

Leadership Outcomes of the Transformational, the Transactional and the Passive Leadership Style in Public Secondary Education Based on Teachers' Perceptions

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Abstract

Leadership styles provide a specific perspective on school leadership and the principal in a school usually uses elements of different leadership styles in his/her daily work — practice. The purpose of this research was to investigate the perceptions of public secondary school teachers of the Prefecture of Thessaloniki in Greece on the leadership style (transformational, transactional, passive) and whether any leadership style is connected to leadership outcomes. The findings of the research are reported regarding the leadership style perceived by the public secondary education teachers of this specific Prefecture and the results of the principal leadership of the school unit where they work, as well as whether the aforementioned leadership styles are predictors of leadership outcomes.

Keywords: transformational/transactional/passive leadership, principals, secondary education teachers

1. Introduction

Leadership has emerged from the advent of social life. Some people are put together and begin their social life and influence each other. Transformational leadership is achieved when leaders and followers motivate each other for higher motivation and morality (Khorshid & Pashazadeh, 2014). It is associated with the satisfaction of higher-level needs at the top of Maslow's hierarchy, such as "the need for self-actualization," which transcends self-interest, enhances creativity, and leads to greater effort (Bass, 1985). Leithwood (1994) argues that transformational leadership can lead

to substantial changes, such as school restructuring, which are considered on his part "second-order changes", as it is oriented towards shaping the school with a common vision, efficient work culture and power sharing. According to Miller & Miller (2001), transformational leadership exists "when one or more teachers interact in such a way that principals and teachers lead each other to higher levels of engagement and commitment, motivation and ethics". Through the process of transformation, the motivations of the leader and his/her followers are unified.

The transactional leadership style provides

leaders with established organizational tools to regulate the relationship between leaders and employees to achieve organizational targets. Therefore, transactional leaders focus on achieving organizational goals defined by processes regardless of followers' development. The passive-avoidant leadership style represented a state of leadership absence and even exceeded the passive management by exception, which the full range leadership theory transferred from the developed transactional leadership style (Sedky, 2021).

Consequently, the purpose of this research was to examine the perceptions of public secondary school teachers of the Prefecture of Thessaloniki in Greece concerning whether a leadership style constitutes a predictor of leadership outcomes and the correlation between leadership style (transformational, transactional, passive) and leadership outcomes, greater effort, effectiveness, satisfaction with leadership. The necessity of the research is supported by the importance of the leadership style for the results of the leadership, as such research has not been conducted in the Prefecture of Thessaloniki yet, and its findings could be used by those responsible for the formation of educational policy.

2. The Styles of Transformational, Transactional and Passive Leadership in Education

Leadership has always been considered as one of the most important factors of success and failure in any organization and numerous researches have been conducted in this field. In recent decades, transformational leadership has attracted lots of attentions to itself. Transformational leaders employ their personal abilities to promote ideals of others and transfer individuals to higher level of performance (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016). Transformational leadership refers to leaders who seek to create ideas and new perspectives to create a new path of growth and prosperity in front of the organization. By developing commitment, passion and loyalty among managers and staff, they mobilize organization's members to make fundamental changes in fundamentals and basis of the organization in order to be prepared and to gain necessary capabilities for moving in new directions and reaching higher ideal performance peaks (Mirkamali et al., 2014).

Today, organisations need to learn more about the environment and make big changes in order

to stay alive and grow. In this situation, the role of leaders who move the organisation toward the future, recognise the need for changes in the environment, and help make them happen becomes more clear. This type of leader is known as "transformational." These leaders can help staff understand and be more fair to each other, and they can improve the quality of work life in the company. The quality of work life includes any change in the culture of an organisation that makes employees more satisfied and humane, which leads to their development and growth in the company (Davis & Thilagaraj, 2022).

