# The Relationship between Teachers' Teacher Leadership Roles and Organizational Commitment Levels

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to determine the relationship between teacher leadership roles and organizational commitment levels of primary, secondary, and high school teachers. This study was designed in survey model. The sample of the study consisted of 280 teachers working in Mugla, Turkey. Participants were selected using disproportionate cluster sampling technique. Data was collected through the application of the Teacher Leadership Scale and Teacher Organizational Commitment Scale. Descriptive statistics, t-test, ANOVA, and Pearson correlation coefficients were used to analyse the data. Based on the findings, teachers' level of performing leadership roles was lower than they consider such roles to be necessary. Teachers consider that the professional improvement dimension of teacher leadership was the most necessary, and should be performed accordingly. This is followed by collaboration among colleagues, and institutional improvement. Teachers also consider that they demonstrate moderate level of commitment. There are significant relationships between teachers' teacher leadership roles and organizational commitment levels.

**Keywords:** teacher leadership, leadership, organizational commitment.

## Introduction

Organizational commitment of the employees is vital for the effectiveness and the productivity of the organizations. Thus, as in the other organizations, effective and productive operation of the educational organizations, which develop people and direct society, is dependent on teachers' feeling of themselves as a part of the organization, namely their commitments. In the literature, it is suggested that teachers with high levels of organizational commitment accept school goals at a higher level and do more than their job description. Besides, it is known that organizational commitment increases job satisfaction and performance; decreases absenteeism and desire to quit. Various factors affecting teachers' organizational commitment can be mentioned. Among these, teacher leadership, which requires being the pioneer of change and actively taking part in educational processes, may have an effect on teachers' organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment, with its most general definition, expresses the power of affection which employees feel towards the organization (Dogan & Kilic, 2008). According to Balay (2014), organizational commitment is an employee's attachment to the aims and values of the organization partially and effectively by performing their roles only for the favour of the organization. The fact that the success of the organizations is dependent on qualified employees and keeping the qualified employees within the organization requires organizational commitment makes this concept important (Karatas & Gules, 2010). In the literature, there are studies showing that organizational commitment affects organizational performance in a positive way, enables employees to be motivated intrinsically, and show determination to stay in the organization (Balay, 2014; Dogan & Kilic, 2008). Besides, organizational commitment decreases job change and absence behaviours; increases job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviours (Meyer et al., 2002; Tett & Meyer, 1993). On the other hand, at schools, teachers' high organizational commitment makes a positive contribution to the success of the students and the school by enabling teachers to be happy with their works (Karatas & Gules, 2010; Selvitoplu & Sahin, 2013). Low organizational commitment may cause teachers to show low job success, to leave the school, or to display obstructive behaviours at work environment (Celep, 2000).

In the literature, there are various forms of organizational commitment. Meyer and Allen (1991) suggested three forms of organizational commitment. These are *affective commitment,* which stems from identification among the workers; *continuance commitment*, which stems from the cost of leaving the organization; and *normative commitment,* which stems from the obligation to stay in the organization. However, these forms should be dealt with as components which employees may possess each of them in different levels rather than as types of organizational commitment (Turan, 1998). Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) studied organizational commitment in two forms, as behavioural and attitudinal commitment. *Attitudinal commitment* implies one's identification with organizational goals and thus working willingly for them. On the other hand, *behavioural commitment* stems from the individual being bound to behavioural actions. Organizational commitment was also categorized as identification, involvement, and loyalty (Buchanan, 1974); moral, calculative, and alienative commitment (Etzioni, 1975, as cited in Balay, 2014); instrumental and normative commitment (Wiener, 1982); compliance, identification, and internalization commitment (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986).

Many factors affecting teachers' organizational commitment may be mentioned. According to Celep (2000), personal characteristics of the employees, structure of the organization, characteristics of the job, climate of the organization, and organizational processes affect teachers' commitment to the organization. Another factor which also affects organizational commitment is teacher leadership roles which enable teachers to actively take part in educational and decision making processes (Angella & Dehart, 2011; Hulpia et al., 2009; Weiss et al., 1992).

In general, leadership is the competence in bunching people together for a specific goal and achieving these goals together by motivating them. On the other hand, teacher leadership, which gained importance in recent years, is defined as the teacher's competence in actively taking part in educational processes in class or at school, developing educational vision, supporting their environment and colleagues' development (Can, 2014). Pounder (2006) explains that teacher leadership, at this stage, expresses the process which is the combination of the notions of teaching and leadership, and leader teachers have many characteristics of transformational leaders. In addition, teacher leadership owns many characteristics of distributed leadership as leader teachers take on many roles at educational and organizational level (Harris, 2005). At this point, Liberman and Miller (2005) indicate some roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders, who are capable of creating required changes at schools. These are developing new criteria for the evaluation of success, improving school standards, enabling students to take part in a new knowledge-based society, offering innovations in teaching, and redefining teacher roles.

