THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL CULTURE AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS

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ABSTRACT

This study, aiming to determine the relationships between school principals' leadership styles and teachers' perceptions of school culture, was designed using a quantitative research approach and a correlational survey model. The population of this research consists of a total of 315 teachers working in private primary and secondary schools in the districts of Lefkoşa, affiliated with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), during the 2022-2023 academic year. The sample consists of 192 teachers randomly selected from this population who participated in the research. The data collection instruments used in the study were the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to measure teachers' perceptions of their school principals' transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles and the School Culture Scale (SCS) to measure teachers' perceptions of school culture in the schools where they work.

At the end of the research, it was found that teachers' perceptions of their school principals' transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles were similar in terms of gender. Additionally, teachers' perceptions of their school principals' leadership styles were similar among married and single teachers. However, significant differences were observed in teachers' views on school culture based on their gender. Specifically, female teachers had significantly higher scores than male teachers in bureaucratic culture and task culture, while there was no significant difference in support and achievement culture.

1. Introduction
1.1. Problem Statement

In today's rapidly changing educational landscape, educational systems are undergoing various changes due to political, economic, and social factors (Honig et al., 2017). Educational institutions need to adapt quickly to global trends, not only to address global challenges but also to contribute to the development of nations. Such changes require effective leadership to guide individuals, teachers, non-teachers, and students in making improvements in the field of education (Burns, 2003). However, most contemporary theorists in the twenty-first century acknowledge that there is no ideal list of skills or characteristics that can fully define the role of school administrators, especially when they face complex situations (Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

In the literature of educational sciences, there are numerous studies focusing on the leadership styles of school principals. The topic of school principals' leadership styles remains relevant and worthy of research. Recent foreign literature on the topic of school principals' leadership styles indicates that relational studies exploring the relationships between school principals' leadership styles and school effectiveness, school culture, teacher self-efficacy, job satisfaction, innovation management skills, instructional effectiveness, job satisfaction, stress, teachers' learning, project success, and other variables, as well as descriptive studies examining school principals' leadership styles in terms of various variables, can be found (Altun, 2011).

When examining recent domestic literature on the topic, relational studies exploring the relationships between school principals' leadership styles and talent management, diversity management, school culture, organizational deviance, organizational cynicism, and organizational support, as well as descriptive studies examining school principals' leadership styles in terms of various variables, can be found. The results of the literature review, both nationally and internationally, indicate that transformational leadership of school principals is effective in creating a positive school culture, establishing an effective school, enhancing teacher self-efficacy, managing innovation, and ensuring the effectiveness of instructional practices (Kahya, 2020).

There is a strong relationship between school culture and the leadership behaviors of school administrators. School culture is a structure formed by the interactions, norms, values, and beliefs of individuals living in the school. This culture plays a significant role in the interactions among students, teachers, and staff in the school and in decision-making processes. School culture is shaped and managed by the leadership behaviors of school

administrators. Given these facts, the research problem in this study is formulated as follows: "Do significant relationships exist between school principals' leadership behaviors and school culture as perceived by teachers?"

1.2. Aims of the Study
The aim of the study is to determine the relationship between school principals' leadership behaviors and school culture as perceived by teachers. Within this scope, the following sub-objectives are sought:

Do teachers' perceptions of school principals' leadership styles and types of school culture differ significantly based on teachers' gender, marital status, and years of service in the school?

1.3. Significance of the Study
The leadership behaviors of school administrators directly influence school culture. For example, school leaders can provide leadership to create a culture of trust, respect, and collaboration within the school. Additionally, school leaders can provide the necessary resources for teachers and staff to unleash their potential and enhance students' learning experiences. School culture is closely related to the leadership styles of school administrators. For instance, a transformational leadership style can help create a culture of trust and collaboration among teachers and staff. On the other hand, an authoritarian leadership style can create a competitive and individualistic environment in the school culture. As a result, the relationship between school culture and the leadership behaviors of school administrators is crucial. School leaders need to adopt appropriate leadership behaviors to shape and manage school culture effectively. Therefore, it is believed that this study will contribute to the literature by examining the relationship between school principals' leadership behaviors and teachers' perceptions of school culture.