After decades of consolidating its place in scholarship, transformational leadership theory is currently an inseparable part of how educational administration scholars consider ideal school leadership. We do not reflect on the manner in which our theories achieve consensus (Berkovich, 2016). Transformational leadership, according to Connolly et al. (2017), affects teachers' internal motivation, such as responsibility, the feeling that they are doing their job right, professional satisfaction, while transactional leadership influences external motivation specific reward for completing a task and avoiding any threat undermining it. The relationship of transformational leadership with intrinsic motivation makes it an appropriate model of educational leadership because teaching is a function, which can be an intrinsic motivation that transformational leadership will enhance. The leadership behaviours that can lead to the development and maintenance of a successful school determine the leadership style (Bush, 2007). Leadership styles, according to Bush and Glover (2014, p. 565), provide a specific perspective on school leadership, "are artificial distinctions" or "ideal types" and the principal in a school usually uses elements of different leadership styles in his/her daily work – practice.

This leadership style denotes that the leader waits to take action until something goes wrong; the status quo is allowed to exist without being addressed. The leader avoids change, does not try to make improvements, or a mistake has to occur before action can be enabled. The two passive leadership styles laissez-faire leadership and management-by-exception are strongly correlated and are often referred to as passive-avoidant leadership (Olsen et al., 2021).

Passive leaders generally do not take proactive

steps to reward positive behavior, so employees who are well behaved and are not rewarded have no desire to repeat their good behavior. In this way, passive leaders can have an effect on deviant employee behavior, such as behavioral incivility (Prasodjo, 2023). On the contrary, transactional leadership is characterized by how the follower is rewarded or punished depending on the achieved performance. Transactional leadership can be an appropriate approach in some instances, but it is worth noting that this kind of leadership often leads to lower levels of performance or non-significant change (Vainio, 2021).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Goal and Research Questions

The purpose of the research was to investigate the perceptions of public secondary school teachers of the Prefecture of Thessaloniki in Greece on the leadership style (transformational, transactional, passive) and whether any leadership style is connected to leadership outcomes.

Therefore, the research questions that arise are:

- A. Is there a correlation between leadership style (transformational, transactional, passive) and leadership outcomes, greater effort, effectiveness, satisfaction with leadership?
- B. Is any of the aforementioned leadership styles a predictor of leadership outcomes?

Sample

The population of the research was the secondary education teachers of the Prefecture of Thessaloniki. The sampling method followed was that of the convenience sampling. The problem with convenience sampling is that the results produced are not generalizable (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2008; Zafiropoulos, 2015).

The questionnaires were sent electronically through the google forms application to teachers who could be approached by the researcher and to principals who forwarded them to teachers in their school unit, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impossibility of physical access — presence to school units. Initially, the questionnaire was distributed to three teachers, to determine if there were any ambiguities in the statements — questions. The survey was conducted in May 2021.

145 teachers of the Prefecture of Thessaloniki participated in the survey, out of whom 101

(69.66%) were women and 44 (30.34%) were men. The age range of the research participants is 28-64 years with a mean of 52.20 years and a standard deviation of 7.47 years. Regarding additional studies, 85 teachers have extra studies apart from their initial BA title, that is a percentage of 58.62%, of whom, almost 75% have a master's degree, 13 (15.29%) have a doctoral degree and 9 (10.59%) hold a second BA title. The mean years of service are 20.76 with a standard deviation of 8.00 and the range is 1-37 years. Furthermore, 94 out of the 145 teachers, that is almost 65%, work in a school of the Directorate of Secondary Education of Eastern Thessaloniki and the rest in schools of Western Thessaloniki. About 50% work in a Junior High School, 42% in a General Senior High School, about 7% in a Vocational Senior High School, while three teachers work in another type of school (Musical, Experimental or Model School). About six out of ten of the principals questioned are men. The teachers stated that they have 1-15 years of cooperation with the principal and the mean of years of cooperation is 4.20 with a standard deviation of 2.93. Regarding the size of the school unit where the teachers work, 15.17% of them work in a small school with up to 120 students, about half of them in a medium-sized school with 121 to 270 students, while 47 (32.41%) teachers offer their services in a large school with more than 270 students.