Teacher leadership has various effects at school, teacher, and student level. According to Harris (2005), leader teachers establish norms among teachers for school improvement, carry on tasks actively in learning and teaching activities, and reform school culture as a result of interactions with their colleagues. At the same time, high collaboration and responsibility which leadership requires enable improvement and transformation of the school. Leader teachers, as they have high motivation, can contribute to the improvement of the students' success by being more effective in class.

Teacher leadership was firstly perceived as only classroom centred, formal-content based, and limited to teaching function (Altinkurt & Yilmaz, 2011). However, changing over time, this concept turned into team leadership which gave importance to educational activities. Lastly, it was perceived as providing organizational change and development with informal leadership roles by bringing the notions of teaching and leadership together (Silva et al., 2000). At this last stage, thanks to teacher leadership, teachers can create a social tie by interacting with other teachers within and outside the boundaries of school. The teachers working together with their colleagues in the process of improving school can perform participative leadership features and contribute to the development of school with their knowledge and expertise. In addition, teachers who get on well with their colleagues can also contribute to the development of school culture by learning together (Angelle et al., 2011; Harris, 2005; Harris & Mujis, 2003; Pounder, 2006).

Studies show that leadership positions not only bring personal benefits but also affect organizational commitment and enable organizational improvement (Can, 2007). Accordingly, it can be asserted that leader teachers affect organizational climate in a positive way by enabling their colleagues' coming together in various activities organized to enhance educational activities (Pounder, 2006), create an effective learning environment including teachers and students, and develop the institutional operating of school (Harris, 2005;

Lieberman & Miller, 2005). Besides, Angella and Dehart (2011) suggest that leadership visions of the schools and the roles of the leader teachers may increase organizational commitment. According to Hulpia et al. (2009), leader teachers may have a higher level of organizational commitment because of taking on much more roles.

When related literature is reviewed, there are many studies which examine teacher leadership (Altinkurt & Yilmaz, 2011; Angelle & Dehart, 2011; Bakioglu, 1998; Beycioglu, 2009; Beycioglu & Aslan, 2012; Can, 2007; Gehrke, 1991; Greenlee, 2007; Harris, 2005; Harris & Mujis, 2003; Lieberman & Friedrich, 2007; Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Pounder, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004) and the relationship between administrators' leadership styles and the levels of teachers' organizational commitment (Hulpia et al., 2009; Kilincarslan, 2013; Ugurlu et al., 2013; Uslu & Beycioglu, 2013). Besides, there are a few studies examining teacher leadership with various variables (Angelle et al., 2011; Aslan, 2011; Kilinc, 2014; Kiranli, 2013; Rinehart & Short, 1993). However, no study examining teachers' leadership roles and organizational commitment levels was found. Thus, the purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between teachers' teacher leadership roles and the levels of organizational commitment. Within the framework of this general purpose, the following questions were tried to be answered:

- What are the levels of teachers' expectations and perceptions on teacher leadership roles?
- What are the levels of teachers' organizational commitment?
- Is there a significant difference between teachers' teacher leadership roles and the levels of organizational commitment?

## Methodology

The research was conducted in survey model. With this research, it was attempted to define the relationship between teachers' teacher leadership roles and the levels of organizational commitment.

The population of the study consisted of 1160 primary, secondary, and high school teachers in Milas, one of the districts of a Turkish city, in Mugla. The participants of the study were chosen through disproportionate cluster sampling technique. The sample size was calculated as at least 289 according to 95% trust level. Taking a lower expected return rate into account, it was decided to receive 400 teachers' views. However 313 questionnaires were returned, with a return rate of 78.25%. After examining the scales, the analyses were conducted with 280 eligible data collection tools.

52.1% (n=146) of the participants were female, 47.9% (n=134) were male. 63.6% (n=178) of the participants worked in the centre of town, 36.4% (n=102) worked at village or street schools. 30% (n=84) of the participants were from primary schools, 39.3% (n=110) of them were from secondary schools, 18.9% (n=53) of them were from high schools, and 11.8% (n=33) of them were from vocational high schools. Besides, 29.3% (n=82) of the participants were primary teachers, 70.7% (n=178) of them were subject teachers. The participants' teaching experience ranged from 1 to 38 years. The percentage of those who have less than 10 years of seniority was 33.6 (n=94), those who have 11–20 years of seniority was 43.9 (n=123), those who have more than 21 years of seniority was 22.5 (n=63). The participants' years at their current school ranged from 1 to 25 years. 73.2% (n=205) of

the participants had 5 years or less experience at their current school, 26.8% (n=75) of them had 6 years or more experience at their current school.

