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## The role of strengthening leadership behaviour on the psychological contract in primary and secondary schools

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In the study reported on here we aimed to determine the role of strengthening leadership behaviour on the psychological contract in primary and secondary schools. The population was a total of 7,772 teachers (3,627 primary school teachers and 4,145 middle school teachers) working in the districts of Bağlar, Kayapınar, Sur and Yenişehir in Diyarbakır during the 2017–18 academic year. A total of 621 teachers selected by random sampling participated in the study. Data were collected through the following scales developed by Koçak (2016): the School Administrators' Level of Conformity to Psychological Contract Scale and the Teachers' Level of Conformity to Psychological Contract Scale. Teacher perceptions of school managers' demonstration of empowering leadership behaviour were measured with the Reinforcing Leadership Behaviours Scale developed by Konczak, Stelly and Trusty (2000) and adapted to Turkish by Aras (2013). Teacher perceptions of school administrators' levels of compliance with psychological contracts (SACPC) were found to be moderate and teachers' levels of compliance with the psychological contract (ÖPSUD) was high. Teacher perceptions of school administrators in terms of empowering leadership behaviour (ELB) were found to be high.

**Keywords:** employee empowerment; empowering leadership behaviour; primary school; psychological contract; secondary school; teacher

### Introduction

The concept of an unwritten psychological contract was coined by management scientists in the early 20th century in an effort to explain employee-employer relations and behaviour. Several business analysis studies were carried out between 1910 and 1930, followed by others on human relations and behavioural science studies (Campbell, Bridges, Corbally, Nystrand & Ramseyer, 1971). Working with factory workers, Argyris (1960), who termed the concept "psychological labour contract," found that employers respect the culture and norms of their employees and that employees demonstrate high performance if employers define autonomy in the workplace. The concept was further supported by the findings of field research undertaken by Levinson, Price, Munden, Mandl and Solley (1962). Similar to the description made by Kotter (1973), Levinson et al. (1962) and Schein (1965) describe the concept as an additive-incentive pattern that develops between the employer and employee. By the 1980s, economic transformation in the global dimension and the economic structures of states obliged fundamental changes in the management philosophies and operations of organisations (Cappelli, Bassi, Katz, Knoke, Osterman & Useem, 1997; Özdemir, 2014). Institutional unions, changes in the roles expected from employees, and the emergence of new management practices have led to a different dimension of relations between the organisation, individuals working in that organisation and human behaviour (Mao, Liu & Ge, 2008; Özdemir, 2014).

In recent years, the phenomenon of psychological contracts has generally been considered within the framework of employees' perceptions (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2006). In this study, the psychological contracts in schools include mutual expectations of school management and teachers. Accordingly, what teachers expect from schools has been taken into consideration. These are personal happiness, understanding and fairness, acknowledgement of their education and development demands, response to their guidance demands in the school, recognition and reward of their efforts, and being included in the decision-making process. The expectations of schoolteachers have also been examined in terms of institutional development effort, loyalty and extra performance (Koçak & Burgaz, 2017).

The relationship between efficient work by teachers and effective schools increases the importance that teachers give to their jobs and job satisfaction. The fact that teachers regard their jobs as important and to do their work actively, effectively and efficiently, is related with the management's capacity to meet teachers' expectations. For this reason, it is crucial to consider the subject of psychological contracts, which covers mutual duties between teachers and administrators, and the leadership behaviour that empowers teachers in the school.

The concept of psychological contracting in schools investigated in this study includes the mutual expectations of teachers and school administrations. These are considered within the framework of meeting teacher expectations, increasing their personal happiness, fair treatment, understanding their individual and professional development requests, responding to their guidance requests in the school, appreciating their efforts, and including them in decision-making processes.

According to the research findings, the psychological contract is an important tool to determine employees' behaviour in institutions. For instance, research to determine the relationships between psychological contracts, organisational commitment, and citizenship behaviour draws attention to the

importance of psychological contracts in institutions (Coyle-Shapiro, 2002; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Doğan & Demiral, 2009; Hui, Lee & Rousseau, 2004; Karcıoğlu & Türker, 2010; Lapointe, Vandenberghe & Boudrias, 2013). It is expected that the results of our study will give direction to the managerial behaviour of school administrators and contribute to the literature on this aspect. In this study, psychological contracts in schools include mutual expectations of school administration and teachers. What teachers expected from the school were handled within the framework of caring about their personal happiness, being understanding and fair, meeting the demands of education and development with empathising, responding to the demands of guidance expected in the school, recognising and rewarding the efforts shown, taking them up and including them in decision making. Teachers' hopes in terms of effort towards institutional development, loyalty and extra performance were also investigated.

