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The Effects of Leadership Behaviors of Secondary School Administrators on Staff Job Satisfaction in TRNC

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Abstract: Job satisfaction levels are important for people who spend most of their days at work. In the literature, there are studies on many factors that may affect the job satisfaction of employees. It is seen that the leadership behaviors of school principals affect teachers. This research aims to reveal the effects of school administrators' leadership behaviors on teachers' job satisfaction. A qualitative research technique was used in this study. Twenty-five secondary school teachers participated in this study. Research data were collected through a semi-structured interview form prepared by the researcher. The data were analyzed through the content analysis technique. The findings showed that the job satisfaction levels of the teachers were not sufficient, and the positive and negative leadership behaviors of the school principals affected the teacher job satisfaction.

Keywords: job satisfaction; leadership; school administrator; teacher

1. Introduction

The happiness and professional satisfaction in the actions and thoughts of the employees, which is determined by the relationship between what the job offers to the employees and what they expect from the job they do, is expressed as job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is an emotional and behavioral state that is affected by factors, such as working environment, working conditions, social relations, performance, salary, seniority and career development. Lack of individual job satisfaction may cause reluctance to go to work, increase absenteeism, and decrease work productivity by causing conflict in social relations at work [1,2]. Job satisfaction is an important factor for teachers to continue their professional work.

Teachers, while carrying out educational activities, need to make students, parents and people around them feel good, even if they have negative feelings in their inner world. However, the negative feelings and thoughts that teachers experience in their inner world, the factors that cause them to be unhappy, in other words, various factors that negatively affect their life satisfaction levels, may have a negative effect on the students served. Unhappy teachers produce unhappy people [3]. Life satisfaction manifests itself in all processes that individuals create within their private living spaces and their own standards. Professional qualifications and titles of teachers, the working environment they serve, economic situation, goals and expectations are the factors affecting their life satisfaction. Therefore, how teachers perceive burnout and job satisfaction naturally affect their life satisfaction [4]. Work life has become an integral and important part of our life, and job satisfaction, therefore, also affects life satisfaction [5].

Management is the process of planning, organizing, directing and using other organizational resources to achieve organizational goals. In other words, management is a means of realizing a decision taken. Therefore, all activities of the organization are carried out through management practices [6]. Management, whose history is as deep as human history, was accepted as a discipline during the Second World War. During this period, management has become the fastest growing discipline. Developments in the fields of science and technology have necessitated radical changes in the understanding of management as

well as in different fields. The most important of these are their functions, structures and expected roles of managers. The evolution of management roles has revealed the concept of leadership because organizations with managers who can exhibit leadership behaviors can be successful [7].

It is important to discuss the effects of the leadership roles of the school administrator on job satisfaction in the literature. It is anticipated that determining the effects of school administrators' positive and negative leadership behaviors on teachers' job satisfaction will contribute to the literature. This research aims to determine the leadership behaviors of school administrators on teacher job satisfaction.

1.1. Leadership

Societies have struggled or had to struggle in many areas where large masses have been affected, such as education, health, environment, and economy, throughout history. These problems are still valid today. Individuals form society. Thus, everyone is directly or indirectly affected by these problems. These problems concern all countries, not just affected individuals; individuals who are sensitive to environmental problems, change-oriented, self-aware, cooperative and responsible are needed. Having this awareness distinguishes them from others, and they are accepted as leaders by society [8].

As a result of the continuous emergence of new concepts and research on leadership, new leadership definitions, such as ethical leadership, visionary leadership and transformational leadership, have emerged. In other words, the leader of the new era is defined as an individual who has adapted to innovations, carries out his business and private life with short-term useful tactics instead of long-term plans, adopts flexibility, finds solutions to the unique complexities of the members of the organization, uses his communication skills well and gains the trust of the other party. New leaders are determined by individuals and leaders to adapt to individuals [7].

Leaders are people who are different from other individuals in many ways and whose differences are obvious. In addition to these differences, research has shown that most leaders reveal certain traits. The most important and prominent features include analysis and synthesis ability, being stable, superior mind, the ability to communicate ideas effectively, being positive, having a vision, communication ability, being exemplary, democracy and tolerance, being reliable and being enthusiastic [9,10].

1.2. School Leadership

Educational management and leadership studies conducted in recent years have shown that effective school leadership can increase the quality of education and thus the success of students. Since the school is an active and dynamic organization, the personality traits and competencies of the administrators as the school leader are important for the progress, change and development of the school [11].