Research tool

The research tool used to collect the research data consists of two parts. The first part that measures the perceived leadership style of secondary school principals as expressed by teachers consists of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Form 5X) by Avolio and Bass (2004), while the second part includes questions about demographic and work characteristics of the sample, gender, age, additional studies, years of service, Directorate of Secondary Education to which the school belongs, type of school, gender of the principal, number of students in the school unit, years of cooperation with the principal.

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ – 5X) was used as translated in Greek by Kalliontzi (2020) after license approval. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire assesses Avolio and Bass' (1991) model of the Full Range Leadership Theory, measures the transformational, the transactional, and the passive style and outcomes of leadership. It

consists of two forms, the Leader Form which addresses the leader, assesses the frequency of the forms of behaviour that shape his/her leadership style, and the Rater Form which asks the leader's associates to rate the perceived frequency of the forms of leadership behaviour. It uses a five-point Likert rating scale, ranging from 0=not at all to 4=almost always (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

In this research work, the Rater Form is used. The MLQ – 5X consists of a total of four factors and twelve subscales comprising forty-five statements. Thirty-six statements measure the nine dimensions of the three leadership styles (transformational, transactional, passive – avoidant).

The MLQ – 5X consists of a total of four factors – scales and twelve subscales – dimensions consisting of forty-five statements. Thirty-six statements measure the nine dimensions of the three factors – *leadership styles* (transformational, transactional, passive). The questionnaire measures five dimensions of *transformational leadership* (idealized influence – traits, idealized influence – behavior, inspiration motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized interest). It also measures two dimensions of *transactional leadership* (contingent – special reward, active leadership) and two dimensions of passive leadership (management by exception, laissez – faire leadership). Finally, nine statements measure the factor *leadership outcomes* (greater effort, effectiveness, satisfaction from leadership).

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ – 5X) is a widely accepted tool for measuring the frequency of leadership behaviours, according to the model of the Full Range Leadership Theory of Avolio and Bass (1991) and has been used in many studies (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Rowold, 2009). The validity of the MLQ is confirmed by a great deal of researchers (Antonakis et al., 2003; Rowold, 2009).

Research data analysis

For the descriptive statistical analysis of the questionnaire statements, the type and the measurement scale of each variable was taken into account (Norris et al., 2014). In the questionnaire there are variables on a five-point Likert scale, the qualitative nominal variables, gender, Directorate of Secondary Education of the school, the gender of the principal and the qualitative graded variables, studies, type of

school, number of students in the school unit, which are expressed with absolute frequencies and the relative frequencies % (percentages). The quantitative continuous variables are expressed using means and standard deviations.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire and the calculated factors were measured using the Cronbach's alpha index (Field, 2016). The data analysis techniques used for the inductive statistical analysis of the questionnaire were the t-tests for independent samples to investigate whether there are differences in the values of the quantitative variables related to the qualitative variables that have two categories and the test of analysis of variance with one factor (ANOVA) to investigate whether there are differences in the values of the quantitative variables related to the qualitative variables with more than two categories (Dafermos, 2011; Zafiroopoulos, 2015).

At the same time, correlation analysis was done to investigate the correlation and its degree between two quantitative variables and multiple linear regression to investigate which factors influence the leadership results scale and its three subscales (Zafiroopoulos, 2015; Norris et al., 2014).

The statistical package SPSS (v23) was used for statistical analysis of the data and the significance level was $p < 0.05$.

3.2 Statistical Analysis Findings

Internal consistency control

For the entire questionnaire, Cronbach alpha is equal to 0.903, indicating that the questionnaire has very high reliability. Table 1 below lists the Cronbach's alpha indices of the entire scale and its factors.

Table 1. Pearson correlation coefficients between leadership outcomes with transformational, transactional and passive leadership styles

Reliability	Statistics	Leadership Outcomes
Transformational leadership	r	0,909**
	p value	0,000
Transactional leadership	r	0,550**
	p value	0,000
Passive leadership	r	-0,701**
	p value	0,000

Descriptive statistical analysis of the questionnaire

Table 2 presents the results of the Pearson correlation analysis of the subscales 'Greater effort', 'Effectiveness' and 'Satisfaction with leadership' with the nine subscales of the three leadership styles. The subscales 'Idealized influence — traits', 'Intellectual stimulation' and 'Individualized interest' positively and strongly affect all three subscales of 'leadership outcomes'. The subscales 'Idealized influence — behavior', 'Inspirational motivation' and 'Extraordinary reward' positively and moderately influence all three subscales of 'leadership outcomes'.

