

AUTHORS:

Dr C.P. Van der Vyver¹ 

Me T. Kok¹ 

Prof L.N. Conley¹ 

AFFILIATION:

¹North-West University

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL WELLBEING AND PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR TO IMPROVE TEACHER RETENTION

ABSTRACT

Challenges and changes in the South African education system could have an impact on teachers' professional wellbeing, which, in turn, results in changes in teacher retention rates. The leadership of the school principal directly influences teachers' experience of professional wellbeing. Some research focuses on teacher wellbeing and plenty of research focuses on principals' leadership behaviour and leadership styles yet very limited research was found that links these two variables. In this research, the main aim was to explore the relationship between the principal's leadership behaviour and teachers' professional wellbeing improving teacher retention. The research design was a quantitative survey design embedded in the post-positivist paradigm. Two standardised instruments – the Institute of Work Psychology Multi-Affect Indicator and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire – were used to collect data among teachers from 20 selected schools in the Kenneth Kaunda District of the North-West Province of South Africa. Descriptive statistics and Spearman's rank correlations were used to analyse the data. The results showed a relationship between perceived leadership behaviour and wellbeing. Transformational and transactional leadership dimensions could positively contribute to teachers' professional wellbeing, whereas laissez-faire leadership has a potentially negative influence on their professional wellbeing. The use of transformational and transactional leadership behaviour results in teachers reporting positive job-related affective wellbeing, which can, in turn, influence teachers to remain in the profession due to their experience of enhanced professional wellbeing.

Keywords: *affective wellbeing; Circumplex Model of Affect; Full Range Leadership Theory; laissez faire; leadership styles; principals; professional wellbeing; transactional leadership; transformational leadership; wellbeing.*



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1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a challenging profession with high levels of stress and mental disorders frequently occurring (Jackson & Rothmann, 2005; Kern, Waters, Adler & White, 2014). Teachers have different ways of coping and react differently

to challenges and stress (Fouché, 2015). Some consider changes as fuel for their professional development, while others become demoralised and unmotivated, which harms their personal and professional wellbeing (Jackson & Rothman, 2005). Teacher wellbeing has been receiving attention since the 1930s (Orsila, Luukkaala, Manka & Nygård, 2011). However, most research focuses on teacher burnout rather than addressing teachers' strengths and wellbeing (Hoy & Tarter, 2011). There seems to be an increased awareness that teachers' professional wellbeing is a significant consideration in many educational organisations (Acton & Glasgow, 2015), as it leads to low levels of teacher retention. Pitsoe (2013) reports that approximately 55% of South African teachers would leave the profession for various reasons, including stress, if they could. One of the reasons for the poor retention rate of teachers can be linked to the principal's leadership behaviour as a contributing factor to teachers' professional wellbeing. Van der Vyver, Van der Westhuizen and Meyer (2014) indicate that school principals who display caring in their leadership contribute positively towards teacher wellbeing, whereas a lack of care reduces teachers' experience of quality of working life and wellbeing.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

More than a third of teachers in South Africa experience the teaching profession as highly stressful (Jackson & Rothmann, 2005). Many teachers experience burnout because of prolonged functioning in a highly stressful working environment (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016). Evers, Castle, Prochaska and Prochaska (2014) found a relationship between poor professional wellbeing and absenteeism, while Kuoppala, Lamminpaä, Liira and Vainio (2008) found a relationship between poor professional wellbeing and retirement due to ill health. By identifying factors influencing teachers' professional wellbeing, it becomes possible for school principals and policy developers to enhance teachers' professional wellbeing or implement interventions when problems arise (Yildirim, 2014). One of these factors is the leadership behaviour of the principal. As mentioned in the introduction, education in South Africa is far from optimal and teacher wellbeing is viewed as a contributing factor in this regard (Fouché, 2015). The functioning and performance of schools are directly influenced by lower levels of wellbeing experienced by teachers, which, in turn, indirectly influences learner performance (Fouché, 2015). Mwangi (2013) indicates that the principal's leadership behaviour has a significant influence on teachers' professional wellbeing. Although some research has focused on teachers' general wellbeing and much research has been done on principals' leadership styles, a scarcity of studies researching teachers' professional wellbeing prevails (Yildirim, 2014). Although some research indicates a relationship between caring in leadership behaviour and teacher wellbeing, no research examined the relationship between teachers' professional wellbeing and principals' leadership styles, specifically within the South African context.