Today's understanding of school leadership has shifted towards a cultural, informal and postmodern structure that goes beyond the bureaucratic, formal rules and procedures [12]. School leadership is defined as the process of mobilizing teachers to meet the changing needs of society and students [13]. In this context, the task of the school leadership is to determine the priorities of school work and gather the efforts of all people in the school at this point. Thus, if a school administrator wants to make his school a successful school, he should determine what is most important to achieve success and focus the efforts and efforts of teachers and other staff on the same point. Such a focus would certainly make the work of school teachers and other staff meaningful. All employees will realize what they are looking for [14]. The school leader should be a leader with interrelated features, such as critical, transformative, visionary, educational, empowering, liberal, ethical, responsible, able to use technology well, talent management and postmodernism [15].

School leaders develop indirectly and most strongly through working conditions to motivate employees at work [16]. The view of classrooms and corridors, rather than primary place authorities, is becoming common for effective school administrators. In

efficient schools, administrators spend most of their time in the teaching environment. Problems related to education are seen on the spot and intervened. They delegate some administrative tasks to their subordinates to create this time for themselves. All the activities of school administrators focus on the learning and teaching process, which is the reason for the existence of the school [14].

This is not a healthy approach when considering leadership independently of the organizational environment because leaders are qualified through the society and the organization they belong [17]. School leaders are people who understand, analyze and develop the school as an institutional organization in every aspect. In short, effective school leaders should work in harmony with their staff, parents and teachers, namely, all school stakeholders because creating a school culture is a long and challenging process. In this direction, school administrators, who are the leaders of the school, should have the ability to see from a wide angle [18].

1.3. Job Satisfaction

From the past to the present, job satisfaction has been the main focus of management to increase the quality of work and the efficiency obtained from work in organizations and businesses. Individuals want to enter a job and work to meet and meet their psychological, sociological and financial needs. In this sense, the more motivated the employees are from their work and the more their job meets their expectations, the greater the pleasure they take from the job. Therefore, their job satisfaction also increases. Job satisfaction varies according to the expectations of the individual, his mental and physiological state, working conditions and environment, communication with colleagues and managers in the working environment, and what is expected from the individual. Job satisfaction is affected by individual characteristics, such as gender, education level, marital status, age, as well as wages, quality, working environment, environmental and organizational factors. In general, business life covers a large part of human life. In this respect, the quality of the work conducted and the time spent at work also affect the quality of life. In addition, the negativities at work can be reflected in the private life of the individual. In this respect, business life has become an important part of a person's whole life [18].

Although job satisfaction is not fully related to productivity, the stress caused by not having enough satisfaction from the job may cause negative effects, such as weakening interpersonal relationships [19]. In this respect, job satisfaction is an important factor of contemporary management understanding and is among the requirements of social responsibility and business ethics. The more important health is for an individual, the more important is job satisfaction. Since the person spends most of his life in the work environment, job satisfaction as an indicator of his emotional state reflects the general conditions of the employees [20].

1.4. Teacher Job Satisfaction

Since education is also a service sector, it is very important that teachers working in these institutions are satisfied with their work. Negative attitudes and thoughts of teachers about the work they do affect the quality and efficiency of the work they do, reduce job satisfaction and therefore negatively affect the service sector.

In addition to the service sector, job satisfaction may also have negative effects on teachers' social lives, physical and mental health [21]. Since people can meet their material and moral needs based on their knowledge and skills, they increase their productivity by providing more satisfaction at work. Job satisfaction is very effective in our lives. They are individuals who are dissatisfied with their jobs, fall short of expectations, run away from work, do not continue to work, or even consider leaving. Those who are satisfied with their job show their happiness both at work and externally [22]. Therefore, a teacher's level of enjoyment from work and the state of doing his job with pleasure are reflected on his students, for whom he is a role model, on the organization he works for and on his life outside of school. In this respect, determining the factors that prevent job satisfaction

in teachers and taking measures for this have great importance regarding the quality and efficiency of education.

The problem of this research is, "What are the effects of the leadership behaviors of school administrators on the job satisfaction of teachers?". In this direction, the research sub-problems are as follows:

1. What are the positive and negative opinions of school principals working in secondary education about leadership behaviors?
2. What are the opinions of teachers working in secondary education about job satisfaction?
3. Do school principals' leadership behaviors have an effect on teacher job satisfaction?
4. What are the positive and negative leadership behaviors of school principals working in secondary education that affect teacher job satisfaction?