In this study, "Teachers' Organizational Commitment Scale" and "Teacher Leadership Scale" were used for data collection. Teachers' Organizational Commitment Scale was developed by Ustuner (2009). The scale consisted of likert type 17 items. Each item in the scale had a range from "1- I totally disagree" to "5- I totally agree". The results of exploratory factor analysis showed that the scale had a single dimension, which explained 48.23% of total variance. Factor loadings of the scale items ranged from 0.44 to 0.86. Results of confirmatory factor analysis showed that the model fitness indicator indexes of the scale were as follows: GFI=0.89, AGFI=0.85, CFI=0.95, NNFI=0.95, RMSEA=0.78, RMR=0.55, SRMR=0.35. Cronbach Alpha reliability and test-retest correlation coefficients, applied for reliability of the scale, found to be 0.96 and 0.88 respectively. High scale scores showed that teachers have high levels of organizational commitment.

Teacher Leadership Scale was developed by Beycioglu & Aslan (2010). In the scale, teachers' leadership roles were evaluated in both the expectation and the perception level. The scale consisted of likert type 25 items. The items in the scale had a range from "1-Never" to "5-Always". Total variance explained by the scale was 57.23% for expectation and 51.60% for perception. The scale consisted of 3 subscales both in the perception and the expectation part as "Institutional Improvement", "Professional Improvement", and "Collaboration among Colleagues". Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the scale were found to be 0.93 for the expectation part and 0.95 for the perception part. The analysis on the test-retest scores revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.80 in the expectation part and of 0.87 in the perception part. High scale scores showed that teachers had high expectation and perception levels of teacher leadership roles (Beycioglu & Aslan, 2010).

In this study, reliability coefficients of the scales were investigated again. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of Teachers' Organizational Commitment Scale was found to be 0.97. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of Teacher Leadership Scale were found to be 0.93 for both the expectation and the perception part.

Descriptive statistics, t-test, and one way ANOVA were used to determine teachers' views on the expectations and the perceptions of teacher leadership roles and the levels of organizational commitment. For significant F values, Tukey post-hoc comparison was used to determine the source of difference. To find the difference in the variable of *work type*, although one of the groups had less than 30 teachers (n=21), t-test was applied as the distribution was normal. Pearson's correlation coefficients were used to find the relationship between teachers' teacher leadership roles and organizational commitment levels.

## Findings

In this section, to solve the problem of the study, findings were presented by statistically analysing the data collected. In Table 1, the means and standard deviations of teachers' teacher leadership roles are given.

**Table 1.** Teachers' teacher leadership roles

| Subscales | Dimensions | $\overline{X}$ | S |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teacher Leadership Expectation | Collaboration among Colleagues | 4.33 | 0.66 |
| | Institutional Improvement | 4.01 | 0.71 |
| | Professional Improvement | 4.53 | 0.52 |
| | General Expectation | 4.30 | 0.54 |
| Teacher Leadership Perception | Collaboration among Colleagues | 3.75 | 0.78 |
| | Institutional Improvement | 3.23 | 0.77 |
| | Professional Improvement | 4.08 | 0.69 |
| | General Perception | 3.71 | 0.64 |

According to the findings in Table 1, teachers indicated that teachers' expectations on teacher leadership roles were in the range of "always" ($\bar{x}$=4.30, S=0.54), and perceptions on leadership roles were in the range of "frequently" ($\bar{x}$=3.71, S=0.64). The participants considered that out of teacher leadership dimensions, professional improvement was the highest at both the expectation ($\bar{x}$=4.53, S=0.52) and the perception level ($\bar{x}$=4.08, S=0.69). This dimension was followed by the dimension of collaboration among colleagues (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.33, S=0.66; Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.75, S=0.78) and the dimension of institutional improvement (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.01, S=0.71; Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.23, S=0.77) respectively.

In Table 2, t-test results concerning the comparisons of teachers' teacher leadership roles with gender, subject taught, work type, years at current school, and location of school variables are presented.

**Table 2.** Comparing teachers' teacher leadership roles with gender, subject taught, work type, years at current school, and location of school