The subscales 'Leadership Laissez — faire' and 'passive Leadership' have a moderate and weak negative influence, respectively, on the three subscales of 'leadership outcomes'. The subscale 'Passive Leadership' is not correlated with any subscale of 'leadership outcomes'.

In conclusion, the teachers state that, when a manager has adopted a high frequency of transformational and transactional leadership practices linked to the 'Extraordinary reward' dimension, then the leadership outcomes will be high, while if he has adopted a high frequency of passive leadership, then the results of leadership will not be satisfactory.

Table 2. Pearson correlation coefficients for the 'Greater effort', 'Effectiveness' and 'Leadership satisfaction' subscales with the nine subscales of the three leadership styles

Leadership style	Statistics	Greater effort	Effectiveness	Satisfaction with leadership
Idealized influence — traits	r	,761**	,811**	,809**
	p value	0,000	0,000	0,000
Idealized influence — behavior	r	,513**	,625**	,523**
	p value	0,000	0,000	0,000
Inspirational motivation	r	,700**	,667**	,624**
	p value	0,000	0,000	0,000
Intellectual stimulation	r	,799**	,750**	,759**
	p value	0,000	0,000	0,000
Individualised interest	r	,783**	,787**	,762**
	p value	0,000	0,000	0,000
Extraordinary reward	r	,737**	,715**	,730**
	p value	0,000	0,000	0,000
Active Leadership	r	0,038	0,067	-0,071
	p value	0,652	0,420	0,397
Passive Leadership	r	-,390**	-,377**	-,427**
	p value	0,000	0,000	0,000
Laissez — faire leadership	r	-,628**	-,667**	-,644**
	p value	0,000	0,000	0,000

Table 3 shows the results of the multiple linear regression done for the 'leadership outcomes' in relation to the three leadership styles. It is found that statistically significant factors for predicting the values of 'leadership outcomes' are 'transformational leadership' and 'passive

leadership'. The percentage of the variance of 'leadership outcomes' explained by these two variables is equal to 83.5%. 'Transformational leadership' positively influences leadership outcomes, while 'passive leadership' negatively.

Table 3. A multiple regression model for leadership outcomes

Independent variables	R ²	β	t	p value
Transformational leadership	0,8350	0,814	17,205	0,000
Passive leadership		-0,136	-2,865	0,005

To investigate which factors are statistically significant predictors of the 'Greater effort', 'Effectiveness' and 'Leadership satisfaction' subscales of the 'leadership outcomes', multiple regression models were used. In these models, the independent variables were the nine subscales of the three leadership styles.

Table 4 shows that statistically significant factors for predicting the values of the 'Greater effort' subscale are 'Intellectual stimulation', 'Idealized influence — traits' and 'Individualized interest'. Therefore, three of the five subscales of 'transformational leadership' explain 75.97% of the total variance of 'Greater effort'.

Table 4. Multiple Regression Model for 'Greater Effort'

Independent variables	R ²	β	t	p value
Intellectual stimulation	0,7597	0,335	3,943	0,000
Idealised influence — traits		0,365	4,705	0,000
Individualised interest		0,227	2,566	0,011

Table 5 shows that statistically significant factors for predicting the values of the 'Effectiveness' subscale are 'Idealized influence — traits', 'Idealized influence — behavior', 'Individualized interest' and 'Laissez-faire leadership'. Therefore, three of the five subscales of 'transformational leadership' and the

'Laissez-faire leadership' subscale of 'passive leadership' explain 79.24% of the total variance of 'Effectiveness'. The subscales of 'transformational leadership' positively affect 'Effectiveness', while the subscale 'Laissez-faire leadership' affects it negatively.

