

## LEADERSHIP, MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE IN TEACHING

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### Abstract

*The aim of this study is associating leadership style and motivation to achieve performance in teaching. Does a certain leadership style positively correlate with motivation, so that it can determine the teacher's performance at his/her job? Representative parameters were used to quantify the degree of motivation the teacher puts into his/her work: perseverance, success certainty, commitment, flexibility, compensatory effort, self-control and self-discipline. This research aims at determining how these variables associate in order to achieve performance. The present study correlated the transformational, transactional and laissez-faire styles, components of the full leadership, on a plot of 140 teachers from the rural and urban areas in Suceava County, aiming at finding out which style predominates. The results indicated that the transformational style is predominant with the mean ( $M = 2.92$ ,  $SD = .39$ ), followed by the transactional one ( $M = 2.67$ ,  $SD = .566$ ) and the laissez-faire style ( $M = 1.43$ ,  $SD = .544$ ). The analysis confirmed positive correlations between the scales of the most efficient styles, the transformation and transactional one measuring the motivation of the performance, perseverance, commitment, success certainty, self-control and self-discipline, compensatory effort and flexibility.*

**Key words:** laissez-faire leadership, leadership styles, learning styles, motivation, performance, transactional leadership, transformational leadership

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### 1. Introduction

Leadership and management are concepts studied and acknowledged since the 21<sup>st</sup> century, aiming at forming managerial competences for leaders in education. In USA and Canada, managers and potential managers must graduate master studies in educational management. Just

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like teachers need continuous training to be efficient in class, leaders need training to be specialists (Bush, 2015). The dilemma from this historic period was highlighted in leadership and management studies in different countries, reaching the conclusion that leadership and management do not mean the same thing: management means administrative leadership while leadership aims at the human division, the side of involvement and training in the activity. According to Bush's vision, educational leadership implies that the motivation and actions of some people are directed towards other people and aimed at achieving certain goals and ideals. This involvement supposes both decision making and taking risks. Goleman (2007) emphasized the idea that the objective of leadership is to establish a vision, a direction of action, transmit this vision to the ones that are to achieve it, as well as motivate the employees. The role of a teacher implies having some specific qualities to be an educational leader. As a manager must meet some standards specific to a leader, the teacher, as a specialist in his area of study, should have leadership qualities (Clipa, 2017; Stolovitch & Keeps, 2017). A leader has personal attitudes, stimulates work, is active and emphatic (pays attention to the significance of actions and events), has a weaker identity being oriented towards change (Zlate, 1997; 2004). Other researchers have also answered the question "How to be a successful leader?": the key to success would be to match the leadership style to the particularities of the situations.

The essential question of this research is: *How does teacher leadership style and motivation influence performance in teaching?* In the Bible, there is a quotation which fits this description perfectly: "If you see a skilled man doing his work, that man could sit with the kings, not with the ordinary people" (Bible, Proverbs, ch. 22v. 29). As a result of the investigations there is the possibility of identifying the implications of teacher motivation on his/her educational work or how the teacher's leadership and teaching styles work together for him/her to be a successful teacher? How does self-control, confidence in their own strengths, extra effort, concentrating on a long period, accepting changes, independence, and feelings of joy in work, optimism, desire to progress and other factors like this influence performance achievement?

## **2. The art and science of leadership**

In every art competences and abilities are essential for success. In leadership, the leader must possess certain abilities to impose respect, to finally achieve performance (Zlate, 2004). According to the idea launched by two French economists, leadership can be seen from three perspectives: as practice, art and science (Covey, 2001; Stolovitch, H. & Keeps, 2017). "The practical part of leadership is not based on grand theories, but it builds on the ability to determine others to act" (Calas, 1993). Approaching leadership as the art leads to the idea of finding the