| Subscale | Variable | | n | $\overline{X}$ | S | df | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Expectation | Gender | Female | 146 | 4.37 | 0.51 | 278 | 2.19 | .29 |
| | | Male | 134 | 4.23 | 0.56 | | | |
| Perception | | Female | 146 | 3.79 | 0.60 | 278 | 2.28 | .23 |
| | | Male | 134 | 3.62 | 0.67 | | | |
| Expectation | Subject taught | Primary teacher | 82 | 4.43 | 0.49 | 278 | 2.54 | **.01** |
| | | Subject teacher | 198 | 4.25 | 0.55 | | | |
| Perception | | Primary teacher | 82 | 3.87 | 0.62 | 278 | 2.72 | **.00** |
| | | Subject teacher | 198 | 3.64 | 0.64 | | | |
| Expectation | Work type | Staffed | 259 | 4.29 | 0.54 | 278 | 0.79 | .42 |
| | | Substitute | 21 | 4.39 | 0.54 | | | |
| Perception | | Staffed | 259 | 3.70 | 0.65 | 278 | 0.97 | .33 |
| | | Substitute | 21 | 3.84 | 0.55 | | | |
| Expectation | Years at current school | 5 years or less | 205 | 4.29 | 0.58 | 278 | 0.63 | .52 |
| | | 6 years or more | 75 | 4.33 | 0.44 | | | |
| Perception | | 5 years or less | 205 | 3.69 | 0.65 | 278 | 0.97 | .33 |

| | | | 6 years or more | 75 | 3.77 | 0.62 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Expectation | Location of school | | Centre of town | 178 | 4.21 | 0.55 | 278 | 3.75 | **.00** |
| | | | Village/Street | 102 | 4.46 | 0.49 | | | |
| Perception | | | Centre of town | 178 | 3.66 | 0.61 | 278 | 1.67 | .96 |
| | | | Village/Street | 102 | 3.79 | 0.68 | | | |

According to Table 2, teachers' teacher leadership roles differed significantly according to the variables of subject taught [$t_{(278)}$=2.54; p<0.05] and location of school [$t_{(278)}$=3.75; p<0.05]. Primary teachers (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.43, S=0.49; Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.87, s=0.62) had more expectations and perceptions on teacher leadership roles than subject teachers (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.25, S=0.55; Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.64, s=0.64). Teachers working at village/street schools (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.46, S=0.49) had higher expectations of teacher leadership roles than teachers working in the centre of town (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.21, S=0.55). Concerning the perceptions of these roles, teachers working at village/ street schools (Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.79, S=0.68) had higher arithmetic means than the teachers working in the centre of town (Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.66, S=0.61). However, the difference was not statistically significant [$t_{(278)}$=1.67; p>.05].

Teachers' teacher leadership roles did not differ in neither the expectations [$t_{(278)}$=2.19; p>0.05] nor the perceptions [$t_{(278)}$=2.28; p>0.05] according to the variable of gender. Female teachers (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.37, S=0.51; Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.79, S=0.60) had more expectations and perceptions on teacher leadership roles than male teachers (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.23, S=0.56; Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.62, s=0.67). However, the difference was not significant.

Teachers' teacher leadership roles did not differ in neither the expectations [$t_{(278)}$=0.79; p>0.05] nor the perceptions [$t_{(278)}$=0.97; p>0.05] according to the variable of work type. However, substitute teachers (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.39, S=0.54; Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.84, S=0.55) thought that they had higher expectations and perceptions on teacher leadership roles than staffed teachers (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.29, S=0.54; Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.70, S=0.65).

According to the variable of years at current school, teachers' teacher leadership roles did not differ in neither the expectations [$t_{(278)}$=0.63; p>0.05] nor the perceptions [$t_{(278)}$=0.97; p>0.05]. Teachers working for 6 years or more at their current school (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.33, S=0.44; Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.77, s=0.62) had higher arithmetic means than teachers working for 5 years or less at their current school (Expectation: $\bar{x}$=4.29, S=0.58; Perception: $\bar{x}$=3.69, s=0.65) in both the expectation and the perception level.

In Table 3, ANOVA results concerning the comparisons of teachers' teacher leadership roles with school level and teaching experience are presented.

**Table 3.** Comparing teachers' teacher leadership roles with school level and teaching experience

| Subscale | Variable | | n | $\overline{\mathrm{X}}$ | S | df | F | p | Difference (Tukey) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Expectation | School level | 1. Primary school | 84 | 4.45 | 0.49 | 3-276 | 5.34 | .00 | 1-2 |
| | | 2. Secondary school | 110 | 4.24 | 0.56 | | | | 1-4 |
| | | 3. High school | 53 | 4.34 | 0.49 | | | | |
| | | 4.Vocational high school | 33 | 4.05 | 0.59 | | | | |
| Perception | | 1. Primary school | 84 | 3.86 | 0.63 | 3-276 | 3.69 | .01 | 1-4 |

| | | | N | $\bar{x}$ | S | df | F | p | diff |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2. Secondary school | 110 | 3.69 | 0.63 | | | | |
| | | 3. High school | 53 | 3.66 | 0.64 | | | | |
| | | 4.Vocational high school | 33 | 3.44 | 0.62 | | | | |
| Expectation | Teaching Experience | 1.10 years or less | 94 | 4.35 | 0.58 | 2-277 | 1.78 | .17 | - |
| | | 2. 11-20 years | 123 | 4.32 | 0.53 | | | | |
| | | 3.21 years or more | 63 | 4.19 | 0.50 | | | | |
| Perception | | 1.10 years or less | 94 | 3.72 | 0.63 | 2-277 | 0.13 | .87 | - |
| | | 2.11-20 years | 123 | 3.69 | 0.63 | | | | |
| | | 3.21 years or more | 63 | 3.74 | 0.68 | | | | |