2. Materials and Methods

In the present study, the effects of school administrators' leadership behaviors on teacher job satisfaction were investigated. Qualitative research method was used in this study because it provides an in-depth and detailed perspective to the researcher in small groups. Qualitative research is a type of research in which qualitative data collection methods, such as observation, interview and document analysis, are used. A process is followed to reveal the perceptions in a realistic and holistic way in the natural environment. At the same time, phenomenological design, one of the qualitative research types, is used. The phenomenological pattern mainly focuses on the phenomena that we are aware of but do not know in detail [23]. The phenomenological design is a qualitative research design that aims to highlight the perceptions and experiences of individuals according to their own perspectives [24]. In this design, it is considered important that the participants in the study group have direct experiences [25].

2.1. Research Group

This research was conducted with the participation of 25 teachers working in secondary schools in the TRNC in the 2021–2022 academic year. Research participants were determined by typical sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods. Within the scope of this research, secondary school administrators were reached, and an appointment request was made by explaining the purpose of this research. In this context, it was determined based on the principle of volunteerism among the school administrators working in the secondary schools of Northern Cyprus. In total, 25 school administrators who agreed to participate in this study were included in the study group. Adhering to the confidentiality of the identity of the participants, they were mentioned in the research with the codes, such as T1, T2 and T3 given within this research instead of their real names. The demographic distribution of the teachers participating in this research is indicated in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of teachers participating in this study.

	n	%
Gender		
Female	19	76
Male	6	24
Occupational seniority		
1–10 years	8	32
11–20 years	9	36
21 years and above	8	32
Education status		
Bachelor's Degree	18	72
Master's Degree	5	20
Ph.D.	2	8

2.2. Data Collection Tool

Interview questions were prepared by the researchers. The interview form was prepared in line with the opinions of three academicians who were experts in their fields because of its content validity. After that, the pre-test of the interview form was made and the interview form was made ready. Before the interviews, general information about the subject was given to the school administrators. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview form prepared by the researchers. Data were collected in October, November and December. Audio and video interviews were held with 25 school administrators due to the pandemic and quarantine reasons. The interviews lasted an average of 25–30 min. Subsequently, questions were sent using e-mail and WhatsApp, feedback was received and the data were written down. The interviews were conducted by the same researcher for the validity and reliability of this research. The data obtained from the participants were examined by the researchers, and the themes and codes were determined by associating them with the literature review conducted before the interview.

2.3. Data Analysis

The themes obtained through the content analysis were classified and similar themes were written on the same subject. Topics were categorized according to general meanings. Finally, categories were given according to each question and categories were given quantitatively with frequency. The frequency of quantitatively reflecting the categories of research results was not determined by the number of teachers participating in this research but was recommended according to the opinions expressed. The reason for this situation is related to that the participants of this study gave more than one answer to some questions, and some questions were not answered. Therefore, the number of categories in the table is, in some cases, more or less than the number of participants. One-to-one quotations were used to express the views of the participants. Participants' names were hidden, and comments were presented in italics and quotation marks.

2.4. Validity and Reliability of Data

For the validity of this research, the interviews were conducted by the same researcher, and the interview data were shared with the participants and approved by the participants. After the researcher analyzed and organized the data obtained from the participants during the interviews, they were combined with the data. The determined topics and codes were reviewed, and interviews were held with data sources with different characteristics [26]. For the reliability of this research, the audio recordings and videos obtained from the interviews were organized as a whole, uninterpreted and transcribed, and as much of these data as possible were provided in this study; the interview text was shared with the participants and verified. For the data under the emerging themes to form a meaningful whole (internal consistency) and then form a whole among themselves (external consistency), opinions were received from two academic authors, and adjustments were made where necessary [26].

3. Results

The data collected in this part of this research were analyzed and interpreted.

3.1. Leadership Behaviors of Secondary School Principals

The research participants were asked, "What are your positive and negative opinions about the leadership behaviors of school principals working in secondary education in TRNC?" The questions were asked, and the themes created according to the participants' opinions regarding positive leadership behaviors are shown in Table 2.