3. RESEARCH PARADIGM

This research was conducted from a post-positivistic paradigm. Post-positivism refers to creating new knowledge with the aim of changing the world and contributing towards social justice (Mertens, 2015). This type of research paradigm is very broad as theory and practice are interlinked and not seen as two separate aspects. Post-positivism requires a researcher to take a distanced view and see the whole picture. The post-positivistic researcher performs a learning role instead of a testing role. This approach enables the researcher to recognise the common humanity that connects researchers and individuals who participate in the research (Creswell, 2013a).

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Various factors, of which leadership is one, influence the way teachers perceive their working environment (Fouché, 2015). School principals' leadership finds its manifestation in different leadership styles being used to achieve the objectives of the school (Avci, 2015). Some leadership styles may enhance teachers' professional wellbeing (Yildirim, 2014) and facilitate optimal performance (Antonakis, Avolio & Sivasubramaniam, 2003), while other leadership styles may contribute to teacher stress and burnout (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016). In this research, the focus was on two variables: professional wellbeing and leadership behaviour.

Professional wellbeing

Professional wellbeing refers to individuals' perception of their qualities needed for professional tasks. It refers to positive emotions towards factors such as self-efficacy and job satisfaction (Aelterman *et al.*, 2007). In contrast, general wellbeing can be defined as being psychologically, physically and emotionally healthy (Yildirim, 2015), whereas affective wellbeing refers to the experience of pleasant or unpleasant emotions and the impact these have on individuals' resilience and ability to utilise resources (Luhmanna, Hawkeya, Eidb & Cacioppa, 2012). The theoretical framework used in this study to conceptualise professional wellbeing is the job-related affective wellbeing framework of Warr (1990) and Warr, Bindl, Parker and Inceoglu (2014), who conceptualise job-related affective wellbeing on two orthogonal dimensions, namely arousal and pleasure. According to this conceptualisation, a specific level of pleasure may be accompanied by a level of arousal, and a level of arousal may be either pleasurable or unpleasant (Warr, 1990; Warr *et al.*, 2014). For example, high levels of activation that are perceived as pleasant are associated with being excited, enthusiastic, energised, happy and pleased. Furthermore, low levels of activation that are perceived as pleasant can produce states such as feeling contented, relaxed, calm and tranquil. Unpleasant states accompanied by high levels of activation can produce states such as being agitated, hostile, irritated, angry and tense. Lastly, unpleasant states that are accompanied by low levels of activation can produce states such as feeling dejected, lethargic, fatigued, gloomy and sad (De Jonge & Schaufeli, 1998).

To further expand on this theoretical framework, Warr *et al.* (2014) developed the Institute of Work Psychology (IWP) Multi-Affect Indicator, which is presented in Figure 1 below. The IWP Multi-Affect Indicator is indicated in a circumplex model that specifies feelings in terms of a displeasure-pleasure continuum and through low to high mental arousal or activation (Warr *et al.*, 2014). Mental arousal or activation refers to an individual's readiness for action and energy levels (Remington, Fabrigar & Visser, 2000). The feelings associated with the two axes (pleasure-activation) are mentioned in Figure 1, with descriptive labels provided for each of the quadrants. In broad terms, positive affect is associated with the feelings on the right-hand side of the figure while negative affect is associated with the feelings reported on the left-hand side (Warr *et al.*, 2014). To be more specific, the top-left quadrant (anxiety) is referred to as "high activation negative affect". The bottom-left quadrant (depression) is referred to as "low activation negative affect", while the top-right quadrant (enthusiasm) is referred to as "high activation positive affect". The bottom-right quadrant (comfort) is referred to as "low activation positive affect".

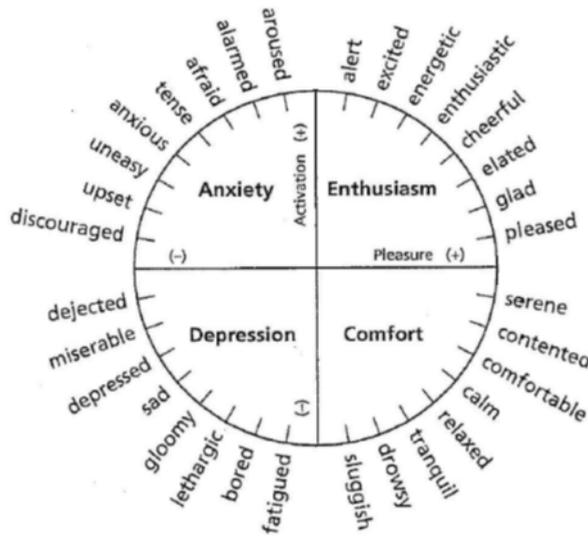


Figure 1: The IWP Multi-Affect Indicator (Warr et al., 2014:343)

According to Warr (2016), job engagement and other proactive behaviour were found to be associated more with activated positive affect (enthusiasm) than with the other three quadrants. Low activation negative affect (depression) is associated with negative behaviour, such as effort avoidance and social withdrawal (Warr *et al.*, 2014).