As shown in Table 3, teachers' teacher leadership roles differed significantly in both the expectation [F(3-276)=5.34; p<0.05] and the perception level [F(3-276)=3.69; p<0.05] according to the variable of school level. Concerning the expectations, the difference was between primary ($\bar{x}$=4.45, S=0.49) and secondary school teachers ($\bar{x}$=4.24, S=0.56), also between primary ($\bar{x}$=4.45, S=0.49) and vocational high school teachers ($\bar{x}$=4.05, S=0.59). Concerning the perceptions, on the other hand, participants' views differed between primary ($\bar{x}$=3.86, S=0.63) and vocational high school teachers ($\bar{x}$=3.44, S=0.62). Primary school teachers had both more expectations and perceptions on teacher leadership roles than the teachers in other schools.

Teachers' teacher leadership roles did not differ in neither the expectation [F(2-277)=1.78; p>0.05] nor the perception level [F(2-277)=0.13; p>0.05] according to the variable of teaching experience. Concerning the expectations of teacher leadership roles, the group with the highest arithmetic means were the teachers having 10 or less years of teaching experience ($\bar{x}$=4.35, S=0.58); the group with the lowest were the teachers having 21 or more years of teaching experience ($\bar{x}$=4.19, S=0.50). Concerning the perceptions of these roles, on the other hand, the group with the highest arithmetic means were the teachers having 21 or more years of teaching experience ($\bar{x}$=3.74, S=0.68); the lowest group were the teachers having 11-20 years of teaching experience ($\bar{x}$=3.69, S=0.63).

Organizational commitment levels of teachers were not high (n=280, $\bar{x}$=3.15, S=1.00). Teachers' organizational commitment levels were about moderate. Considering teachers' organizational commitment levels, the item with the highest mean value was "Our principal's giving support and encouragement to my efforts enables me to feel closer to this school ($\bar{x}$=3.40, S=1.31)", whereas the item with the lowest mean value was "Professional development possibilities in this school make me committed to this school ($\bar{x}$=2.76, S=1.17)".

In Table 4 and Table 5, analyses on the comparisons of teachers' organizational commitment levels with various variables are presented.

**Table 4.** Comparing teachers' organizational commitment levels with gender, subject taught, work type, years at current school, and location of school

| Variable | | n | $\overline{\text{X}}$ | S | df | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Female | 146 | 3.14 | 0.95 | 278 | 0.29 | .76 |
| | Male | 134 | 3.17 | 1.04 | | | |
| Subject taught | Primary teacher | 82 | 3.34 | 0.99 | 278 | 2.06 | **.04** |
| | Subject teacher | 198 | 3.07 | 0.99 | | | |
| Work type | Staffed | 259 | 3.13 | 1.00 | 278 | 1.48 | .13 |
| | Substitute | 21 | 3.47 | 0.90 | | | |
| Years at current school | 5 years or less | 205 | 3.11 | 1.03 | 278 | 1.28 | .20 |
| | 6 years or more | 75 | 3.28 | 0.91 | | | |
| Location of school | Centre of town | 178 | 3.06 | 0.91 | 278 | 2.15 | **.03** |
| | Village/Street | 102 | 3.32 | 1.12 | | | |

As shown in Table 4, teachers' teacher leadership roles differed significantly according to the variables of subject taught [$t_{(278)}$=2.06; p<0.05] and location of school [$t_{(278)}$=2.15; p<0.05]. Primary teachers' organizational commitment levels ($\bar{x}$=3.34, S=0.99) were higher than subject teachers' ($\bar{x}$=3.07, S=0.99). Organizational commitment levels of teachers working at village/street schools ($\bar{x}$=3.32, S=1.12) were higher than the teachers working in the centre of town ($\bar{x}$=3.06, S=0.91).

Teachers' organizational commitment levels did not differ according to the variables of gender [$t_{(278)}$=0.29; p>0.05], work type [$t_{(278)}$=1.48; p>0.05], or years at current school [$t_{(278)}$=1.28; p>0.05]. Male teachers' organizational commitment levels ($\bar{x}$=3.17, S=1.04) were higher than the females' ($\bar{x}$=3.14, S=0.95); substitute teachers' organizational commitment levels ($\bar{x}$=3.47, S=0.90) were higher than staffed teachers' ($\bar{x}$=3.13, S=1.00); organizational commitment levels of teachers working for 6 years or more at their current school ($\bar{x}$=3.28, S=0.91) were higher than the teachers working for 5 years or less at their current school ($\bar{x}$=3.11, S=1.03). However, the difference was not statistically significant.

