *Quantitative Analysis*, in *Research in Practice: Applied Method for the Social Sciences*
- Fred E. Fiedler, (1967), *Theory of Leadership Effectiveness*, New York, McGraw-Hill,
- Hamidifar, F. (2009). A study of the Relationship between Leadership Style and Employee Job Satisfaction of Islamic Azad University in Tehran, Iran, pp:45-57
- Hemphill, J. K. (1949). *Situational factors in leadership*. Ohio State University. Bureau of Educational Research Monograph, 32, xii, 136.
- Hollander, E. P. (1985). *Leadership and power*. In G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (pp.485–537). New York: Random House
- Kaufman, E. & Bruce (2008), "Work motivation": Past, present and future. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, London, 270 Madison Avenue, New York NY, 10016. pp. 588-589
- Kloep, M. & Tarifa, F. (1994). Working Conditions, Work Style, and Job Satisfaction among Albanian Teachers, Vol. 40, No. 2 (1994), fq.159- 172
- Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D. (1999) *Transformational school leadership effects: A replication*. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, *Journal of Educational Administration*.
- Liu, X., & Ramsey, J. (2008). *Teachers' job satisfaction: Analyses of the Teacher Follow-up Survey in the United States for 2000–2001*. *Teaching & Teacher Education*
- Starrett, R. J. (1993) *Transforming life in schools: Conversations about leadership and school renewal*. Hawthorn, Victoria: Australian Council for Educational Administration.
- Stogdill R.M, & Coons A.E, (1957) *Leader Behavior: Its Description and Measurement*, Columbus, Ohio State University, Bureau of Business Research
- Ubben, G. C., Hughes, L. W. & Norris, C. J. (2001). *The Principal: Creative Leadership for Excellent Schools*.
- Vroom, Victor H.; Jago, Arthur G. (1988). *The New Leadership: Managing Participation in Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. ISBN 0-13-615030-6
- Vroom, Victor H.; Yetton, Phillip W. (1973). *Leadership and Decision-Making*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. ISBN 0-8229-3266-0.