Table 1 provides a summative overview of a specific model of the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator of affective wellbeing in terms of items, quadrants and factor structure (axis) consisting of two correlated factors.

Table 1: Items of the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator (Gonçalves & Neves, 2011:709)

Items	Factor (quadrant)	Factor (axis)
Tense Anxious Worried Comfortable Calm Relaxed	Anxiety Comfort	Anxiety-comfort
Depressed Melancholic Unhappy Motivated Enthusiastic Optimistic	Depression Enthusiasm	Depression-enthusiasm

In Table 1 the first column indicates the factors in the four quadrants of the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator. These factors can be combined and tested in different ways. Gonçalves and Neves

(2011) tested five factor models on Warr's IWP Multi-Affect Indicator. In one of the models for example, the four correlated factors representing the four quadrants on the emotional-affective states based on pleasure and activation are supported. Table 1 presents the model with a specific factor structure consisting of two correlated factors, namely depression-enthusiasm and anxiety-comfort. This specific model of the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator was used in the empirical part of the research.

Leadership behaviour

The second variable in this research is the principal's leadership behaviour. Leadership style is a coherent approach used to motivate and manage teachers and handle grievances while maintaining relationships with teachers (Kauts, 2010). The theoretical framework used to examine leadership behaviour in this study was the full-range leadership theory (FRLT), which is often used in the field of leadership (Bass, 2008; Van Jaarsveld, 2016). The FRLT is regarded as a modern leadership theory rooted in three theoretical perspectives of leadership behaviour, namely transactional, transformational and *laissez-faire* (Luo, Wang & Marnburg, 2013) Within the nine-factor FRLT model, transformational leadership consists of five dimensions: idealised influence (attributed); idealised influence (behaviour); inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. The two dimensions related to transactional leadership are contingent reward and management-by-exception (active), while the two dimensions of *laissez-faire* leadership are management-by-exception (passive) and passive-avoidant (Witges & Scanlan, 2014). The FRLT aims to explain high-level leadership or transformation to help followers and leaders transcend beyond the limits of resource exchange (transaction) to achieve change at a higher level, driven by a utilitarian or moral motivation (Witges & Scanlan, 2014). The FRLT suggests that elements of transactional leadership form the foundation of searching for the ability to produce transformational results. An important consideration of FRLT is that transformational leadership is not meant to replace transactional leadership; rather, without a foundation of transactional leadership, the attainment of transformational effects may not be possible (Witges & Scanlan, 2014). The most widely used survey instrument to measure the nine factors in the FRLT is the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5x) (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003).

Table 2: The nine factors of the FRLT (Luo *et al.*, 2013)

Dimension of leadership behaviour	Factors	Explanation
Transformational	(a) Idealised influence (attributed)	The ability to influence followers as a role model in values and morals.
	(b) Idealised influence (behaviour)	The ability to motivate and inspire followers to accomplish objectives through extra effort.
	(c) Inspirational motivation	The ability to communicate the leader's vision and mission and find the means to realise these objectives.
	(d) Intellectual stimulation	The ability to stimulate followers to think in new and creative ways, challenge others and be innovative in problem solving.
	(e) Individualised consideration	The ability to meet followers' unique individual needs and develop them to realise their full potential.

Dimension of leadership behaviour	Factors	Explanation
Transactional	(a) Contingent reward	Leaders who clearly define obligations, objectives and tasks for followers and stipulate reward associated with the contractual obligations being met.
	(f) Management-by-exception (active)	Leaders who actively check that work standards are met.
<i>Laissez-faire</i>	(a) Management-by-exception (passive)	Leaders who passively check that work standards are met.
	(g) Passive-avoidant	Leaders who do not take responsibility, avoid making decisions and do not use authority.

The two theories, namely job-related affective wellbeing framework and FRLT informed the empirical part of the research, where specific instruments related to these theories were employed to measure leadership behaviour of the principals as well as professional wellbeing of educators in order to determine if a relationship between these variables exist.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Purpose of the research

The main purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between the professional wellbeing of teachers and the leadership behaviour used by principals. To address this purpose, it was necessary to determine the dominant dimension of leadership behaviour of the principal according to the FRLT and measure the professional wellbeing of the educators. The relationship between these variables could then be determined.