**Table 5.** Comparing teachers' organizational commitment levels with school level and teaching experience

| Variable | | n | $\overline{\text{X}}$ | S | df | F | p | Difference (Tukey) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School level | 1. Primary school | 84 | 3.35 | 0.99 | 3-276 | 4.42 | .00 | 4-1 |
| | 2. Secondary school | 110 | 3.16 | 1.00 | | | | 4-2 |
| | 3. High school | 53 | 3.17 | 0.99 | | | | |
| | 4. Vocational high school | 33 | 2.62 | 0.85 | | | | |
| Teaching experience | 1. 10 years or less | 94 | 3.16 | 0.99 | 2-277 | 0.67 | .50 | - |
| | 2. 11-20 years | 123 | 3.09 | 1.01 | | | | |
| | 3. 21 years or more | 63 | 3.27 | 1.00 | | | | |

As shown in Table 5, participants' organizational commitment levels differed significantly according to the variable of school level [F(3-276)=4.42; p<0.05]. The difference was between vocational high school ($\bar{x}$=2.62, S=0.85) and primary school teachers ($\bar{x}$=3.35, S=0.99), also between vocational high school ($\bar{x}$=2.62, S=0.85) and secondary school teachers ($\bar{x}$=3.16, S=1.00). According to the variable of teaching experience, on the other hand, teachers' views on organizational commitment levels did not differ significantly [F(2-277)=0.67; p>0.05]. The groups with the highest arithmetic means of organizational commitment were the teachers having 21 or more years of teaching experience ($\bar{x}$=3.27, S=1.00), 10 or less years of teaching experience ($\bar{x}$=3.16, S=0.99), 11-20 years of teaching experience ($\bar{x}$=3.09, S=1.01) respectively.

The relationship between teachers' expectations and perceptions on teacher leadership roles and organizational commitment levels are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** The relationship between teachers' teacher leadership roles and organizational commitment levels

| Scales | Subscales | Organizational Commitment Levels |
|--------|-----------|----------------------------------|
| Teacher Leadership Roles | Expectation | 0.21** |
| | Perception | 0.34** |

**p < .01

As shown in Table 6, there were significant relationships between teachers' teacher leadership roles and organizational commitment levels. There was a low level of positive relationships (r=0.21, p<.01) between teachers' organizational commitment levels and the expectations of teacher leadership roles. Besides, there was a moderate level of positive relationships (r=0.34, p<.01) between organizational commitment levels and the perceptions of teacher leadership roles. Lastly, there was a moderate level of positive relationships (r=0.53, p<.01) between teachers' views on the expectations and the perceptions of teacher leadership roles.

## Conclusion and Discussion

This study aimed to examine the relationship between teachers' teacher leadership roles and the levels of organizational commitment. In the study, firstly, the views on the expectations and the perceptions of teacher leadership roles were determined. According to the teachers who participated in the study, the expectations of teacher leadership roles were indicated as "always" and the perceptions of them were indicated as "frequently". Participants thought that out of teacher leadership dimensions professional improvement was the highest on the expectation and the perception level. Similar results were obtained from the studies of Altinkurt and Yilmaz (2011), which was conducted on secondary school teachers; Yigit et al. (2013) on primary and secondary school teachers; Beycioglu and Aslan (2012) and Kiranli (2013) on primary school administrators and teachers.

Teachers' teacher leadership roles did not differ according to gender. Female teachers thought that they had higher expectations and perceptions on teacher leadership roles than male teachers. However, the difference was not statistically significant. In the literature there are many studies which show that female teachers' teacher leadership roles are more positive than the males'. In Beycioglu and Aslan's study (2012), female teachers had more expectations on teacher leadership roles than male teachers. Besides, a study by Kilinc and

Recepoglu (2013) showed that there was a difference according to gender in the expectation views of professional and institutional improvement of teacher leadership scale. Female teachers' showing more teacher leadership roles may suggest that they internalize teacher roles more. It may also be considered that female teachers who do not take many roles in the administration of school are inclined to create more opportunities for themselves and to perform administrative roles (Beycioglu & Aslan, 2012).

Teachers' teacher leadership roles differed according to the variable of subject taught. Primary teachers had both more expectations and perceptions on teacher leadership roles than subject teachers. Yigit et al. (2013) also concluded that primary teachers' views were more positive than subject teachers' in both the expectation and the perception level. The fact that primary teachers work in the same school and with the same group of students for a long time may be the reason for this.