1.4. Limitations
The research data is collected from school principals and teachers. It was not possible to collect information from participants who could not come to school for various reasons. Therefore, the study is limited to participants who were available for data collection.

This research is limited to the applied measurement tools and the responses of the participants.

2. Conceptual Framework
2.1. School Culture
School culture is a culture where the interactions and practices among students, teachers, staff, and parents come together in a school. This culture is shaped by the institutional values, management style, teaching methods, student discipline, student activities, teacher-student relationships, parent involvement, and other factors. School culture can affect students' learning experiences and achievements (Altıntop, 2010). For example, if a school's culture is discipline-oriented, students may encounter discipline penalties and a strict disciplinary approach. However, if a school's culture is based on collaboration, self-confidence, and creativity, students tend to have more of these values. School culture is an essential factor for students' development and learning experiences and needs to be carefully managed by school administrations (Kuen, 2009).

The concept of school culture was first introduced by educational sociologist Willard Waller (1932), who stated that every school has a culture defined by a code that shapes behaviors and relationships within the school (cited in Deal & Peterson, 2009). Deal and Peterson (2009) describe the code mentioned by Waller as follows: "Students entering a school try to become a part of it and usually within a short time understand that something is different from rules or procedures. Similarly, a teacher starting to work at a new school quickly notices clues about the school culture. They consciously or intuitively begin to interpret unwritten rules, norms, expectations, and rituals. Teachers consciously or intuitively start to review the depths of expectations, norms, and rituals and feel the need to make sense of what they mean to become an accepted member of the school."

2.2. Leadership Behaviors
Leadership is the process of setting goals, guiding, and facilitating a group or organization to achieve success. Leadership involves using one's influence to enhance the performance of a team through motivating, directing, and influencing others. Leadership can occur at any level and can be at the highest level of an organization. Leadership is not solely related to a person's position or title; anyone can exhibit leadership qualities (Eşki, 2010). Leadership can be explained through various approaches and theories. Some view leadership as inherent traits, while others argue that leadership can be learned. Some leadership theories focus on leadership styles, while others emphasize leadership effects and outcomes (Lussier & Achua, 2015).

Transformational Leadership: Transformational leadership focuses on motivating followers to act in the interests of a larger purpose rather than their own self-interests to improve followers' performance and help them reach their full potential (Northouse, 2018).

Transactional Leadership: Transactional leadership is a leadership style based on the leader's authority, achieving tasks through contingent rewards, and follower compliance (Northouse, 2018). Transactional leadership emphasizes the exchange occurring between a leader and followers. This exchange is explained as the leader rewarding followers materially or psychologically for achieving goals or punishing them for failures (Bass & Bass, 2008).

Laissez-Faire Leadership: Laissez-faire leadership, located on the far right of the model that represents the continuum of leadership in Bass's (1985) leadership model, is termed as the absence of leadership. Leaders who adopt this approach avoid taking responsibility, shy away from making decisions, provide minimal feedback, and make little effort to help fulfill followers' needs (cited in Northouse, 2018).

3. Method
3.1. Research Design
This study aims to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school principals' leadership styles and their views on school culture. The study is designed using a quantitative research approach and employs a correlational survey design. The correlational survey design allows researchers to determine the existence or degree of change in two or more variables, enabling a better understanding of relationships between variables (Karasar, 2016).

