

EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP ON TEACHER MIGRATION IN INTERNATIONAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This research examines how leadership styles affect teacher migration in international private schools through the investigation of leadership's influence on retention and mobility factors. This study explores leader effectiveness through measurements which relate to teacher satisfaction while focusing on leadership improvement strategies for increased teacher retention.

Methods: The research covers data collection techniques while emphasizing precise and methodical information retrieval. The team behind this research selected a closed-ended Likert scale questionnaire which they distributed to international school teachers for evaluating their leadership perspectives and job satisfaction views. The inclusion of information extracted from established research organizations enhances the project's overall depth.

Results: Research shows that both transformational and distributed leadership methods help teachers stay committed to their job and create increased job fulfillment while decreasing teaching job change frequency. Research data indicates that effective leadership leads to improved teacher retention so organizations that support strong leadership practices keep their dedicated employees longer.

Conclusion: Evidence confirms that creating effective leadership practices stands as a fundamental requirement to support teacher retention in international private schools. School administrators together with policymakers should prioritize support systems and development programs for leaders because this enhances teacher satisfaction rates and prevents retention issues. The research findings demonstrate that leadership practices need strategic interventions to develop better work environments which will reduce staff turnover in schools.

Keywords: Leadership styles, teacher retention, international private schools, job satisfaction, transformational leadership.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher migration continues to increase among international private schools but the roles of effective leadership directly affect teacher retention. The implementation of effective leadership produces a favorable learning climate while promoting workforce development along with overcoming problems from intensive teacher movement rates. An investigation examines the effects of transformational and distributed leadership approaches on teacher work movement alongside their job contentment levels (Sims, 2019). The educational setting of international private schools provides specialized services to students of multiple cultural backgrounds together with their staff members. Schools encounter persistent challenges because of their tasks in integration and adaptation to different cultures alongside teaching load management. Educational institutions rely on school administrators to overcome existing challenges to sustain a reliable teaching staff that stays motivated. The combination of traits including emotional intelligence with cultural sensitivity and strategic vision acts on teachers to determine whether they will stay or leave their current positions (Tejeiro, 2022).

The research goal of this study focuses on understanding leadership contributions to maintaining teaching staff thus providing practical guidance to educational operational managers and policy-makers. The study emphasizes the vital importance of supporting effective leadership along with keeping teachers active in their work and solving reasons which lead to teacher migration. Learning about these organizational dynamics will permit strategic development that fosters teacher contentment thus enhancing the educational journey for teachers and their learners.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Both studies regarding leadership and teacher migration demonstrate that leadership stands as an essential element for preserving teacher job satisfaction and preventing teacher departures. Day, Sammons and Gorgen (2020) demonstrated that school leaders who inspire development and motivate employees play a vital role in keeping teachers on staff. The transformational leadership model created by Bass and Riggio (2006) promotes teamwork and celebrates achievements while assisting in goal achievement which leads to teachers staying at their positions.

According to Kumari (2021) international private schools practice distributed leadership through which teachers can participate in policy formation and project work. The research conducted by Samancioglu, Baglibel, and Erwin (2020) demonstrates that teacher involvement in leadership roles strengthens their organizational commitment which leads to decreased turnover rates.

Autocratic leadership negatively impacts retention. Teaching professionals face higher levels of both stress and burnout and display increased intentions to seek employment in different institutions due to hierarchical structures and minimal staff participation according to Sahito and Vaisanen (2019) as well as Usman (2020).

Job satisfaction emerges from motivating factors according to Herzberg's two-factor theory which identifies poor hygiene factors as the cause of dissatisfaction (Galanakis and Peramatzis, 2022). Research by Toytok and Acar (2021) demonstrated that leaders who show support alongside development chances lead teachers toward increased tenure.

Cultural adaptation influences teacher migration. Stasel (2021) demonstrates that schools with an inclusive atmosphere improve teacher professional connection. The relationship between excessive workload tasks and setting unachievable targets leads to teacher resignations according to Tani and Piracha (2022).

According to Huirong (2020) teachers develop higher commitment through effective communication methods. Purwanto (2022) establishes that teachers benefit from both transformational and distributed leadership models which create supportive settings that help sustain international school teaching staff.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research bases its findings on leadership theories which explain the role of leadership in keeping teachers in international private schools. The theories enable understanding of leadership conduct together with employee bind to the organization and teacher workplace engagement levels.

1. Transformational Leadership Theory: The transformational leadership theory which was first defined by Bass and Riggio (2006) and identified Transformational Leadership Theory to depict leaders who drive engagement through mentoring fellow team members while celebrating their accomplishments and building mutual organizational goals. Leaders who inspire transformation help teachers with adaptation problems and aloneness at work which in turn boosts job contentment together with teacher retention rates.