#### Psychological Contract

Arygris (1962) first used the concept of psychological contracts to qualify employer and employee expectations in business relations, such as expectations and demands on mutual obligations, values, legal contracts (as cited in Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998). The psychological contract is an implicit and non-verbal agreement with a psychological aspect, between the employee and the organisation that shows what both parties expect to receive and give. Rousseau (2004) defines psychological contracts as declaring commitments with individuals and organisations through a mutual agreement (Yılmaz & Altinkurt, 2012).

The psychological contract is based on the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which is seen as the desire to realise expectations of one in return for the gain obtained by the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), and which argues that individuals will benefit others to the extent that they benefit from them. So, as Vroom (1964) explains in his expectation theory, the employee must initially believe that he will get an award or reward that he values in exchange for his service. Therefore, the fulfilment of the obligations of teachers on the basis of the psychological contract seems to be related to the fulfilment of the obligations of the school administration under this contract.

The general view is that leadership is important to ensure the development of the school and to implement important changes effectively in the education system (Moorosi & Bantwini, 2016). Accordingly, from the 1980s onwards, organisational and employee needs and the mutual obligations of parties have shown fundamental development (Baker, 2009) and significant changes have occurred in the nature of employment relations (Cappelli et al., 1997). The psychological contract

has been dealt with in a different way from the definitions of the early days, with these changes especially focused on individuals in employment relations. The concept that arises on the basis of mutual expectations has evolved into Rousseau's (1995) understanding of individual perceptions of mutual expectations. The psychological contract became the basis for other individual, subjective concepts.

Rousseau and Schalk (2000) argue that psychological contracting is a belief system for the obligations between the organisation and the employee. According to Rousseau and Tijoriwala (1998), psychological contracts arise when employees acknowledge that they have made a promise and that they will fulfil their obligations with respect to this promise. This concept, which refers to the subjective beliefs of parties (Robbins & Judge, 2013) is based on the perceptions of what is believed and the perceptions of whether these words are fulfilled (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). On such a basis, it is possible to say that teachers hold a number of beliefs about the material-spiritual possibilities and administrative behaviour that the school will provide in return for the educational and administrative services they provide. In this sense, there is a mutual, non-written, psychological sense of obligation in the business relation between teachers and school managers.

Konczak et al. (2000) refer to empowering leadership behaviour as coaching for empowerment, responsibility, self-determination, information sharing, skills development, and innovative performance. In order to evaluate this behaviour, it is necessary to (1) ensure that teachers take authority and responsibility for educational activities, (2) establish a safe environment where they can use initiative in educational activities, and (3) share necessary information about the academic-administrative functioning of the school. However, presenting development opportunities that will enable teachers to respond to new approaches in education and to the developing performance demands required by the profession poses a different challenge (Koçak, 2016).

Pont, Nusche and Hopkins (2012) point out that effective leadership in schools is achieved through the sharing of leadership roles and responsibilities among teachers, with much emphasis on their development and empowerment. Pont et al. (2012) found that leaders of successful schools spent the majority of their time and energy on the development of teachers, and that they gave them authority and coaching in the form of regular feedback. Literature includes a number of theoretical studies that deal with the strengthening of employees in organisations and how leader behaviour affects employees, the organisation, and the quality of work life (Demirbilek & Türkan, 2008; Karakaş, 2014; Özel, 2013; Öztürk, A & Özdemir, 2003).

Other studies deal with methods of empowering employees and the barriers to empowerment (Akçakaya, 2010; Çuhadar, 2005; Yukl & Becker, 2006). Other researchers have studied how empowering leadership behaviour affects psychological empowerment (Altındaş & Özutku, 2011; Arslantaş, 2007). These studies emphasise that empowering leadership behaviour is a necessity for modern organisations and argue that organisational effectiveness may be enhanced through making employees more powerful.