Table 5. Multiple Regression Model for 'Greater Effort'

Independent variables	R ²	β	t	p value
Idealised influence — characteristics	0,7924	0,371	5,020	0,000
Individualised interest		0,284	3,962	0,000
Laissez — faire leadership		-0,237	-4,191	0,000
Idealized influence — behavior		0,119	2,432	0,016

Regarding the multiple linear regression model of the 'Satisfaction with leadership' subscale, statistically significant factors for predicting its values are 'Intellectual stimulation', 'Idealized influence — traits', 'active leadership' and the 'Laissez-faire Leadership'. Therefore, two of the five subscales of 'transformational leadership', 'Active leadership' of 'transactional leadership' and 'Laissez — faire leadership' of 'passive

leadership' interpret 80.11% of the overall dispersion of 'Satisfaction with leadership'. The subscales of 'transformational leadership' 'Intellectual stimulation' and 'Idealized influence — traits' positively influence 'Satisfaction with leadership', while the subscale 'Active leadership' and the subscale 'Laissez — faire Leadership' influence it negatively.

Table 6. Multiple Regression Model for 'Satisfaction with Leadership'

Independent variables	R ²	β	t	p value
Idealized influence — traits	0,8011	0,483	6,962	0,000
Intellectual stimulation		0,326	4,960	0,000
Active leadership		-0,140	-3,686	0,000
Laissez — faire leadership		-0,140	-2,523	0,013

4. Discussion — Conclusion

This article presents the results of the research regarding whether there is a correlation between the leadership style (transformational,

transactional, passive) and the outcomes of leadership, the greater effort, the effectiveness, the satisfaction with leadership and whether a leadership style is a predictor of leadership

outcomes.

Regarding the research question and, specifically, whether there is a correlation between three specific leadership styles (transformational, transactional, passive) and leadership outcomes, it was found that there is a very strong positive correlation between 'transformational leadership' and 'leadership outcomes', moderate positive correlation between 'transactional leadership' and 'leadership outcomes' and moderate negative correlation between 'passive — avoidant leadership' and 'leadership outcomes'.

More specifically, it was found that there is a strong positive correlation between the dimensions of 'transformational leadership' 'Idealized influence — traits', 'Intellectual stimulation', 'Individualized interest' and the three dimensions of the 'leadership outcomes' scale, that there is a moderate positive correlation between the dimensions of 'transformational leadership' 'Ideal influence — behavior', 'Inspirational motivation', the dimension of 'transactional leadership' 'Extraordinary reward' and the three dimensions of the 'leadership outcomes' scale, moderate negative and weak negative correlation between the dimensions of 'passive — avoidant leadership' 'Laissez — faire leadership' and 'passive leadership', respectively, and 'leadership outcomes'. Therefore, teachers perceive that when the principal adopts transformational and at the same time transactional leadership behaviors, they help teachers, clearly assigns responsibility for the achievement of goals and determines positive reinforcement during their completion, express satisfaction felt when teachers fulfill their expectations, leadership outcomes will be high, while when they adopt passive leadership behaviors, leadership outcomes will be unsatisfactory.

These findings are in agreement with a series of studies. The research of Kalliontzi and Iordanidis (2019) shows that there is a strong positive correlation between 'transformational leadership' and the dimensions of the 'leadership outcomes' scale, a moderate positive correlation between 'transactional leadership' and 'leadership outcomes' and a moderate negative correlation between 'passive to avoidant leadership' and 'leadership outcomes'. A very strong positive correlation between 'transformational leadership' and 'leadership

results' is also found in the research of Dimopoulos — Iordanidis (2019).