most efficient ways to reach our objectives. Leadership as science represents the unavoidable need to coordinate work activities, thus the need of theoretical reflection. Calas (1993) defined leadership as follows: “Leadership supposes that the actions and motivation of some people are directed by other people aiming at achieving certain goals; this implies both taking initiative and assuming risks”. Leadership could also be defined as a process/state/structure of influence based on personal values and conscience, social intelligence, independent of the position authority exercised by an individual or more on others aiming at transforming the vision into an efficient reality: it is associated with human resource development (Goleman, 2007). In the last 20 years there has been reported an important concentration in leadership theoretical and practical studies on the new paradigm of transformational and transactional leadership (Avolio, 1999; Avolio & Bass, 2004). *Transactional leadership theory* and *transformational leadership theory* are two defining theories regarding leadership. The terms of transformational and transactional leadership were quoted by J. M. Burns (in his paper “Leadership”, published in 1978). He interpreted the two concepts as follows: transformational leadership is defined by behaviours of the leader who raises in his employees the desire to reach some organizational goals, which overlap with their own personal interests. The other type of leadership, the transactional one is defined by behaviours which determine commitment; people desire to meet the organizational objectives.

The previous leadership models fail to explain a full leadership styles range, which could comprise the behaviours described as being charismatic and inspirational, on one hand, but also avoidant or passive on the other hand. The full range leadership model was developed to widen the range of leadership investigated in the traditional mode. The model was tagged "full range" to challenge the classical theories of the field and to coerce the leadership specialists to extend their interest beyond the classical paradigms focused on traits or on the limited leadership styles. The full range leadership model postulates the existence of differences in the efficiency of leadership styles, based on the active/ passive distinction. The continuum of theoretical general categories of leadership has, at one end, the passive/ avoidant leadership (Laissez-Faire), through transactional leadership and transformational leadership at the other end. The MLQ questionnaire, generated by authors Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M. Bass, is closely related to the transformational leadership concept and full range leadership model. Both the MLQ questionnaire and interpretation report have evolved during the last 25 years, based on a large number of investigations done on the leaders of private and public companies, from big company directors to project managers or lower level leaders. The major leadership constructs from the fundamental MLQ model form a paradigm useful for understanding leaders in both high and low levels of hierarchy. Constructing on the old paradigms of leadership, which have dominated the practices of leadership selection,

development and training in the last half of century, such as the ones theorizing autocrat versus democrat leader, directive versus participative leadership, objective versus relation centered leadership and so on, the full range leadership model perfectly contributes also to the understanding of all types of leadership effects, both minor and strategic. The MLQ questionnaire and MLQ report were developed to extend the leadership assessment outside the traditionally measured dimensions and to make available, for the specialists, a concise format for application and feedback, useful in individual, group or organizational development. In conclusion, researchers Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M. Bass (2004), in the description of leaders' assessment questionnaire MLQ, emphasized the results of some researches regarding the description of leaders which are classified in different types of leadership.

In the study *Effectiveness correlates of transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic review of the literature*, the authors (Lowe et al., 1996) conducted a meta-analysis of the transformational leadership literature using the leaders' MLQ assessment questionnaire for the diverse observations integration, to calculate a medium effect on the different management scales and to probe some moderators of the management style and efficiency. The transversal leadership scales of the MLQ questionnaire proved to be reliable and significantly predicted the efficiency of the work unit within the set of assessed studies. The moderator variables indicated by the literature, the leader's level (high or low), organizational setting (public or private), operationalization of the criterion measure (subordinate perceptions and organizational measures of efficacy) and the impact on the correlations between the leadership style and efficacy were empirically tested. As a conclusion, the criteria variable appeared as a strong moderator. The unforeseen findings for the organization type and the level of the leader were explored with respect to the frequency of the transformational leaders' behaviour and the relations with the efficacy.

If from the first paper presented it results that the system suggested by Antonakis et al. (2003) confirmed the viability and liability of the system proposed as a MLQ model, in the second paper, Veronica Rile (2006) highlighted the importance of transformational leadership as correlated to personality traits, thus being proved the MLQ questionnaire liability, in the third paper presented there was highlighted the liability of the transversal leadership scales of the multifactorial MLQ questionnaire. In conclusion, to study the development of transformational and transactional leadership, the MLQ multifactorial questionnaire's validity and liability has a large-scale resonance, being a veritable instrument, worthy of being used.