Studies on strengthening teachers through empowering leadership behaviour of school principals discuss how teachers are affected by this behaviour. A study by Cerit (2007) focused on the levels of school principals' empowering leadership behaviour toward teachers and found that this behaviour was moderately performed according to teacher perceptions. On the other hand, Parlar (2012) found that teacher empowerment is neglected or not understood by school administrators. However, in a qualitative study, it was concluded that supporting and strengthening leadership behaviour are important for teachers to develop positive attitudes and feelings about school relations and the profession (Argon, 2014).

Özdemir (2014) says that efficient human resource management in schools may only be possible if the apical degree of employee expectations is realised. Rong (2009) notes that these expectations are not only economic but also social. In this sense, if teachers have career opportunities, material-spiritual awards, status and development opportunities, they will engage all their talents and skills as they do their jobs and will show loyalty and commitment (Griffin & Moorhead, 2014). Kotter (1973) presents a wider perspective and regards workers' expectations as opportunities for personal development, job enrichment, opportunities to provide skills diversity, authority and reputation, a climate of working together, authority, fair and regular business construction, and a targeted feedback system.

#### Empowering Leadership Behaviour

The concept of personnel empowerment, originally associated with support provided by management to employees, was first proposed by Block (1986). Personnel empowerment is defined as the provision of a worker's ability to make decisions in their own workplace without ever receiving orders or approval from the supervisor (Bowen & Lawler, 1992; Luthans, 2011). Personnel empowerment equips employees to work in the most effectual style for the institution they work for (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

Distributed leadership is one of the "seven strong claims about successful school leadership" (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008:27). Effective schools achieve their goals when leadership ema-

nates from various sources (Makhasane & Chikoko, 2016). Evidence reveals a positive relationship between high performance leadership and high achievement schools (Bush & Jackson, 2002; Huber, 2004; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004; Naicker & Mestry, 2016).

Doğan and Demiral (2009) refer to the factors that can be taken into consideration in empowering employees: participation and decision-making in management, authority transfer and necessity, interaction, innovation, education and training. Participation in management is seen as the personnel's participation in decisions regarding organisational goals, the determination of the departure route, and taking part in various managerial actions (Rodrigues, 1994). In the literature, employees' active participation in the decision-making process is considered as contributing to the process and being responsible for the decisions taken (Eren, 2008; Koçel, 2007). Organisational gains of personnel's involvement in the decision-making process are asserted as easy approval of decisions taken, which results in greater harmonisation, backing of entrepreneurial ideas, avoiding of functionless disagreements, self-respectful and self-assured employees, and the application of all potential (Mihçioğlu, 1983). Authority transfer is the assigning of the executive's rights to the personnel, while the executive remains responsible for the results of the work (Yüksel & Erkutlu, 2003).

Information exchange is another strengthening factor. It is important that the results achieved match the purposes initially set. In other words, if the goal is to match predetermined objectives, then employees need access to all necessary information about their work. In this sense, if the managers clearly share the necessary information with their subordinates, they will be able to create an atmosphere of trust within the organisation, and in this way, employees will be able to take responsibility and show innovative behaviour (Rothstein, 1995). Encouraging innovation is a key strengthening element that managers can use to harness the individuals' talents, skills, points of view and entrepreneurial potential, and turn them into organisational benefits (Gebert, Boerner & Kearney, 2006). An essential factor to be considered in the empowerment of workers is the provision of instruction opportunities that will allow employees to carry out their duties in the most effective way. Lincoln, Travers, Ackers and Wilkinson (2002) view education and training as the strongest factors in empowering employees. While personnel are empowered, training must be provided so that they can perform their duties in the most efficient way. Lincoln et al. (2002) state that in the empowerment of staff, education and training are the most important factors.

With the exception of a doctoral dissertation undertaken by Koçak and Burgas in 2017, no studies have examined the relationship between school

psychological contracts and the process of leadership empowerment. Two studies examined the relationship between empowering leadership behaviour perceived by employees in the private sector and enhanced performance (one dimension of the psychological contract). These studies (Humborstad, Nerstad & Dysvik, 2014; Raub & Robert, 2013) have shown that empowering leadership behaviour has an impact on employees' extra performance levels (Koçak & Burgaz, 2017).