Participants in the positive leadership behaviors of secondary school principals were motivating (n7), open to criticism and new ideas (n5), democratic/fair (n4), guiding (n4), prone to teamwork (n3), having a vision (n3), foreseeing the problems (n2), and they stated their opinion. In Table 3, the emerging themes regarding the participants' views on negative leadership behaviors are indicated.

Table 2. Participant views on positive leadership behaviors of secondary school principals.

Theme	Participant Views	
	n	**%**
Motivating	7	25
Open to criticism and new ideas	5	18
Democratic/fair	4	14
Guiding	4	14
Prone to teamwork	3	11
Having a vision	3	11
Foreseeing the problems	2	7

Table 3. Participant views on negative leadership behaviors of secondary school principals.

Theme	Participant Views	
	n	**%**
Repressive attitude/Excessive authority	11	44
Lack of leadership	7	28
Discrimination	5	20
Mobbing	2	8

As for the negative leadership behaviors of secondary school principals, the opinions of the participants were gathered under six themes. These are repressive attitude/excessive authority (n11), discrimination (n5), lack of leadership (n7), and mobbing (n2). The positive and negative opinions of the participants are as follows:

"In some schools, the vision, determination, belief and team spirit of the principals affect the school staff, teachers and students positively, while the school principals who do not have these characteristics negatively affect the school staff, teachers and students." (T1)

"While some of the school principals working in secondary education in TRNC are very oppressive, some of them have a softer attitude." (T7)

"School principals should be people who motivate their teachers, who are open to criticism, who support their teachers, who are open to new ideas, who support people who do their job." (T13)

"I think they have competencies and deficiencies in different areas. Unfortunately, some school principals do not have sufficient management skills at the moment. This causes problems." (T16)

"Current principals are doing authoritarian leadership. They are never open to criticism. Besides their oppressive administration, they discriminate and mobbing." (T21)

3.2. Job Satisfaction Status of Secondary Education Teachers

"What are your views on the job satisfaction of teachers working in secondary education in the TRNC?" The answers given by the participants to the question are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Participant views on job satisfaction of secondary school teachers.

Theme	Participant Views	
	n	**%**
Not adequate	19	66
Being affected by the behavior of the school principal	6	20
High	4	14

The participants stated that the job satisfaction of secondary school teachers was not at a sufficient level (n19), being affected by the behavior of the school principal (n6), and was high (n4). The answers given by the participants are as follows:

"I find teachers' job satisfaction levels high. The provision of practice areas in schools by the Ministry, the support provided by school administrations, and the fact that most of the teachers I know do this profession willingly and fondly increase job satisfaction." (T3)

"Working conditions and provided opportunities are not sufficient, so teachers' job satisfaction is not sufficient." (T9)

"Teachers' job satisfaction is affected by many factors. High motivation increases the efficiency of the teacher. Increasing teacher motivation depends on the management style of school administrators." (T11)

"Some of the teachers are reluctant and complain about practicing this profession." (T17)

"Sufficient job satisfaction can be caused by the personal and the working environment. Teachers are not satisfied with many issues and this reduces their job satisfaction. (T24)

3.3. The Effects of Leadership Behaviors of School Principals on Teacher Job Satisfaction

"Do school principals' leadership behaviors have an effect on teacher job satisfaction? How? The participants' answers to the question were gathered under five themes shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Participant views on the effects of school principals on teacher motivation.

Theme	Participant Views	
	n	**%**
It is effective.	23	52
Leadership practices increase job satisfaction.	13	30
Management style is effective.	5	11
No effect.	2	5
Other factors are more influential.	1	2

The majority of the research participants expressed the opinion that it had an effect. Statements of the participants about the effects of school principals' leadership practices on teacher job satisfaction are as follows:

"It is effective. The school principal should provide fair, empathetic and effective management within the school. The job satisfaction of a principal and a teacher who loves his school and pays attention to his attitude will be high." (T8)

"The teacher, who is positively motivated by the school principal, works more happily and willingly in his task. Successful leadership means a positive and successful employee with high motivation and job satisfaction." (T12)

"It has no effect. I think the physical working conditions, salary and rights of the teacher are more effective." (T19)

"Yes. With leadership practice, it aims to motivate teachers and creates a positive working environment." (T22)

"It is directly effective. School principals can be role models for teachers. Appreciation and support of a working teacher by the school principal increases the job satisfaction of the teacher." (T25)

3.4. Positive and Negative School Principal Leadership Behaviors Affecting Teacher Job Satisfaction

The participants were asked, "What do you think are the positive and negative leadership behaviors of school principals working in secondary education that affect teacher job

satisfaction?" Positive leadership behaviors are shown in Table 6, and negative leadership behaviors are shown in Table 7, in line with their answers.