5.2 Research design

The study employed a non-experimental quantitative survey design (*cf.* Creswell, 2013b). Non-experimental research is used during quantitative research to describe the relationships between variables or to describe tendencies for variables in a population without manipulating any circumstances (Clark & Creswell, 2015). Clark and Creswell (2015) define survey research designs as non-experimental quantitative procedures used by researchers to administer a questionnaire to a smaller group, referred to as a "sample", to describe trends in attitudes, opinions, behaviours or characteristics of a larger group, referred to as the "population".

5.3 Population and sampling

In the study, quintile four and five (schools that charge school fees) urban primary and secondary schools within the Kenneth Kaunda District of the North-West Province of South Africa were regarded as the population. Within the study population, a non-probability, convenient sampling method was used for selecting schools within the district. A representative sample was not used, as the researchers did not aim to generalise the findings obtained from the study but merely aimed to explore the possible relationship between two variables. The sample in the study consisted of teachers from 20 schools. All teachers from each school were approached to take part in the research. From the 20 schools selected, the researchers obtained completed questionnaires from 400 participants, consequently regarded as the sample.

5.4 Research instruments

Data were collected through standardised structured questionnaires. Leadership behaviour was measured using the MLQ-5x (Avolio & Bass, 1995, 2004), and professional wellbeing was measured employing the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator (Warr, 1990).

5.5 Reliability, validity and ethical considerations

As two standardised measures were used in the research (See par 5.4), the reliability and validity of the instruments are beyond any suspicion. To make sure the instruments were reliable and valid in the South African context, Cronbach Alpha coefficients were calculated and factor analyses were done. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated to determine the inter-item consistency of the questionnaires.

Table 3: Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients for the main factors and Sub-Scales of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5x)

Leadership dimension	Sub scales	Cronbach Alpha	Inter-item correlation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Transformational Leadership dimension	Idealised influence: attributed	0.786	0.486	3.11	0.791
	Idealised influence: behaviour	0.628	0.372	3.12	0.680
	Inspirational motivation	0.828	0.554	3.26	0.708
	Intellectual stimulation	0.786	0.478	2.84	0.829
	Individualised consideration	0.768	0.471	2.75	0.899
			0.923	0.715	3.02
Transactional Leadership dimension	Contingent reward	0.670	0.356	2.91	0.784
	Management-by-exception: active	0.611	0.283	2.45	0.824
		0.455	0.295	2.68	0.647
Laissez-Faire Leadership dimension	Management-by-exception: passive	0.625	0.324	0.90	0.990
	Passive-avoidant	0.756	0.434	0.73	0.845
		0.842	0.736	0.81	0.855

The Cronbach alphas for the subscales measured in the MLQ ranged from 0.611 to 0.828, while the Cronbach alphas for the three main factors ranged from 0.455 (transactional dimension) to 0.923 (transformational dimension).

Table 4: Cronbach-Alpha reliability coefficients of the Institute of Work Psychology (IWP) Multi-Affect Indicator for the Affective Indicators

Affective Indicators	Cronbach Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation
Anxiety (HANA = High Activation Negative Affect)	0.89	1.73	0.90
Depression (LANA = Low Activation Negative Affect)	0.80	1.45	0.69
Comfort (LAPA = Low Activation Positive Affect)	0.93	3.87	1.05

Affective Indicators	Cronbach Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation
Enthusiasm (HAPA = Activated Positive Affect)	0,93	3.88	1.00
Secondary scores	Cronbach Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation
Negative affect	0.78	1.59	0.73
Positive affect	0.77	3.87	0.92

Very high Cronbach alphas were calculated for the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator, ranging between 0.77 and 0.93, indicating that the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator is reliable within the South African context. As no South African studies were found where the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator has been used, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine the validity of the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator. In a recent study by Van Jaarsveld (2016), the construct validity of the MLQ-5x was determined for the South African context by means of a factor analysis. Therefore, the researchers deemed it necessary to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis in combination with standardised regression weights and goodness-of-fit indices to determine whether the different items loaded meaningfully on the same factors as indicated in the manual of the MLQ-5x and to ensure that the factor structure remains the same within the specific sample used. Ethical clearance was obtained from the university under whose auspices the study was conducted, and permission was granted by the North-West Department of Education. A sealed box was provided to each school where the completed questionnaires were posted to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of all the participants. Each of the boxes received a number. Participation in this study was voluntary and the researchers adhered to all the ethical guidelines. The participants provided informed consent to take part in the research.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics in which averages, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages were calculated from the responses to the questionnaires were used to summarise, organise and condense the large numbers of observations (*cf.* McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Spearman's rank correlations were calculated to determine the relationship between leadership behaviour and teachers' professional wellbeing.