All the studies examined show how important psychological contracting and empowering leadership behaviour are for organisations. However, teachers' perceptions about psychological contracts are seen to be problematic and teacher expectations are not adequately met (Güneş, 2007; Güzelce, 2009; Koçak & Burgaz, 2017; Özdemir & Demircioğlu, 2015; Yılmaz & Altınkurt, 2012). This raises the question of what needs to be done in order for teachers to improve their perceptions of the psychological contract. At this point, it has become a matter of curiosity of whether strengthening leadership behaviour influences teachers' perceptions of psychological contracts. Although studies have explored the relationship between empowerment and psychological contracts (Kun, Hai-yan & Lin-li, 2007; Paul, Niehoff & Turnley, 2000) we found only one empirical study on the attitudes of empowering leadership behaviour and the perceptions of teachers regarding the level of compliance with the psychological contract (Koçak & Burgaz, 2017).

Studies on what should be done to cover the expectations of teachers in schools and to develop their perceptions about the psychological contract are crucial. In this context, it has been a matter of whether empowering leadership behaviour is related to teachers' perceptions of psychological contracts, and if a relationship exists, what behaviour is related. For these reasons, teachers' perceptions of psychological contracts and empowering leadership behaviour were examined in this study.

Empowering leadership behaviour was the dependent variable and the psychological contract was the independent variable in this study. The goal was to reveal the role of empowering leadership behaviour in teachers' perceptions of the psychological contract. For this purpose, the perceptions of school administrators' and teachers' compliance with psychological contracts were examined mutually to determine the role that strengthening leadership behaviour plays in this relationship. Answers were sought to the following questions:

- 1) a) What are teachers' perceptions of the level of school managers' compliance with psychological contracts?
- b) What are teachers' perceptions of the level of school managers' empowering leadership behaviour?
- c) What are teachers' perceptions of their level of compliance with the psychological contract?

- 2) Do teacher perceptions of the level of school administrators' compliance with psychological contracts differ significantly according to the seniority of teachers?
- 3) According to teacher perceptions, are the levels of school managers' compliance with the psychological contract and exhibiting empowering leadership behaviour significant predictors of teachers' compliance with psychological contracts?

This study was limited to the responses of 621 teachers working in the central districts of Diyarbakır, Bağlar, Kayapınar, Sur, and Yenişehir, Turkey in the 2017–18 academic year. In addition, teachers' perceptions were limited to their opinions about school principals.

### Method

In this study we focused on the relationship between psychological perceptions and teacher perceptions of empowering leadership behaviour, using the relational screening model. Within the framework of this model, quantitative techniques were used in the analysis of the data.

### Population and Sampling

The universe of the research constituted a total of 7,772 teachers (3,627 primary school teachers who taught grades 1 through 4 and 4,145 middle school teachers who taught grades 5 through 8) in the districts of Bağlar, Kayapınar, Sur and Yenişehir in Diyarbakır during the academic year of 2017–18.

This study was carried out with secondary school teachers because it is considered to be favourable in terms of the low number of studies related to this sampling group and monetary source, type of research, the pattern of research, time, control and energy. The simple random sampling method was used as this method allows all participants an equal possibility of being selected, and the selection of an individual does not affect the selection of other individuals. Also, this method can be said to be much stronger than others in providing representation (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2016).

The sample size was calculated based on a 5% confidence interval. Accordingly, the sample size was to be at least 367 (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The study sample of 621 teachers was determined by simple random sampling, based on the number of teachers in primary and secondary schools in the universe. A total of 621 of the 800 structured questionnaires distributed were returned and all were taken into consideration.

### Data Collection Tools

Teacher perceptions of the levels of school managers' demonstration of empowering leadership behaviour were measured using the Reinforcing Leadership Behaviours Scale developed by Konczak et al. (2000) and adapted to Turkish by Aras (2013).

School administrators' perceptions of the psychological contract were determined using the School Administrators' Level of Conformity to Psychological Contract Scale developed by Koçak (2016). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the one-factor scale was calculated as .96. The factor loadings of the scale ranged from .66 to .82 and had a one-factor structure of 25 items. It was found that 57% of the total variance of the scale was explained.

Teachers' perceptions of the psychological contract were determined using the Teachers' Level of Conformity to Psychological Contract Scale developed by Koçak (2016). A 26-item scale with factor loadings ranging from .47 to .72 was obtained, explaining 53% of the total variance of the scale.