Table 6. Participant views on school principal leadership behaviors that positively affect teacher job satisfaction.

Theme	Participant Views	
	n	%
Being equal/neutral/fair	21	40
Appreciation	8	15
Effective Communication skill	7	13
Fair and Equal management	6	11
Sensitive/respectful/tolerant	5	9
Be open to criticism	3	6
Value/support	3	6

Table 7. Participant views on school principal leadership behaviors that negatively affect teacher job satisfaction.

Theme	Participant Views	
	n	%
Communication problem	13	34
Discrimination	8	21
Mobbing	6	16
Not being open to criticism	5	13
Lack of mission and vision	4	11
No reward system	2	5

The answers given by the participants were gathered under the themes. These were being equal/neutral/fair (n21), appreciation (n8), effective communication skills (n7), fair and equal management (n6), sensitive/respectful/tolerant (n5), being open to criticism (n3), and value/support (n3), The opinions of the participants were as follows:

"Be fair, be an example, be tolerant, be positive, be open to criticism." (T4)

"Appreciating achievements, communicating effectively with all teachers." (T10)

"Equality and fairness. The teacher's appreciation of their work." (T15)

"Making fair decisions impartially in the face of events and providing support for the development of teachers." (T18)

"Treating the teachers equally without making any discrimination, taking their thoughts together with the teacher in producing solutions to the problems encountered in education within the school." (T23)

The answers given by the participants to the question of participant opinions about the school principal's leadership behaviors that negatively affect teacher job satisfaction are as follows.

The opinions of the teachers participating in this research on the school principal's leadership behaviors that negatively affect teacher job satisfaction are grouped under six themes. Participants expressed 38 opinions on leadership behaviors that negatively affect job satisfaction. The opinions of the participants in line with the question asked were as follows:

"It lacks communication, it is not fair, it does not make coherent decisions, it is not democratic." (T2)

"No reward system." (T5)

"Leaders who do not listen to the teacher, are not open to different ideas, are not open to criticism, and oppressive leaders negatively affect teachers' job satisfaction." (T6)

"The lack of effective communication skills of school principals affects teacher job satisfaction in every field." (T14)

"Features, such as discrimination among teachers, lack of mission and vision, and not being open to criticism affect teachers' job satisfaction." (T20)

4. Conclusions, Discussion and Recommendations

This study has investigated the effects of the leadership characteristics of secondary school principals on teachers' job satisfaction and has four objectives: (1) to determine the positive and negative views of school principals on leadership behaviors, (2) determine teachers' views on job satisfaction, (3) determine the effects of school principals' leadership behaviors on teacher job satisfaction, and (4) determine the effects of school principals working in secondary education on teacher job satisfaction. This research identifies positive and negative leadership behaviors.

There are many studies on teachers' job satisfaction in the literature. Factors that increase job satisfaction include additional wages [27] and physical conditions at school [28], and also low wages and lack of opportunities [29]. This study aimed to investigate the effects of school principals' leadership behaviors on teacher job satisfaction. In addition to the physical factors affecting job satisfaction in the literature, school principal behaviors were examined.

The findings obtained in this study showed that the leadership behaviors of school administrators had a higher effect on teacher job satisfaction levels than secondary school teachers. However, when the job satisfaction levels of the teachers were examined, it was determined that the majority of the participants stated that they were not sufficient.

As a result of this research, it is seen that the positive leadership behaviors of school principals are equal, fair and tolerant, as well as being open to criticism. On the other hand, the negative leadership behaviors of school principals are communication problems, discrimination among teachers, and mobbing. In line with the participants' opinions, it was concluded that the positive and negative leadership behaviors of the school principals affect the job satisfaction of the teachers. Similarly, in their research, Refs. [30–32] emphasize that increasing workload and management styles reduce job satisfaction.

The findings obtained in this study suggest that in-service training should be increased so that school principals can exhibit effective management and their leadership characteristics can produce positive results. In addition, this study, which was conducted with qualitative techniques, can be repeated with the participation of more participants with quantitative research techniques. In addition, this research can be conducted in line with the opinions of teachers working in different regions, and the results can be compared.

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