At the same time, Stone's (1992) research finds a strong positive correlation between the dimensions of the 'transformational leadership' scale, the dimension of the 'transactional leadership' scale 'Extraordinary reward' and the dimensions of the 'leadership outcomes' scale and argues that teachers perceive effectiveness to a fairly high degree as a consequence of leadership, and that 'Extraordinary Reward' is a necessary element of leadership for positive organizational and individual outcomes. Hauserman et al. (2013), in a survey of 135 public schools in the province of Alberta in Canada, find that while there are no statistically significant differences in quantitative research with the MLQ between 'transformational leadership' and 'leadership outcomes', with the parallel use and qualitative methods, 'transformational leadership' positively affects teachers' 'Greater Effort', 'Leadership Satisfaction' and 'Effectiveness' of leadership behaviour. Ibrahim and Al-Taneiji's (2013) research on primary and secondary teachers in 43 public schools in Dubai reveals that there is a strong positive correlation between principals' leadership style and leadership outcomes, that is, the more teachers recognize that headmasters adopt transformational leadership practices, the more highly they perceive leadership outcomes. It is understood that teachers who perceive that principals act as role models, consistently carry out the actions assigned to them, stimulate them intellectually, provide challenges for innovation in solving problems, strengthen their self-esteem, contribute to their professional development, they respond to individual needs and at the same time reward them for every positive result, they recognize that the principals effectively fulfill the requirements of the position of responsibility and the satisfaction they feel leads them to make every effort in the school.

Regarding the research question about whether any of the leadership styles is a predictive factor for leadership outcomes, it was found that transformational and passive leadership are statistically significant factors for predicting the values of leadership outcomes. 'Transformational leadership' positively affects 'leadership outcomes', while 'passive-avoidant leadership' negatively, i.e., the more often a manager adopts transformational leadership

practices and the less often passive-avoidant leadership, the higher will be the results of leadership, the 'Greater effort' that teachers will exert, since the principal strengthens their will for increased effort, the desire to succeed and achieves to be more active than their expectations, the 'Effectiveness of leadership, as long as the principal effectively fulfills the requirements of the position of responsibility, satisfies the teachers' work-related needs, represents them in the best possible way to the executives in higher positions of the administrative pyramid and the teachers demonstrate a high performance and 'Satisfaction with leadership', because the principal uses appropriate leadership methods and cooperates with teachers in an adequate manner.

Particularly, the research showed that statistically significant predictors for 'Greater effort' are the dimensions of 'transformational leadership', 'Intellectual stimulation', 'Idealized influence — traits' and 'Individualized interest', for 'Effectiveness' are the dimensions of the factor 'transformational leadership', that is 'Idealized influence — traits', 'Idealised influence — behavior', 'Individualized interest' and the 'Laissez — faire leadership' dimension of 'passive leadership'. The dimensions of 'transformational leadership' positively affect 'Effectiveness', while the dimension 'laissez-faire leadership' affects it negatively. Statistically significant predictive factors for 'Satisfaction with leadership', are the dimensions of the factor 'transformational leadership', 'Intellectual stimulation', 'Idealized influence — traits', the dimension of 'transactional leadership', 'Exceptive leadership — active' and the 'Laissez — faire leadership' dimension of 'passive leadership'. Therefore, it seems that 'Satisfaction with leadership' is also negatively affected by practices of 'transactional leadership', the attitude of the manager who points out with excessive meticulousness mistakes, deficits, failures. The finding that 'transformational' and 'passive leadership' are statistically significant factors for predicting 'leadership results', is also in agreement with the research of Kalliontzis and Iordanidis (2019). It is understandable that, just as transformational leadership positively affects the outcome of leadership, when principals are not flexible in decision making, are inhibitive in taking responsibility and hinder in dealing with

problems, then teachers perceive that they are not consistent in performance of their role and the lack of satisfaction is an inhibiting factor for making a greater effort in the school community.

The present research helps to understand the form in which leadership is implemented in schools. How teachers perceive the leadership practices used by principals in the schools where they work is linked to how they understand their own professional lives and the extent to which their own choices and practices are supported. The research was carried out in May 2021, the academic year in which the majority of lessons were conducted by distance learning, teachers taught from home and the school had to transform into a professional learning community to adapt to the rapid changes required by distance learning and communication. The teachers, in their majority, learned to use the e-class, e-me and Webex platform with mutual help or through in-school training organized by the principal, because the provision of help was necessary, to understand the challenges and to respond and, as Kirkbride (2006) argues, organizations undergoing turbulence and rapid change need transformational leadership practices, while, on the contrary, transactional leadership style is useful for stable situations.

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