The Reinforcing Leadership Behaviours Scale (adapted to Turkish by Aras, 2013) was used to measure teachers' perceptions of empowering leadership behaviour. The measurement tool with 18 items consists of five dimensions: Authorization and responsibility, Decision-making on its own, Information sharing, Skills development and Coaching for innovative performance. When the results of compliance and the reliability coefficients were evaluated, the Reinforcing Leadership Behaviours Scale was concluded to be a valid and reliable instrument for the relevant sample (adapted to Turkish by Aras, 2013). A five-point Likert-type scale was used to evaluate the data. In the interpretation of arithmetic means, the range of 1.00–1.79 is considered too low (I disagree), the range of 1.80–2.59 is low (I partially agree), the range of 2.60–3.39 is medium (I agree moderately), the range of 3.40–4.19 is high (I agree very much), and 4.20–5.00 is considered too high (I fully agree).

#### Transactions and Analysis of Data

Prior to the collection of data, necessary approvals were obtained from the researchers for each of the scales used. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. Frequency and percentage values were used to determine the demographic characteristics (gender, branch, seniority, level of education, school term, school and place of work). Frequency analyses of the specified variables were made.

Univariate and multivariate extreme value analyses were performed. The normal distribution of data, skewness and kurtosis coefficients were examined. Correlation coefficients between the independent variables were found to be below .80. Thus, the variables were considered not to exhibit multiple connectivity problems (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013:253). Correlation coefficients were examined to determine whether there were multiple interconnectedness problems between independent variables.

Rating samples allow individuals to show their responses to the survey items by choosing the most appropriate answer option on the scale points that follow each other in a logical order. Wilson and McClean (1994) state that it would be useful to name the scale points. In five-point Likert scales, while the above-mentioned intervals were determined, the number of the options mentioned in the scale was divided into 4 (the gap of the options) by the number 5 (number of the options). The value .80, which is the result of the division, determined the limits of the scale (Wilson & McClean, 1994). Mean and standard deviation values were used in the descriptive analysis of the data, and multiple correlation analysis was used to reveal the relationships between the variables. Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the predictors of teachers' compliance with psychological contracts.

In the hierarchical method, predictive variables are analysed in a sequence determined by the researcher and each variable is evaluated in terms of its contribution to the variance related to the dependent variable. In this method, the independent variables are analysed as blocks and each block contains one or more independent variables (Green, Salkind & Akey, 1997). The analysis of the data using this method is explained with the information given in Table 4 and below.

#### Results

Findings Based on Teacher Perceptions of the Administrators' Conformity to the Psychological Contract, Demonstrating Empowering Leadership Behaviour and Their Own Conformity to the Psychological Contract

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics on the psychological contract and empowering leadership behaviour according to teacher perceptions.

**Table 1** Descriptive statistics related to variables

| Variables  | <i>n</i> | $\bar{X}$ | <i>SD</i> |
|--|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1) SACPC (School administrators' compliance with the psychological contract) | 621      | 3.33      | .38       |
| 2) LCPCT (Level of compliance with the psychological contract of teachers)   | 621      | 3.47      | .54       |
| Corporate development effort   | 621      | 3.90      | .74       |
| Loyalty  | 621      | 3.35      | .67       |
| Extra performance  | 621      | 3.03      | .61       |
| 3) ELB (Empowering leadership behaviour)                                     | 621      | 3.66      | .83       |
| Authorisation and responsibility   | 621      | 3.69      | .82       |
| Self-decision making   | 621      | 3.70      | .92       |
| Information sharing  | 621      | 3.67      | .93       |
| Skills development   | 621      | 3.62      | .96       |
| Coaching for innovative performance  | 621      | 3.63      | .96       |

As seen in Table 1, teachers' perceptions of school administrators' levels of compliance with the psychological contract (SACPC) were moderate ( $\bar{X} = 3.33$ ) and teachers' levels of compliance with the psychological contract (LCPCT) were high ( $\bar{X} = 3.47$ ). According to the given scale range ( $\bar{X} = 3.47$ ), the value corresponds to the high (I agree) option. This value ( $\bar{X} = 3.33$ ) corresponds to the middle (moderate level) option. Teachers' perceptions of school administrators' levels of empower-

ing leadership behaviour (ELB) were high ( $\bar{X} = 3.66$ ). Behavioural attitudes toward teachers' compliance with psychological contracts were found to be lowest in the sub-scale for institutional development ( $\bar{X} = 3.90$ ) and lowest in the sub-scale of extra performance ( $\bar{X} = 3.03$ ). However, according to teachers, school managers have the lowest average of empowering leadership behaviour for coaching for innovative performance ( $\bar{X} = 3.63$ ) and skills development ( $\bar{X} = 3.62$ ).