### **3. The teaching styles of teachers in harmony with the students' learning styles – a step towards performance**

It is well known that children can develop their abilities and talents when teachers and parents show indulgence towards their individual differences and see them as potentials which could be structured as strong personality features. Teachers, instead of trying to transform students in children of their own ideal image on the profile of a student, should encourage the child's development depending on their potential (Iliescu & Dincă, 2007). The individual characteristics of children ensure the development of relations and social interactions and influence their performances when they are identified and used at their maximum potential. Develop performance in learning means identifying certain skills and having the ability to compensate their insufficiently structured characteristics. The students that have such skills may have a series of abilities insufficiently developed. In such situations both teachers and parents should discover the less developed areas to be able to interfere with the students' educational process, raising awareness and helping them to reduce or, in the best-case scenario, eliminate them. It is very important that teachers raise students' awareness of the fact that, regardless of their temperamental styles or skills, they are valuable for whom they are and there is no temperamental style that is more efficient and desirable than others, but each style characteristics are unique (Verboncu & Zalman, 2005). The differences between temperamental styles give the possibility to students to share to one another different points of view, different perspectives and information (Iliescu & Dincă, 2007). A factor that leads to performance in learning is the students' self-knowledge. Teachers can help students know themselves better through different activities, games with well-established objectives (Măță, 2014). In the case of older students, teachers or local school councillors can apply the *Learning Styles Questionnaire*, translated by Iliescu and Dincă (2007). After the identification of the learning style, the student needs to be encouraged to use the results of the test to know him/her better.

In literature, the theme regarding the educational implications of temperaments and learning styles in the teaching method are significantly present (Iliescu & Dincă, 2007). The conclusion drawn by Thomas Oakland and Joseph Glutting (2007), the authors of *The Learning Styles Questionnaire*, are that teachers can determine the efficiency of the teaching act by using some appropriate techniques, so that it could help the students develop their preferences and know they better (Iliescu & Dincă, 2007). These authors also assert that there is a larger number of teaching techniques which can be satisfied by a single approach, students with different styles and preferences. Teachers can draw a daily plan which could satisfy all preferences, determining the students to attend the lessons irrespective of the learning style they have.

The organizational leader, the school's manager should encourage students team work. To do that they have to identify first the teachers' temper and teaching styles and then distribute the appropriate teacher to each formed group, one that is compatible to the students group temper. Thus, for the teachers that use intuitive methods and for those based on creativity and abstract reasoning the students that have this learning style will be more efficient. On the other hand, the teachers that use practical and concrete methods will have better results working with students who adopt this style. The students will have different reactions to different teaching strategies, various ways of work management and types of schedule structuring. In other words, the extroverted students will be more efficient in team work, while introverted ones will be more efficient when working individually or in smaller groups. The students who adopt a practical style prefer activities with immediate applicability, while students who have an imaginative style prefer theoretical activities. Judicious students are the advocates of truth and objectivity, while the ones with an emotional style desire emotional safety and subjective, humanized standards. Students with an organized style are most efficient when classes are well organized, while students that adopt a flexible style are more efficient when the schedule is flexible, somehow improvised.

#### **4. Wings to new horizons – performance motivation**

As compared to cognitive abilities, the motivation to reach performance can be considered the second important factor for professional success (Stolovitch & Keeps, 2017). Some critics position it on the first place among conditions for professional success (Atkinson, 1978). The assessment "Project A" (Personnel Psychology 2/1990), the largest skills diagnosis investigation, identified performance motivation as being the second important determining factor of higher performance together with cognitive and practical abilities (Schuler, Thornton, Frintrup, Mueller-Hanson, 2002). The importance motivation has in accomplishing the professional requests is greater in the desire to achieve performance the lesser external constraints exist. Performance motivation is associated with the performance based on intrinsic motivation, which resides inside the human being. There have not been studies to highlight the impact of their own perceptions about their attitudes or performance yet. About the performance motivation homogeneity, universality or generality there have not been researches in this field yet (Schuler et al., 2002). The theories about this concept are diverse and are linked between them. Tenney and Gard identified a need in the needs pyramid that is called "the performance need", namely the desire to solve something difficult (Clipa et al., 2011; Clipa, 2017; Tenney & Gard, 2017). Thus, for Rile (2006) school performance motivation means the result of an emotional conflict between hope for success and fear of failure. Within the socio-psychological constructivist theory (Rile, 2006;