Teachers' teacher leadership roles did not differ according to the variable of work type. Substitute teachers considered that they had both higher expectations and perceptions on teacher leadership roles than staffed teachers. This finding of the study is striking. This is because substitute teachers, despite working at their school for a short time and then leaving, indicated that they performed teacher leadership roles more than staffed teachers in the development of their colleagues and students. The reason for this situation may be that substitute teachers are at the beginning of their jobs and have large-scale purposes.

Teachers' teacher leadership roles differed according to the variable of location of school in the expectation level. However, the difference was not statistically significant in the perception level. Teachers working at village/street schools had both higher expectations and perceptions on teacher leadership roles than teachers working in the centre of town. The fact that teachers working at village/street schools work at smaller structured schools and have more informal interactions may be the reason for this finding.

Teachers' teacher leadership roles indicated difference according to the variable of school level. The difference was between primary and secondary school teachers, in favour of primary school teachers in the expectation level; between primary and vocational high school teachers, in favour of primary school teachers, in both the expectation and the perception level. Also in some studies (Angelle & DeHart, 2011; Angelle et al., 2011; Yigit et al., 2013), it was concluded that primary school teachers performed teacher leadership roles more than secondary and high school teachers. Angelle and DeHart (2011) found this finding interesting as secondary and high school teachers' working hours might be flexible and they might take on more responsibilities.

Teachers' teacher leadership roles did not differ according to the variable of teaching experience. Teachers with 21 or more years of teaching experience performed more teacher leadership roles than the others. However, the difference was not statistically significant. In the literature, there are some studies supporting this finding. According to Beycioglu and Aslan (2012), teachers with 21 or more years of teaching experience had more positive views than the others on the perceptions of teacher leadership roles. In the literature, there are also some studies which do not support this finding. In their studies, Yigit et al. (2013), and Kilinc and Recepoglu (2013) concluded that teachers with 5 or less years of teaching experience had more positive views on the perceptions of teacher leadership roles. However, in this study, teachers with 21 or more years of teaching experience had the lowest arithmetic means in the expectation level of teacher leadership roles. This finding

shows that those teachers had lower expectations but higher perceptions on teacher leadership roles than the others in the group. The reason for higher level of perceptions of veteran teachers may stem from the fact that they know how to create a positive school culture, have positive relationships with the administrators, and use their existing experiences for innovations (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

There was not a significant difference in teachers' views on teacher leadership roles according to the variable of years at current school. However, teachers working for 6 years or more at their current school had more positive views on the expectations and the perceptions of teacher leadership roles than teachers working for 5 years or less. This finding may show that teachers' expectations and perceptions of teacher leadership roles increases after they make themselves accepted among colleagues by adapting to their current school. For this reason, it may be stated that it is necessary for Ministry of National Education of Turkey to review the compulsory relocation application for teachers. Compulsory relocation of teachers, who work with their colleagues in harmony at their current school, take active roles in educational processes, and perform other leadership roles, may cause decrease in these behaviours. According to Harris (2005), teachers should have adequate time to perform leadership roles. In this way, teachers can make school-wide plans, collaborate with higher education institutions, and form study groups. In Turkey, on the other hand, work overload of teachers, lack of in-service training courses, and the competitive structure of education system which hinders working in collaboration may be obstacles to performing leadership roles. According to Can (2006), teachers who can't perform teacher leadership roles prefer routine educational activities as they do not acquire new knowledge and their job enthusiasm decreases over time.

Another purpose of the study was to determine the levels of teachers' organizational commitment. Teachers' organizational commitment was about moderate. Similar results were obtained from the studies of Uslu and Beycioglu (2013), which was conducted on primary school teachers; Sesen and Basim (2012) on high school teachers; Garipagaoglu (2013) on pre-school, primary, secondary and high school teachers; Devos et al. (2014) on secondary school teachers; Wahab et al. (2014) on primary school teachers. However, the organizational commitment of teachers is vital for the success of schools. This is because teachers who are highly committed to their schools may embrace their schools, endeavour to make their schools much more successful, and do more than what is expected from them (Celep, 2000; Khalili & Asmavi, 2012; Suki & Suki, 2011). On the other hand, it is indicated that teachers with low levels of organizational commitment may perform ineffective teaching, tend to be late for work and change their job, and display behaviours hindering work environment (Balay, 2014; Celep, 2000; Chi, 2013).