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results for the Question “Do Teacher Perceptions of the Level of School Administrators’ Compliance with Psychological Contracts Differ Significantly According to the Seniority of Teachers?”

**Table 2** Investigation of teacher perceptions according to the seniority variable related to the level of compliance of school administrators with the psychological contract

| Sub-dimension | Variables         | <i>N</i> | $\bar{X}$ | Source of variance | <i>SS</i> | <i>SD</i> | Squares average | <i>F</i>     | <i>p</i> | Least significant difference (LSD) |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|----------|------------------------------------|
| Loyalty       |                   |          |           |                    | Seniority |           |                 |              |          |                                    |
|               | 1–5 years         | 210      | 3.28      | Intergroup         | 4.991     | 4         | 1.248           | 2.805        | .025     |                                    |
|               | 6–10 years        | 202      | 3.35      | In-group           | 274.071   | 616       | .445            | Difference:  |          |                                    |
|               | 11–15 years       | 113      | 3.41      | Total              | 279.062   | 620       |                 | 5-1, 2, 3, 4 |          |                                    |
|               | 16–20 years       | 67       | 3.32      |                    |           |           |                 |              |          |                                    |
|               | 21 years and more | 29       | 3.70      |                    |           |           |                 |              |          |                                    |

As seen in Table 2, ANOVA was performed to test the significance of the difference between three or more unrelated sample means. Based on the results of the ANOVA analysis, Fischer's LSD test, which is frequently used for multiple comparisons of mean scores, was performed. According to the LSD results, there is a significant difference only in the sub-dimension of loyalty. Teachers with twenty-one years or more seniority have higher perceptions related to the level of compliance with

the psychological agreement of school administrators than the perceptions of teachers who are less senior. As seniority increases, the experience of teachers, their professional knowledge and skills, and their attitudes and values towards the profession can also positively change. As a result, teachers in the seniority range of twenty-one years or more may have higher levels of compliance with the psychological contract.

Findings Related to the Question "According to Teacher Perceptions, are the Levels of School Managers' Compliance with Psychological Contracts and Exhibiting Empowering Leadership Behaviour Significant Predictors of Teachers' Compliance with Psychological Contracts?"

**Table 3** The results of hierarchical regression analysis on the prediction of teachers' psychological agreement levels (ÖPSUD)

| Predictive variables                | B     | Standard error B | $\beta$ | $t$    | $p$  | Binary $R$ | Partial $R$ |
|-------------------------------------|-------|------------------|---------|--------|------|------------|-------------|
| Constant                            | 1.920 | .081             | -       | 23.822 | .000 | -          | -           |
| Authorisation and responsibility    | .125  | .032             | .189    | 3.881  | .000 | .556       | .155        |
| Self-determination                  | .095  | .035             | .162    | 2.727  | .007 | .574       | .109        |
| Information sharing                 | .050  | .038             | .085    | 1.305  | .193 | .576       | .053        |
| Skills development                  | .105  | .035             | .186    | 3.000  | .003 | .580       | .120        |
| Coaching for innovative performance | .050  | .039             | .088    | 1.265  | .207 | .578       | .051        |

Note.  $R = 0.637$ ,  $R^2 = 0.406$ ,  $F(5, 615) = 83,940$ ,  $p = .000$ .

When the binary and partial correlations between predictive variables and dependent variables were examined, it was clear that there was a positive and moderate relationship ( $R = 0.56$ ) between the sub-dimension of empowering leadership behaviour of school administrators and the sub-dimension of responsibility and the level of psychological agreement with teachers (ÖPSUD). However, when the other variables were checked, it was clear that the correlation between the two variables was calculated as  $R = 0.19$ . The results are shown in Table 3. There was a positive and moderate relationship ( $R = 0.58$ ) between decision making and ÖPSUD, but when the other variables were controlled, the correlation between the two variables was calculated as  $R = 0.09$ . There was a positive and moderate relationship between knowledge sharing and ÖPSUD ( $R = 0.58$ ), but when the other variables were controlled, the correlation between the two variables was calculated as  $R = 0.02$ . A positive and intermediate relationship was observed between skills development and ÖPSUD ( $R = 0.58$ ), but when the other variables were controlled, the correlation between the two variables was calculated as  $R = .09$ . For innovative performance, there was a positive and moderate relationship between coaching and ÖPSUD ( $R = 0.58$ ), but when the other variables were checked, the correlation between the two variables was calculated as  $R = 0.09$ . The variables of delegation and responsibility, self-determination, knowledge-sharing, skills development and innovative performance together provided a moderate and meaningful relationship with teachers' levels of psychological agreement (ÖPSUD) scores,  $R = 0.637$ ,  $R^2 = 0.40$ ,  $p < .01$ . The

aforementioned five variables together explain about 40% of the total variance in teachers' psychological agreement.