3.2. Population and Sample
The population of this research consists of a total of 315 teachers working in private primary and middle schools located in the districts of Lefkoşa (Nicosia) in Northern Cyprus during the 2022-2023 academic year. The sample of the study consists of 192 teachers selected randomly from this population. The sample was determined using disproportionate stratified sampling. Disproportionate stratified sampling is a sampling method in which a population to be sampled is divided into different subgroups, and samples of different sizes are taken from these subgroups (Karasar, 2016). Information related to the sample is that there are 192 teachers working in 8 private primary schools and 8 private middle schools in the capital city Lefkoşa. The number of schools, levels, and teachers in the districts is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Information

		N	%
Gender	Woman	123	63,1
	Male	72	36,9
Marital status	Married	128	65,6
	Single	67	34,4
Length of service at school	1-3 Years	56	28,7
	4-7 Years	37	19,0
	8 Years and Over	102	52,3
	Total	195	100,0

Participants in the study consisted of 63.1% females and 36.9% males. Regarding marital status, 65.62% were married, while 34.4% were single. When looking at the current length of service in the current school, it was observed that 52.3% had 8 years or more of service, 28.7% had 4-7 years, and 19% had 1-3 years of service.

3.2. Data Collection Instruments
In this study, data were collected through the use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the School Culture Scale (SCS) to measure teachers' perceptions of school principals' leadership styles and their views on school culture. In addition, the first section of the data collection form included a Personal Information Form that gathered information about participants' gender, marital status, and years of service in the school.

3.2.1. Personal Information Form
The personal information form consisted of questions aimed at gathering information about participants, including their gender, marital status, and years of service in the school.

3.2.2. Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)
The MLQ was used to measure teachers' perceptions of their school principals' leadership styles. The short form of the MLQ, developed by Avolio and Bass (2004), was adapted to Turkish by Aksu (2017). Aksu (2017) provided detailed information about the adaptation of the MLQ into Turkish in a study titled "Adaptation of Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire into Turkish." After the necessary modifications, the goodness-of-fit values of the scale were found to be acceptable (RMSEA = 0.06; GFI = 0.85; SRMR = 0.09; CFI = 0.91; IFI = 0.91; NNFI = 0.90). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the scale were determined to be 0.94 for the transformational leadership style, 0.88 for the transactional leadership style, and 0.92 for the laissez-faire leadership style in the original study. In this study, based on the data obtained from the sample, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were found to be 0.94 for transformational leadership, 0.91 for transactional leadership, and 0.90 for laissez-faire leadership. The MLQ uses a five-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from "never (1)" to "always (5)."

3.2.3. School Culture Scale (SCS)
The SCS was used to measure teachers' views on their school's culture. Terzi (2005) explained the development process of the SCS in detail in a study titled "Organizational Culture in Primary Schools." The scale had factor loadings ranging from 0.443 to 0.736. The reliability coefficient for the entire scale was 0.84, while it ranged from 0.74 to 0.88 for the subscales. Sezgin (2010), who conducted a confirmatory factor analysis on the SCS, confirmed the four-factor structure of the scale. In this study, based on the data obtained from the sample, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were found to be 0.89 for task culture, 0.93 for achievement culture, 0.93 for support culture, and 0.96 for bureaucratic culture. The SCS uses a five-point Likert scale as well, with response options ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)."

3.3. Data Analysis
When the independent variables were binary (gender, marital status), assumptions for independent samples t-tests were tested. These assumptions can be stated as having normally distributed measurements in both groups and having equal variances in the distributions of measurements in both groups (Büyüköztürk, 2018). In cases where the assumptions were met, independent samples t-tests were conducted. In cases where the assumptions were not met, non-parametric pairwise comparison tests, such as the Mann-Whitney U Test, were utilized.

4. Findings
The study investigated whether teachers' views on school principals' leadership styles and school culture types differed based on teachers' gender, marital status, and years of service in the school. In this context, gender, marital status, and years of service in the school were considered as independent variables, while school culture types were considered as dependent variables.