Weiner, 1985) some concepts completed with a variables set have been identified: action rapidity and its independence, exigencies level—setting the task’s goal and difficulty, overcoming the difficulties—perseverance or endeavour, orientation towards competition (McClelland, 1985), a pride in performance, dominance, status orientation, the desire to acquire by Schuler, Thornton, Frintrup, Mueller-Hanson, 2002. It was thus proven that performance motivation is not a self-built construct but is at the meeting of many personality features. The results confirmed that part of the behaviours measured by MLQ was strongly correlated with different performance motivation facets while others were less correlated: the scales of the transformational style are strongly correlated but the ones of the transactional and laissez-faire styles were less correlated. The most dominant scale was Dominance, others highly correlated were Preference for difficulty, Success certainty, Goals setting, Learning flexibility and availability and the ones less correlated were Assimilation, Performance pride and Compensatory effort. Negative correlations were also registered between the laissez-faire style scale and the scales measuring performance motivation: *Internality, Perseverance and Dominance*. Passive leaders that behave negligently and get involved only in extreme situations were characterized by poor perseverance and submissiveness (Schuler et al., 2002). As a conclusion, the data resulted from the AMI questionnaire correlated with the leadership behaviours assessed by the MLQ are important because they not only give validity to the questionnaire but also profoundly detail the scales significations. The data resulted from the AMI and performance scales correlation (Schuler et al., 2002) is interesting, proving the questionnaire’s validity.

## **5. Research aim and hypothesis**

The research aim is the association of the leadership style to motivation in achieving teaching performance. Does a certain leadership style positively correlate with motivation, to determine the teacher’s performance? To measure the teacher’s motivation representative parameters were used: perseverance, commitment, success certainty, flexibility, compensatory effort, self-control and self-discipline.

### Research hypothesis

The general hypothesis: There is a correlation between leadership styles and motivation to achieving teacher’s performance in teaching. To what extent is the authoritarian leadership style associated with the democratic leadership style to achieve performance?

### Work hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: If the mistake monitoring frequency level increases, the level of trust built also increases.

Hypothesis 2: If the results reward frequency level increases, the innovative thinking encouragement also increases.

Hypothesis 3: There is an association between the frequency level of results reward and the development of the others.

## **6. Research methodology**

### **6.1. Research Design**

The present research comprises two parts: the first part highlights the correlations between leadership styles and the second part correlations between efficient scales of leadership styles and performance motivation scales.

### **6.2. Participants**

The research was done on a group comprising 140 subjects (teachers who teach in kindergarten and primary education as well as teachers from gymnasium and high school). Differentiated by the gender variable, the plot has 51 masculine and 89 female subjects. Regarding the environment variable, the plot is formed of 70 subjects from the rural area and 70 from the urban area. The participants were grouped into the following age categories: category 1 (18-35 years old), category 2 (36-45 years old), category 3 (46-60 years old).

### **6.3. Instruments and method**

The present research relied on an experimental method that involved the use of a questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. The research based on questionnaires applied to teachers is of a quantitative type. Considered to be a complex method of opinion, attitudes, aspirations, behaviours and knowledge, the inquiry can be done based on a questionnaire or investigation. It facilitates data collection in a relatively short period of time. Regardless of whether it is all about a survey or an inquiry, the questionnaire always proves to be one of the most frequently used techniques (Chelcea, 1975; Swan, 2017). The sampling method of the questioned population was done by the snowball method, at four schools from urban areas and four from rural areas in Suceava County.

The Achievement Motivation Inventory (AMI) developed by Schuler, Thornton, Frintrup, Mueller-Hanson (2002) aims at assessing the attitude towards work, professional life and



performance. AMI is a structural, non-verbal, omnibus measure of some personality coordinates and behavioural preferences, which was built to measure the way in which motivation is articulated, especially motivation for performance. The questionnaire consists of 170 items and is grouped in 17 structural scales as well as in a global motivational index. The items appreciation will be done using the Likert Scale, 1 meaning absolutely no agreement, 2 representing a strong disagreement, 3 – disagreement, 4- neither agreement, nor disagreement, 5 means agreement, 6 means strong agreement and 7 is completely agree.