## Discussion

In this study we examined the role of empowering leadership behaviour on teacher perceptions of psychological contracts in schools. Firstly, we examined how teacher perceptions were related to psychological contracting and empowering leadership behaviour. The results show that while teachers' perceptions of their administrators' compliance with the psychological contract were moderate, their level of compliance with psychological contracts was found to be high. In a study conducted by Yılmaz and Altinkurt (2012), teachers at private teaching institutions thought that their institutions fulfilled their obligations towards their employees at a moderate level. They also thought that they fulfilled their obligations towards their institutions at a very high level in all dimensions. Çildir (2008) determined that teachers felt a high level of obligation towards their schools, but that the administrations responded moderately to these services. According to research findings by Koçak and Burgas (2017), although the general average of teachers' levels of compliance with psychological contracts was high, their perceptions of extra performance and loyalty were moderate and that the dimension of enterprise development effort increased the overall average. In other words, teachers were most active with regard to institutional development, which entailed students' progress and their success. On the contrary, their efforts towards the school were less than expected, and they seemed to be less

faithful to the school. This can be described as a response to teachers' inadequacy to comply with psychological contracts. These findings and the findings of this research are similar. Moreover, according to Gouldner's (1960) norm of reciprocity, and Blau's (1964) social bargaining theory, the individual will be the transmitter when they achieve whatever they expect to receive. In order for the personnel to perform their duties in the most effective way, their working conditions must be met and motivated (Huffington, Cole & Brunning, 1997). As a result, teachers may strive towards institutional development that is directly related to the provision of student development, but administrators may not show more effort and commitment, and they think they realise their responsibilities at a medium level (Koçak & Burgaz, 2017). Similar results were found in the study conducted by Koçak and Burgaz (2017).

Secondly, in the loyalty sub-dimension only, the perceptions of senior teachers (twenty-one years or more) about the level of compliance of school administrators with psychological contracts were higher than the perceptions of other teachers. In a study conducted by Yılmaz and Altinkurt (2012), the opinions of teachers did not change according to their obligations towards the employees (working conditions, characteristics of work, justice) and the obligations of the employees towards the institution (institutional membership, basic vocational standards and relationship contract).

This study shows that teachers' perceptions of school administrators' levels of ELB were high. According to teachers' perceptions, the empowering leadership behaviour of school administrators was also high in all sub-dimensions. In a study conducted by Cerit (2007:88), school administrators showed "moderate" empowering leadership behaviour according to teachers' perceptions. These findings differ from those of our study.

Thirdly, the relationship between teachers' and school administrators' compliance with psychological contracts was investigated, and a moderate, meaningful and positive relationship was found between the two variables. The psychological contract was predicated on the basis of common satisfaction of employee and employer duties (Rousseau, 1989, 1995). The theoretical basis of the concept lies in the theory of expectation (Vroom, 1964), which expresses the belief that individuals will arrive at a price that they find worthwhile for their efforts. In compliance with this, teachers expect to have a management approach that responds to their material and spiritual needs in response to the services they supply. The same is true for school management. If one of the teachers or administrators perceives a problem with meeting their expectations, they can reduce or end their efforts. In this research, the positive relation-

ship between the compliance levels of both parties to the psychological contract emphasises the basic lines of the psychological contract (Koçak & Burgaz, 2017).

Fourthly, we questioned how various variables, SACPC and ELB, predicted LCPCT, respectively. According to this, gender, branch, seniority, educational status, and the duration of schooling were found to have a predictive value of 0.09%. The significance of the relevant variables in the LCPCT procedure suggests that individual perceptions of the psychological contract may be affected to a lesser extent than these variables. Therefore, the findings obtained from this survey are supported, albeit at a low level, by these theoretical explanations given in the literature. However, it has been determined that the greatest predictor of teacher perceptions related to LCPCT is teacher perceptions related to SACPC. This can be considered in the context of social barter theory requirements. According to the findings of a study conducted by Koçak and Burgaz (2017), the variables of gender, seniority, education status, school type and the number of teachers working in a school were effective on teachers' perceptions of the psychological contract. Research findings by Guest (2004) indicate that individual variables such as age, gender, education level, seniority, status, and ethnicity play a role in the formation of the psychological contract. These findings do not corroborate each other.