4.1. Comparison of Teachers' Views on School Principals' Leadership Styles by Demographic Variables
Table 2. Analysis of teachers' views on school principals' leadership styles according to gender variable

Leadership Style	Groups	X	ss	Shg	t Testi		
					t	Sd	p
Transformational Leadership	Woman	3.88	.651	.024	.910	745	Mar.63
	Male	3.83	.652	.045			
Interactionist Leadership	Woman	3.65	.562	.024	-.772	745	Nis.41
	Woman	3.69	.625	.043			
Leadership that Allows Freedom	Woman	2.81	.686	.029	-.169	745	Oca.17
	Male	2.91	.816	.057			

As seen in Table 2, teachers' perceptions about the level of principals' realization of transformational, transactional and permissive leadership styles do not differ significantly according to teachers' gender (t (745) = .910, t (745) = -.772, t (745) = -.169, p> .05). From this point of view, it can be said that teachers' perceptions of

the level of realization of transformational, transactional and permissive leadership styles of school principals are at a similar level for males and females.

It was evaluated that it was appropriate to apply independent variables t-test, one of the parametric tests, to determine whether the teachers' views on the leadership styles of school principals differed significantly according to the gender of the teachers. The results of the independent groups t-test analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Analysis of teachers' views on the leadership styles exhibited by school principals according to marital status variable

Leadership Style	Groups	X	ss	Shg	t	*t Testi*		
						Sd	p	
Transformational Leadership	Married	3.901	.752	.022	-.527	745	.59	
	Single	3.862	.622	.059				
Interactionist Leadership	Married	3.733	.681	.043	-.145	745	.14	
	Single	3.653	.554	.065				
Leadership that Allows Freedom	Married	2,941	.821	.078	-.126	745	.12	
	Single	2.827	.703	.062				

As seen in the table, teachers' perceptions about the level of principals' realization of transformational, transactional and permissive leadership styles do not differ significantly according to marital status variable (t (745) = .597; t (745) = .145; t (745) = .126; p>.05). From this point of view, it can be said that teachers' perceptions of principals' realization of transformational, transactional and permissive leadership styles are at similar levels for married and single teachers.

It was considered appropriate to apply one-way analysis of variance, one of the parametric tests, to determine whether the teachers' views on the leadership styles of school principals differed significantly according to the duration of the teachers' service in the school. The results of the one-way analysis of variance are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Analysis of teachers' views on the leadership style of school principals according to the variable of the length of service in the school

Leadership Style	Groups	X	Ss	f	p
Transformational Leadership	1-3 Years	3.89	.66	2.44	.06
	4-7 Years	3.81	.60		
	8 Years and Over	3.95	.70		
	Total	3.87	.65		
Interactionist Leadership	1-3 Years	3.67	.60	1.12	.33
	4-7 Years	3.69	.52		
	8 Years and Over	3.60	.63		
	Total	3.66	.57		
Leadership that Allows Freedom	1-3 Years	2.86	.59	1.38	.24
	4-7 Years	2.85	.69		
	8 Years and Over	2.79	.70		
	Total	2.84	.62		

According to Table 4, teachers' views on principals' leadership styles do not differ significantly according to the teachers' length of service in the school (F(2, 744) = 2.44; F(2,744) = 1.12; F(2,744) = 1.38; p> .05).From this point of view, it can be said that teachers' views on the level of realization of transformational, transactional and

permissive leadership styles by school principals are similar between the teachers who have just started working at the school and the teachers who have been working at the school for a longer period of time.4.2. Differentiation of Teachers' Views on School Culture According to Demographic Variables
The results of the independent groups t-test analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Analysis of teachers' views on the school culture of their schools according to gender variable

School Culture	Groups	$\overline{X}$	ss	Shg	t Testi		
					t	Sd	p
Support Culture	Woman	3.84	.69	.061	1.178	745	.239
	Male	3.77	.73	.069			
Culture of Success	Woman	3.87	.64	.052	1.279	745	.202
	Male	3.80	.73	.054			
Bureaucratic Culture	Woman	3.63	.64	.077	2.470	745	.014*
	Male	3.23	.69	.072			
Mission Culture	Woman	4.04	.58	.061	2.663	745	.008*
	Male	3.91	.63	.081			