There was not a significant difference between organizational commitment levels of teachers and gender. In the literature, there are studies which support this finding. In the studies of Karatas and Gules (2010) and Kilincarslan (2013), no significant difference was found according to the variable of gender. Accordingly, in Albdour & Altarawneh's (2014) study on bank workers and Suki and Suki's (2011) study on workers, the views of the participants did not differ according to the variable of gender. Besides, in meta-analysis studies of Aydin et al. (2011), which was conducted on 13 master theses and 2 doctoral dissertations; and Dalgic (2014), on 50 theses and 16 articles, the effect of gender on teachers' organizational commitment was found to be low. In this study, organizational commitment levels of male teachers were found to be slightly higher than the females'.

Teachers' organizational commitment levels differed according to the variable of subject taught. Primary teachers indicated that they had higher levels of organizational commitment than subject teachers. In the literature, there are studies which either support or not support this finding. In Kursunoglu et al.'s study (2010), there was a significant difference in organizational commitment levels of teachers, in favour of primary teachers. On the other hand, in the study of Karatas and Gules (2010), there was a significant difference, in favour of subject teachers. The reason for primary teachers' having higher levels of organizational commitment may be that they spend longer hours at school compared to subject teachers, take more responsibility, and have been working at the same school for a longer time.

Teachers' organizational commitment levels did not show any difference according to the variable of work type. Substitute teachers had higher arithmetic means than staffed teachers. This finding of the study is interesting because substitute teachers' levels of organizational commitment were higher although they work at the school for a shorter time and know that they will leave. Principals' views and role of decision are also important for substitute teachers to pursue their career at the same school. For this reason, substitute teachers' desire to work at the same school in the forthcoming years may be a reason for their higher organizational commitment.

Teachers' organizational commitment levels did not differ according to the variable of years at current school. Teachers working for 6 years or more at their current school had higher levels of organizational commitment. In the studies of Kursunoglu et al. (2010) and Iqbal (2010), the difference between the views of teachers was significant according to the variable of years at current school. In Garipagaoglu's (2013) study, teachers working for 6 years or more at their current school had higher arithmetic means although the difference was not statistically significant. Also in this study, teachers with more experience at their current school were found to have higher levels of organizational commitment. Teachers who work at the same school for a long time have an increase in contribution to their schools and in responsibility to their colleagues, so this may be the reason for their higher levels of organizational commitment (Uslu & Beycioglu, 2013).

There was not a significant difference between organizational commitment levels of teachers and location of school. Organizational commitment levels of teachers working at village/street schools were higher than the teachers working in the centre of town. Village/street schools' being smaller than the ones in the centre of town, higher collaboration possibilities for teachers, and supporting behaviours of administrators in these schools may be the reason for this situation.

Teachers' organizational commitment levels differed according to the variable of school level. This difference was between primary and vocational high school, in favour of primary school teachers; secondary and vocational high school, in favour of secondary school teachers. This finding almost overlaps with other studies in the literature. In Selvitoplu and Sahin's (2013) study, conducted on secondary school teachers, the difference in teachers' organizational commitment levels was statistically significant. According to this study, organizational commitment levels of teachers working at high schools were higher than teachers' working at vocational high schools. Also in Kilincarslan's (2013) study, there was a significant difference between organizational commitment levels of teachers and school level.

Teachers' organizational commitment levels did not differ according to the variable of teaching experience. Organizational commitment levels of teachers with 21 or more years of teaching experience were higher than the other groups. The group with the lowest organizational commitment levels were the teachers with 10-20 years of teaching experience. However, the difference was not statistically significant. In the literature, there are studies supporting this finding. In Uslu and Beycioglu's (2013) study, there was not a significant difference between organizational commitment levels and teaching experience. In the study of Kursunoglu et al. (2010), there was not a significant difference between organizational commitment and teaching experience either. However, also in this study, it was concluded that teachers with more teaching experience had higher levels of organizational commitment.

There were significant relationships between teachers' teacher leadership roles and organizational commitment levels. There was a low level of positive relationships between organizational commitment levels and the expectations of teacher leadership roles; a moderate level of positive relationships between organizational commitment levels and the perceptions of teacher leadership roles. This result of the study may suggest that teachers with more expectations and perceptions of teacher leadership roles have higher levels of organizational commitment. Comparisons with demographic variables also support this finding. For example, primary school teachers who showed more teacher leadership roles also had higher levels of organizational commitment. Thus, the collaboration of teachers with their colleagues, taking active roles in educational processes, contributing to the development of school will also increase their commitment.

Supportive and guiding attitudes of principals on this matter may make the biggest contribution to the teachers to perform these roles. Teachers will be eager to take on school-wide roles out of the class when principals support leadership roles, create a positive school climate (Angelle & Dehart, 2011), form a reassuring and inspiring school environment (Can, 2006). In Turkey, some non-governmental organizations and local governments offer teacher leadership training courses for the teachers. However, these training courses can reach only a distinct group and few teachers. At this point, increasing the number and quality of these training courses may also contribute to performing of leadership roles expected from teachers.

**Notes**

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