The AMI scales used for this study are: BE = PERSEVERANCE (persistent, energetic, perseverant, strong willed, resistant, determined, tenacious, industrious), EN = ENGAGEMENT (engaged, desire to work, diligent, occupied, hardworking, ambitious, eager to achieve performance), EZ=ENSURANCE OF SUCCESS (confident, persuaded, full of hope and confidence), FX=FLEXIBILITY (flexible, open minded, ready to change, agile, honest, receptive, sensitive, interested, adaptable), KA=COMPENSATING EFFORT (avoid fear constructively, reacts to stress, stimulated, endeavour, compensates fear), SK = SELF CONTROL AND SELF DISCIPLINE (controlled, concentrated, disciplined, delays satisfaction of desires, organized) (Liliana Miclăuș, Dragoș Iliescu).

Leader self-evaluation questionnaire – 5x Form (MLQ - Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire) developed by Avolio & Bass, 2004 is a structured measure of three leadership styles: Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership and Laissez – faire Leadership. The questionnaire contains 45 items grouped in 12 scales. Item evaluation will be done using the Likert scale type, 1 meaning nothing, 2 very rare, 3 sometimes, 4 often and 5 represents frequently or always.

Transformational scale: IA = ACCOMPLISHED ATTRIBUTES (builds confidence), IB = IDEAL COMPONENTS (integrity in action), IM = INSPIRATIONAL MOTIVATION (inspires others), IS = INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION (encourages individual thinking), IC = INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION (develops people).

Transactional Leadership implies: careful monitoring of certain problems, intense work with the subordinate groups; work objectives accomplishment. Transactional Scales: CR = Situational compensation (rewards results), MBE-A = MANAGEMENT BY EXCEPTION: ACTIVE (Management-by-Exception: Active) (Monitors mistakes).

Passive/avoidant Leadership (Laissez-Faire) –Passive leaders avoid identifying and clarifying critical areas and potential problems, avoid getting involved, setting standards and monitoring the

actions of the subordinates. This leadership style has, most of the time, negative impact on the results and is associated with laissez-faire. Leadership scales for laissez-faire: MBE-P = Management- by- Exception: Passive (mitigates problems), LF = Laissez-faire (avoids implication). Leadership results: both transformational and transactional leadership are related with the success at individual group and organisational level. Leadership efficiency is evaluated by MLQ based on the mode in which the subordinates and colleagues perceive the leaders as good motivators, as efficient in interactions on different levels of the organisation and generating satisfaction with their work methods.

Leadership scales: EFF = EFICIENCE (is efficient), by high scores, the identified leaders in this scale are efficient, satisfy professional needs of others, represent the group in front of higher authority, satisfy organisational needs and raise the efficiency of the whole group; EE = EXTRA EFFORT (generates extra effort); SAT = LEADERSHIP SATISFACTION (generates satisfaction).

#### ***6.4. Questionnaire application and data interpretation***

To test the research hypothesis proposed we used the SPSS statistical analysis software, using the next statistical methods: Pearson correlation for analysis and verification of hypothesis 1-13; frequency analysis for demographic variables chosen to describe the group of subjects: gender, age, education level, institution, environment; ONE-WAY ANOVA test for identification of predominant leadership styles. Results are presented as tables, graphics and histograms.

### **7. Results**

To know if there are differences between the averages of styles we applied One-Way ANOVA. All the three styles were measured on the same scale and the database was restructured for each style, bringing each subscale that composes a style and dividing it to the number of subscales. Thus, we obtained an average of the results for each answer to compare it with the other answers. The descriptive data regarding leadership styles are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Style of leadership

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					LowerBound	UpperBound		
Transformational	140	2.9236	.39239	.03316	2.8580	2.9891	1.80	3.85
Transactional	140	2.6732	.56652	.04788	2.5785	2.7679	1.25	4.00
Passive/avoidant	140	1.4313	.54400	.04598	1.3403	1.5222	.13	2.63
Total	420	2.3427	.82616	.04031	2.2634	2.4219	.13	4.00

The analysis showed that there are significant differences between the averages per style (Table 2).