According to Table 5, it is seen that teachers' views on school culture differed significantly in bureaucratic culture and task culture types according to teachers' gender (t (745) = 2.470, t (745) =2.663 p<.05), but not in support and achievement culture types (t (745) = 1.178, t (745) =1.279 p>.05). The mean scores of female teachers' views on bureaucratic culture (X = 3.634) and task culture (X = 4.046) are significantly higher than male teachers' views on bureaucratic culture (X = 3.230) and task culture (X = 3.915).

Mann Whitney U test, one of the nonparametric tests, was deemed appropriate. The results of the Mann Whitney U test analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Analysis of teachers' views on the school culture of their schools according to marital status variable

School Culture	Groups	SO	ST	U	Z	p
Support Culture	Married	366.81	225957.00	35921.00	-1.980	.051
	Single	407.49	53421.00			
Culture of Success	Married	368.45	226963.00	36927.00	-1532	.125
	Single	400.11	54415.00			
Bureaucratic Culture	Married	370.50	228229.00	38193.00	-.962	.336
	Single	390.45	51149.00			
Mission Culture	Married	367.51	226389.00	36353.00	-1793	.073
	Single	404.50	52989.00			

As can be seen from Table 6, the mean ranks of teachers' views on school culture do not differ significantly according to whether they are married or single (p>.05).

Table 7. Analysis of teachers' views on school culture according to the variable of length of service in the school

School Culture	Groups	X	Ss	F	p
Support Culture	1-3 Years	3.80	.77	2.44	.06 (-)
	4-7 Years	3.84	.89		
	8 Years and Over	3.83	.66		
	Total	3.83	.71		
Culture of Success	1-3 Years	3.72	.59	1.12	.33 (-)
	4-7 Years	3.69	.71		
	8 Years and Over	3.70	.69		

	Total	3.70	.67		
	1-3 Years	3.35	.70		
	4-7 Years	3.33	.67	1.38	.24 (-)
	8 Years and Over	3.30	.58		
Bureaucratic Culture	Total	3.33	.66		
	1-3 Years	3.92	.78		
	4-7 Years	3.93	.57		
	8 Years and Over	4.16	.63	3.49	.015*
Mission Culture	Total	4.01	.60		

When Table 7 is examined, it is seen that teachers' perceptions of the school culture of the schools where they work do not differ in support culture (F(2,744)= 2.44; p>.05), achievement culture (F(2,744)= 1.12; p> .05) and bureaucratic culture (F(2,744)= 1.38; p< .05), but they differ in task culture (F(2,744)= 3.49; p< .05). Levene's homogeneity test was used to determine whether the groups met the assumption of homogeneity in order to decide which method to use in order to determine which method to use in order to determine the significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the task culture of the schools they work in. As a result of Levene's homogeneity test, it was concluded that the variances were homogeneously distributed (p>.05). According to the results of Sheffe's test, it was concluded that teachers with 8 years or more of service in the school perceived the task culture at a higher level compared to teachers with 1-3 years and 4-7 years of service in the school.

4.3. Analysis of the Relationship between Leadership Styles and School Culture

Table 8. Pearson Correlation Analysis matrix showing the relationship between leadership styles and school culture

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
1. Transformational Leadership	1	.721**	.055	.645**	.683**	.229*	.527**
2. Interactionist Leadership		1	.295**	.499**	.551**	.408**	.456**
3. Leadership that Allows Freedom			1	,053	.014	-.025	.115*
4. Support Culture				1	.871**	.270**	.629**
5. Culture of Success					1	.303**	.645**
6. Bureaucratic Culture						1	.312**
7. Mission Culture							1

When the relationships between leadership styles and school culture are analyzed, it is noteworthy that transformational leadership and all types of school culture have statistically significant and positive relationships. In terms of the level of these relationships, the relationships between transformational leadership and achievement culture (r = .683; p< .01), support culture (r = .645; p< .01) and task culture (r = .527; p< .01) are statistically significant, moderate and positive; the relationships between bureaucratic culture are statistically significant, low level and positive (r = .229; p< .05).