7. RESULTS

7.1 Dimensions of the FRLT behaviour displayed by principals in the study population

Figure 2 provides a visual overview of the respondents' mean scores for the three main factors of the MLQ-5x.

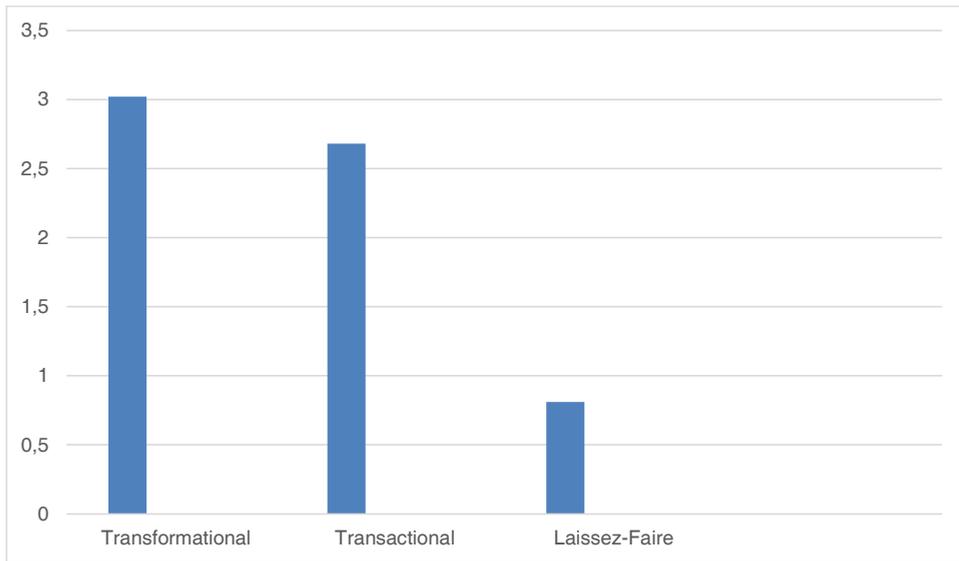


Figure 2: Visual overview of scores obtained for the three main factors of the MLQ-5x

The mean scores depicted in Figure 2 indicate that the dominant dimension of leadership behaviour of principals in the selected schools as perceived by teachers participating in the research related to transformational leadership with a mean score of 3.02, followed by the transactional dimension with a mean score of 2.68 and, lastly, *laissez-faire* with a mean score of 0.81. The least dominant dimension of leadership behaviour displayed by principals in the selected schools appears to be *laissez faire*.

7.2 Professional wellbeing experienced by teachers in the study population

Table 5: Descriptive statistics for the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator

Item	1 Never 0-20%		2 Some of the time 20-40%		3 Half of the time 40-60%		4 Most of the time 60-80%		5 Always 80-100%		Mean	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
4. Comfortable	14	3.5	40	10.0	43	10.8	143	35.8	160	40.0	3.99	1.11
10. Motivated	14	3.5	33	8.3	70	17.5	146	36.5	137	34.3	3.90	1.08
12. Optimistic	10	2.5	42	10.5	68	17.0	147	36.8	133	33.3	3.88	1.07
5. Calm	13	3.3	47	11.8	48	12.0	162	40.5	130	32.5	3.87	1.09
11. Enthusiastic	9	2.3	48	12.0	65	16.3	150	37.5	128	32.0	3.85	1.07
6. Relaxed	19	4.8	58	14.5	56	14.0	144	36.0	123	30.8	3.74	1.18
1. Tense	208	52.0	117	29.3	42	10.5	25	6.3	8	2.0	1.77	1.00
3. Worried	212	53.0	117	29.3	40	10.0	20	5.0	11	2.8	1.75	1.01
2. Anxious	230	57.5	111	27.8	28	7.0	23	5.8	8	2.0	1.67	0.97

Item	1 Never 0-20%		2 Some of the time 20-40%		3 Half of the time 40-60%		4 Most of the time 60-80%		5 Always 80-100%		Mean	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
9. Unhappy	237	59.3	111	27.8	32	8.0	16	4.0	4	1.0	1.60	0.87
7. Depressed	302	75.5	49	12.3	32	8.0	14	3.5	3	0.8	1.42	0.84
8. Melancholic	313	78.3	47	11.8	29	7.3	11	2.8	0	0.0	1.35	0.73