Table 2. Differences between mean of the leadership style

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
BetweenGroups	178.835	2	89.417	347.991	.000
WithinGroups	107.149	417	.257		
Total	285.984	419			

The comparison of the averages using the Tukey HSD test showed that there are significant differences between analysed styles as shown in the Table 3. As a consequence, the style that scored the lowest is passive avoidant (M = 1.43, SD = .544), followed by transactional style (M = 2.67, SD = .566) and the one that scored highest was the transformational style (M = 2.92, SD = .39).

Table 3. Differences between the mean of leadership style

(I) Index1	(J) Index1	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					LowerBound	UpperBound
Transformational	Transactional	.25036*	.06059	.000	.1079	.3929
	passive/avoidant	1.49232*	.06059	.000	1.3498	1.6348
Transactional	Transformational	-.25036*	.06059	.000	-.3929	-.1079
	passive/avoidant	1.24196*	.06059	.000	1.0995	1.3845
passive/avoidant	Transformational	-1.49232*	.06059	.000	-1.6348	-1.3498
	Transactional	-1.24196*	.06059	.000	-1.3845	-1.0995

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Graphical representation of the results is presented in Figure 1.

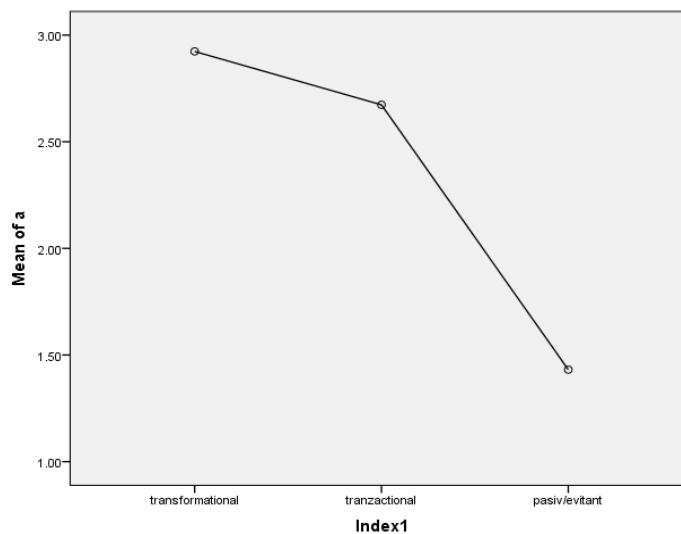


Figure 1. Mean of Leadership style

There is a positive correlation between the transformational and transactional styles. The more the leaders specify the performance standards and take immediate corrective actions, the more the students will trust the evaluator, because the leader shares his principles and values and is consistent in his behaviour. In the case of such an approach, the students feel safe, knowing the standards and preventive measures the teacher will apply. The democratic leadership style associates with authoritarian leadership regarding mistake monitoring, results rewarding, compensation of results, building confidence, encouraging innovative thinking and development of the people around and does not associate with laissez-faire style (Clipa, 2017; Joița, 2000). Also, a transactional leader, that specifies expectations but also rewards offered in case of achieving the objectives, manages to encourage students to become creative, to approach old situations from different perspectives, having the courage to ask questions and find new solutions. The more a leader rewards results, the more this will help the students to reach their potential in order to achieve the objectives. The professor will offer a supportive climate and will focus on the strong points of the students. This correlation between leadership styles (transformational and transactional) was proven in hypothesis 3.

## 8. Discussions and conclusions

As mentioned in other studies conducted so far (Avolio, 1999; Avolio and Yammarino, 2002; Bass, 1998a; Clipa, 2017; Rile, 2006), transformational leaders (democratic style) ensure a greater efficiency and satisfaction in their ranks compared to leaders that adopt transactional and

passive styles. To achieve performance in the act of teaching, teachers should embrace the transformational style, inspire others, motivate them, and appreciate the students' behaviour regarding the development of their personalities (not only the cognitive side). The results of this research can be the basis for more detailed research. Comparisons can be done between rural and urban areas to highlight which teachers are more interested in doing performance. There may also be drawn comparisons using the age variable in order to emphasize its influence upon achieving performance, subsequently resulting in plans of improvement /development.

### **Research limitations**

Participants not being able to fill in the questionnaire, lack of sincerity or incorrectly filled answers, unequal number of subjects between the genders in order to be able to do some interesting comparisons.

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