The relationships between transactional leadership and achievement culture (r=.551; p<.01), support culture (r=.499; p<.01), task culture (r=.456; p<.01) and bureaucratic culture (r=.408; p<.01) are statistically significant, moderate and positive. There were no statistically significant relationships between permissive leadership and support, achievement and task cultures. On the other hand, the relationship between permissive leadership and task culture is statistically significant, low level and positive (r = .115; p< .05). The highest relationship between transformational and transactional leadership styles and school culture belongs to achievement culture. The type of school culture that has the highest relationship with permissive leadership is task culture.

Conclusion and Discussion
When the relationships between leadership styles and school culture are analyzed, the relationships between transformational leadership and achievement culture, support culture and task culture are statistically significant,

moderate and positive. The relationships between transformational leadership and bureaucratic culture are statistically significant, low level and positive.The relationships between interactionist leadership and all types of school culture are statistically significant, moderate and positive.In organizations as a dynamic system, employees need to adapt to change and be open to learning and use their newly trained skills.This requires an organizational culture that is open to change and learning.A culture of change requires appropriate leadership to orchestrate many changes in the organization. Organizations as a dynamic system have a very different culture from traditional organizations (Tolfo et al., 2011). This difference is embedded in the culture through a set of shared practices, including visions, beliefs, principles, values, ideals, etc. that emerge through the interaction of organizational members. In general, many authors argue that if the prevailing organizational culture is not appropriate, the organization will not be able to recognize its environment and respond to environmental changes (Tolfo et al., 2011). However, according to Derby (2006), it is possible for a hierarchical organization with a bureaucratic culture to realize its environment and react to environmental changes. In contrast, cultures where collaboration is encouraged seem more likely to provide the components of organizational dynamism.

According to the results of the study, significant relationships were found between achievement culture and transformational leadership and transactional leadership. Achievement culture is based on the competence of self-motivated members.At the same time, achievement culture energizes the work environment by utilizing the energy of its members to achieve goals.An achievement-oriented culture is one in which employees are intrinsically motivated.To be intrinsically motivated, employees need to feel valued and appreciated for their personal contributions and achievements (Al-Elaumi, 2014).Indeed, transformational leaders are aware of the individual needs of their followers and closely monitor them and mentor them according to their needs.Thus, transformational leaders not only fulfill their followers' material needs but also create conditions that make them feel valued (Warrilow, 2012).

Interactionist leaders create situations where they follow the process of doing business after setting the standards of working standards and provide support or show leadership only in adverse conditions (Koçel, 2014).In this respect, teachers associated the achievement culture (Al-Elaumi, 2014) more with the transactional leadership style, where they need the freedom to interpret situations with high intrinsic motivation and implement what they believe to be the right solution.According to the results of the study, there was no relationship between achievement culture and permissive leadership style.It can be said that the reason for the lack of a relationship between laissez-faire leadership style, which is referred to as the absence of a leader, and achievement culture is due to the need for appreciation of efforts, although achievement culture focuses on individual efforts and independence.

According to the results of the study, significant relationships were found between support culture and transformational leadership and transactional leadership. The level of relationship is higher in transformational leadership. A culture of support is based on mutual trust between the employee and the organization, and in this culture, employees believe that they are valued as human beings, not just that they serve to complete the job (Harrison, 1993). An organization with a culture of support has a warm and caring atmosphere in which it is assumed that a sense of belonging will create a sense of commitment to the organization and therefore employees will contribute more to the organization (Harrison & Stokes, 1992). In this respect, it can be said that support culture is fed by the individualized caring behaviors of transformational leadership.

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