(Positive affect; negative affect)

Using the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator, it was possible to determine the levels of affective wellbeing experienced by the teachers in the study population. According to Table 5, the highest mean score of 3.99 was reported on item 4 (comfortable) of positive affect. The lowest mean score was reported on item 8 (melancholic) of negative affect with a very low mean score of 1.35. Furthermore, all the items measuring positive affect (items 4, 10, 12, 5, 11 and 6) have a mean score not lower than 3.74, which is regarded as very high. However, all the items measuring negative affect (items 1, 3, 2, 9, 7 and 8) reported very low mean scores, with the highest being 1.77. Reporting on the positive affect, item 4 reported the highest percentage (75.8%) of respondents stating that they felt comfortable at work most of the time. Secondly, as is evident in item 10, the respondents felt highly motivated with an agreed percentage of 70.8%. Thirdly, the respondents agreed, with a percentage of 70.1%, that they felt optimistic at work. Concerning negative affect, item 9 reported a very high percentage (87.1%) of the respondents stating that they were not unhappy at work. Item 7 indicated that 87.8% of the respondents were not depressed at work. Lastly, item 8 indicated that most of the respondents (90.1%) did not feel melancholy at work.

7.3 Relationship between the dimensions of principals' leadership behaviour and the professional wellbeing of teachers

Calculating Spearman correlations gave an indication of the causal relationships between the perceived leadership behaviour and the factors associated with professional wellbeing according to the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator. The size of the correlations is indicated as well as the direction of the relationship (+ or -). If the direction is indicated as a positive relationship it means that as the one variable increases the other also increases. For example, if there is a positive correlation between transformational leadership and enthusiasm it means with an increase perception of principals as transformational leaders teachers show more enthusiasm. However, less likely it could also mean enthusiastic teachers experience their principals as more transformational.

Table 6: Spearman correlation between perceived principal leadership behaviour and professional wellbeing of teachers

	ANX	DEPR	COMF	ENTH	- AFF	+ AFF
Leadership dimension						
TRANSFORMATIONAL	-0.354**	-0.426**	0.456**	0.639**	-0.432**	0.608**
Idealised influence: attributed	-0.336**	-0.423**	0.410**	0.557**	-0.412**	0.539**
Idealised influence: behaviour	-0.261**	-0.323**	0.323**	0.500**	-0.323**	0.456**
Inspirational motivation	-0.299**	-0.334**	0.378**	0.595**	-0.348**	0.540**
Intellectual stimulation	-0.286**	-0.365**	0.409**	0.561**	-0.362**	0.538**
Individualised consideration	-0.342**	-0.381**	0.444**	0.578**	-0.407**	0.566**
TRANSACTIONAL	-0.187**	-0.259**	0.269**	0.364**	-0.256**	0.349**
Contingent reward	-0.312**	-0.356**	0.369**	0.495**	-0.365**	0.478**
Manage-by-exception: active	-0.004	-0.060	0.075	0.121*	-0.051	0.109*
LAISSEZ-FAIRE	0.315**	0.375**	-0.333**	-0.471**	0.370**	-0.439**
Manage-by-exception: passive	0.314**	0.346**	-0.313**	-0.467**	0.361**	-0.423**
Passive-avoidant	0.264**	0.367**	-0.309**	-0.427**	0.326**	-0.405**

*correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

r=0.1 (small); r=0.3 (medium); r=0.5 (large)

7.3.1 Correlation between transformational leadership dimension of the FRLT and professional wellbeing

According to Table 6, a medium negative correlation ($r = -0.354$; $p < 0.01$) was found between the transformational dimension and anxiety, which could indicate that teachers who perceive their principal as predominantly displaying the transformational dimension of leadership, experience lower levels of anxiety. Between the transformational dimension and depression, a medium negative correlation ($r = -0.426$; $p < 0.01$) was reported. It is thus possible that principals displaying transformational dimensions of the FRLT could result in teachers experiencing lower levels of depression. It also could be that anxious and depressed teachers experience principals as less transformational, however this is less likely.