Findings regarding the fifth research question show that coaching for innovative performance ( $R^2 = 0.34$ ), knowledge sharing ( $R^2 = 0.33$ ), and skills development ( $R^2 = 0.34$ ) had higher predictability than other sub-scales for empowering leadership behaviour sub-scales. According to the findings of the study conducted by Koçak and Burgaz (2017), in terms of the strengthening leadership behaviour dimensions, coaching for innovation performance and skills development have the highest predictive value. This finding corroborates those of this study. De Vos, Buyens and Schalk (2003) suggest that it is important to provide training and development opportunities for a positive psychological contract. Moreover, Guest (2006) claims that beneficitation of work and career/improvement possibilities should be provided for ensuring the improvement of abilities in order to generate a supporting atmosphere in psychological contract perceptions.

According to the findings of the study conducted by Koçak and Burgaz (2017), another important finding related to the predictive power of the empowering leadership behaviour and teachers' compliance with the psychological contract is that the dimension of responsibility is the least predictive dimension. As justification for this, it can be said that teachers are accustomed to the statutory requirements arising from the centralised structure of education in Turkey, and for this reason, they do not tend to pursue additional authority and respon-

sibility at schools. Moreover, a recent study also showed that the centralised construction of the Turkish National Education System constitutes an impediment for teachers to take on additional authority and responsibility within the school (Özdemir & Demircioğlu, 2015). Contrary to this finding, we determined that submitting to authority and the responsibility sub-dimension had moderate predictability. According to another finding by Koçak and Burgas (2017), the size of self-determination from empowering leadership behaviour does not expound the level of teachers' compliance with the psychological contract. Contrary to this finding, we determined that the authority and responsibility sub-dimension had the highest predictability. Accordingly, it is believed that teachers must be free in classroom actions as the profession is a natural phenomenon existing in itself, and that teachers are the only authorised person in the classroom (Öztürk, IH 2011).

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Perceptions of teachers' compliance with psychological contracts are higher than school administrators' perceptions of compliance with psychological contracts. With respect to the psychological contract, teachers think that school administrators care less about teachers' personal happiness and their long-term satisfaction. School administrators tend to show only slight appreciation when teachers make extra efforts. According to the teachers' views, school administrators do not provide environments and opportunities for social interaction between colleagues. School administrators are in moderate agreement with the psychological contract on the rewarding behaviour that teachers need. School administrators adhere to the psychological contract at a low level with regard to the behaviour of demonstrating understanding in unusual situations and responding to requests for effective classroom instruction. According to the views of the teachers, administrators tend to honour the agreement tenuously in directing activities in vocational development and providing opportunities for higher positions.

According to the results, school administrators do not include teachers in the decision-making process or do not provide environments in which teachers can express their ideas openly. They do not clearly inform teachers about the outcomes of the general operation of the school and cannot provide the education that teachers need to adapt to the changes in the vocational education and training system. They do not reward success. They express their expectations indistinctly in their work. It was also found that school administrators do not provide the necessary training to which teachers are legally entitled. School administrators also do not give enough feedback on teachers' work or provide financial support for non-compulsory extracurricu-

lar activities. They only partially share their thoughts on issues that are closely related to teachers. Furthermore, they are ineffectual in providing a healthy environment and expressing the reasons for the decisions taken at school. They also communicate in a subjective manner.

The general average of the teachers' level of compliance with the psychological contract was high, and the perceptions of extra performance and loyalty was moderate. The level of teachers' compliance with the psychological contract in the sub-dimension of institutional development effort was higher than loyalty and extra performance.

The conclusions of this study afford practical implications. School administrators should be provided with in-service training and be encouraged to participate in conferences to enhance teachers' personal happiness and their long-term satisfaction, to attain empathic thinking skills, to improve school loyalty, to support personal and professional endeavours, and to provide prize justice. In-service training seminars on loyalty and extra performance should be provided to increase the level of teachers' compliance with the psychological contract.

### Notes

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