A medium positive correlation ($r = 0.456$; $p < 0.01$) was found between the transformational dimension and comfort (Table 4). It is thus possible that teachers experience higher levels of comfort when principals predominantly display the transformational dimension of the FRLT. Between the transformational dimension and enthusiasm, a large positive correlation ($r = 0.639$; $p < 0.01$) was found. Teachers who perceive their principal as practising transformational dimensions of the FRLT thus possibly experience higher levels of enthusiasm. However less likely, it could be possible that teachers experiencing comfort and enthusiasm may experience principals displaying more transformational dimensions of the FRLT.

A medium negative correlation ($r = -0.432$; $p < 0.01$) was found between the transformational dimension and negative affect. Between the transformational dimension and positive affect, a high positive correlation ($r = 0.608$; $p < 0.01$) was found (Table 4). It seems thus possible that a high level of positive affect is experienced by teachers when principals are perceived to predominantly display the transformational dimensions of the FRLT.

7.3.2 Correlation between transactional leadership dimension of the FRLT and professional wellbeing (Table 4)

Referring to Table 6, a small negative correlation ($r = -0.187$; $p < 0.01$) was found between the transactional dimension and anxiety. Thus, teachers who perceive their principal as predominantly displaying transactional dimensions of the FRLT, may possibly experience lower levels of anxiety. A small negative correlation ($r = -0.259$; $p < 0.01$) was found between the transactional dimension and depression. Thus, teachers who perceive their principal as predominantly exhibiting transactional dimensions of the FRLT, could possibly experience lower levels of depression. Between the transactional dimension and comfort, a small positive correlation ($r = 0.269$; $p < 0.01$) was found. Although less likely, teachers with lower levels of anxiety and depression and higher levels of comfort may experience the principal's leadership as showing transactional dimensions.

A medium positive correlation ($r = 0.364$; $p < 0.01$) was found between the transactional dimension and enthusiasm. Thus, teachers might experience higher levels of enthusiasm, perceiving their principal as predominantly displaying transactional dimensions of the FRLT. A small negative correlation ($r = -0.256$; $p < 0.01$) was found between the transactional dimension and negative affect. It is thus possible that teachers who perceive their principal as practising transactional dimensions of the FRLT, and giving a contingent reward, may experience lower levels of negative affect. Between the transactional dimension and positive affect, a medium positive correlation ($r = 0.349$; $p < 0.01$) was found.

7.3.3 Correlation between the *laissez-faire* dimension of the FRLT and professional wellbeing (Table 4)

A medium positive correlation ($r = 0.315$; $p < 0.01$) was found between the *laissez-faire* dimension and anxiety. Thus, teachers who perceive their principal as predominantly displaying a *laissez-faire* dimension of the FRLT, may experience higher levels of anxiety. Between the *laissez-faire* dimension and depression, a medium positive correlation ($r = 0.375$; $p < 0.01$) was found, which could mean that teachers who perceive their principal as predominantly practising the *laissez-faire* dimension of the FRLT, might experience higher levels of depression. A medium negative correlation ($r = -0.333$; $p < 0.01$) was also found between the *laissez-faire* dimension and comfort. Therefore, it is possible that teachers who perceive their principal as practising the *laissez-faire* dimensions of the FRLT, may experience lower levels of comfort. On the other hand, the less likely relationship is that teachers with higher levels of anxiety and depression and lower levels of comfort may experience the principal's leadership as displaying *laissez-faire* dimensions of the FRLT.

Between the *laissez-faire* dimension and enthusiasm, a medium negative correlation ($r = -0.471$; $p < 0.01$) was found, resulting in the deduction that teachers who perceive their principal as showing *laissez-faire* dimensions of the FRLT possibly experience lower levels of enthusiasm. A medium positive correlation ($r = 0.370$; $p < 0.01$) was found between the *laissez-faire* dimension and negative affect, which could imply that teachers who perceive their principal as practising *laissez-faire* dimensions of leadership, experienced higher levels of negative affect.

Between the *laissez-faire* dimension and positive affect, a medium negative correlation ($r = 0.439$; $p < 0.01$) was found. Thus, principals perceived as predominantly practising *laissez-faire* dimensions of the FRLT could result in teachers experiencing lower levels of positive affect.

8. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the results it can be deduced that the respondents in the study population had an overall positive experience of affective wellbeing. This positive experience of wellbeing contrasts with the suggestion made by Jackson and Rothmann (2005), claiming that more than a third of teachers experience the profession as highly stressful. It was further indicated that the dominant leadership dimension as experienced by teachers was the transformational dimension. This is in line with Arokiasamy, Abdullah and Ismail (2016), who also found in their study that principals in general mainly utilised a transformational leadership style. There is an indication that the perceived transformational leadership dimension could be associated with the experience of higher levels of professional wellbeing. Teachers perceiving principals displaying the transformational dimension of the FRLT experience high positive affect and low negative affect. This relationship between transformational leadership and professional wellbeing is also supported by Nielsen, Randall, Yarker and Brenner (2008). In addition, Bono, Foldes, Vinson and Muros (2007) reported a positive relationship between increased transformational leadership and less stress. A negative relationship was also reported between transformational leadership and burnout (Hetland, Sandal & Johnsen, 2007). Large effect sizes may be indicative that perceived transformational leadership could result in the experience of higher professional wellbeing than in the case of transactional dimensions.

There is an indication of teachers that perceived their principals displaying the transactional dimension could also experience higher levels of professional wellbeing, although not to the same extent as experienced with increased use of the transformational dimension by principals. When teachers know expectations and receive recognition when objectives are accomplished as indicated by transactional contingent reward (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003), it could be a reason why the above experiences manifest. Teachers experience an increase in positive affect and a decrease in negative affect when principals are perceived as displaying the transactional leadership dimension, although not to the same extent as when principals display a dominance in the transformational leadership dimension. The correlations with the transformational dimension were medium to large, whereas the correlations with the transactional dimension were medium to small. The possible reasons for the large correlations with the perceived transactional leadership dimension could be as a result of idealised influence, referred to as the humane side of the transformational dimension, referring to a leaders' ability to set aside self-interest, accentuating the importance of collective values, beliefs, purpose, a shared mission and the potential gains of trusting one another (Gozukara, 2016).

With the aforementioned in mind, teachers experienced lower levels of professional wellbeing when principals are perceived as predominantly displaying the *laissez-faire* dimension of leadership. This results in teachers experiencing higher levels of negative affect and lower levels of positive affect with the increase of a perceived *laissez-faire* dimension of leadership displayed by principals. The relationship between increased levels of the *laissez-faire* dimension of the FRLT and decreased professional wellbeing is also supported by Hetland *et al.* (2007) who also found a positive relationship between passive-avoidant leadership and burnout. Skogstad, Einarsen, Torsheim, Aasland and Hetland (2007) also found a relationship between *laissez-faire* leadership and psychological distress.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

Current courses for prospective and practising school principals, such as the Advanced Diploma in School Leadership, could be used to make school leaders aware of leadership behaviour and the impact thereof on the professional wellbeing of teachers. These training courses, including short courses, could further be expanded to include dimensions of the FRLT, specifically the transformational dimension and, to a lesser extent, transactional leadership dimension. Equipping teachers and prospective principals with knowledge of the characteristics of these dimensions of leadership behaviour and the impact it has on the professional wellbeing of teachers could particularly be emphasised.

Professional development opportunities in the form of workshops, discussion forums and seminars could help the Department of Basic Education to create an awareness among principals about the influence of leadership behaviour on the professional wellbeing of teachers as well as the necessity to focus more on transformational and transactional dimensions of leadership. Existing measures, such as the IWP Multi-Affect Indicator, may be utilised by school governing bodies and principals to determine teachers' level of professional wellbeing, informing interventions that could be conducted when low levels of professional wellbeing are detected. In creating an awareness of the influence of their leadership behaviour on professional wellbeing of teachers, principals may strive towards adopting characteristics of transformational and transactional leadership styles in their own leadership style.

It is recommended that future research explore the use and development of instruments that measure leadership behaviour other than the three leadership dimensions of the FRLT measured by the MLQ-5x to enable the consideration of other leadership behaviour as well.

10. CONCLUSION

Because of the sampling method used, the study population was not representative of the larger population and therefore no generalisations can be made. In the study, it was found that principals who were perceived as utilising a combination of the transformational and transactional dimensions of leadership behaviour may contribute to the professional wellbeing of teachers. The positive relationship between these leadership dimensions and teacher wellbeing implies that the use of these two leadership dimensions of the FRLT results in teachers reporting positive job-related affective wellbeing. The literature shows that teachers experiencing positive job-related affective wellbeing tend to remain in the profession due to their experience of enhanced professional wellbeing. As indicated by Fouché (2015), lower levels of wellbeing indirectly influence learner performance. Therefore, the stability of teachers remaining in the profession due to positive professional wellbeing indirectly results in improved learner performance. One of the aims of the Department of Basic Education, namely to contribute towards improving quality of life, could be partially realised by creating a school climate in which teachers can flourish and experience high levels of professional wellbeing, as wellbeing could contribute to the quality of working life of teachers.

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