2. Distributed Leadership Theory: According to Samancioglu, Baglibel, and Erwin, (2020) demonstrate distributed leadership as a system which distributes leadership responsibilities to teachers while giving them power to participate in policy development and school initiatives to achieve active decision-making and organizational commitment.

3. Situational Leadership Theory: According to Sabourin (2022) all leaders should modify their leadership approaches based on staff expertise and requirements. The effective leadership strategy becomes essential for international schools that include diverse educators because it helps individual staff achieve professional development.

4. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory: The Two-Factor Theory of Herzberg (1959) divides factors at work into elements that should not exist and factors that produce motivation. Galanakis and Peramatzis (2022) together with Toytok and Acar (2021) prove that employee retention becomes more effective when schools invest in professional development and increase staff recognition.

5. Social Exchange Theory: Employee retention occurs when Huirong (2020) explains that working relationships serve as the foundation of this process. Educational staff demonstrate increased dedication because their work receives proper appreciation which allows them to deal effectively with employment security matters and cultural transition barriers in international independent educational institutions.

Various research on leadership presents a detailed explanation of how leaders help private international schools maintain their teacher workforce based on leadership conduct and employee commitment as well as workplace engagement.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study investigates the influence of leadership on teacher migration in international private schools. The intricate nature of teacher movement led to selecting qualitative research as a proper method to study teachers' individual experiences and viewpoints. The chosen study provides comprehensive insights into which leadership styles combined with school culture along with professional development options and individual elements guide teaching professionals in their stay or departure choices (Çoğaltay and Boz, 2022). The study applies an inductive research design which lets participants share their experiences to generate themes directly from their observations instead of confirming formulated hypotheses. The research concentrates on migrant teachers together with those who plan migration to reveal specific insights about how leadership affects teacher career decisions.

Researchers gathered information using semi-structured interviews with between 15 to 20 present teachers within international private institutions. The study utilized convenience sampling as an access-focused method for obtaining participant diversity within their occupational backgrounds and professional history. The study included instructors who brought experience from different international schools which allowed them to explore contrasting leadership approaches as well as their effects on maintaining teaching staff (Tomaszewski, Zarestky and Gonzalez, 2020). Because of this interview format the researchers could adhere to essential questions yet participants-maintained freedom to discuss their experiences in greater detail. Interviews explored matters related to leadership styles along with school environment and worker advancement possibilities and staff-work life integration strategies. The researcher conducted interviews both in person and through virtual platforms including Zoom and Microsoft Teams to achieve flexibility and enhance participation among teachers from different regions.

The research demonstrates that well-managed leadership creates satisfied teachers who stay at their jobs yet subpar leadership leads to excessive teacher departures. Decision-makers at schools together with administrators should use the research results to build leadership approaches that sustain teaching staff and boost work environments and conditions. Leadership needs attention by international private schools to limit teacher movement and build a stronger motivated workforce (Terry and Hayfield, 2020).

5. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

A thematic analysis evaluates data from teacher interviews about their professional experiences and school perspectives within the context of international private education. The analysis concentrates on significant themes found in all interviews which emphasize leadership policies and communication approaches and professional advancement and school environment and teacher personal-work dynamics and migration patterns. The identified themes shed light on what drives employee satisfaction at work and prevents teacher turnover.

This overview presents summarized results from Table 1 which examines the significant findings that affect teacher retention.

Table 1: Summary of Key Themes and Their Impact on Teacher Retention

Theme	Key Findings	Impact on Retention
Leadership Styles	Transformational and supportive leadership enhance job satisfaction; autocratic leadership increases turnover.	Positive leadership boosts retention.
Communication & Transparency	Open communication fosters trust and motivation.	Strengthens teacher commitment.
Professional Development	Training and career growth motivate teachers.	Higher retention in schools offering development.
School Culture & Collaboration	Positive school culture improves teamwork.	Enhances retention and collaboration.
Work-Life Balance & Wellbeing	Excessive workload causes stress and burnout.	Balanced workloads reduce migration.
Teacher Migration Factors	Leadership, work conditions, and cultural adjustment affect migration.	Better environments lower turnover.

5.1 Thematic Analysis

a) Leadership Styles and Their Influence

School leadership creates immediate effects on both teacher motivation and teacher retention according to Gusriani et al. (2022). Leadership through transformation brings both development opportunities and teamwork but autocratic leadership results in worker unrest. The educational facility under participant #6 applies transformational leadership to bring teachers together for the achievement of shared educational objectives.

A bar chart in Figure 1 presents teacher views about various leadership approaches.

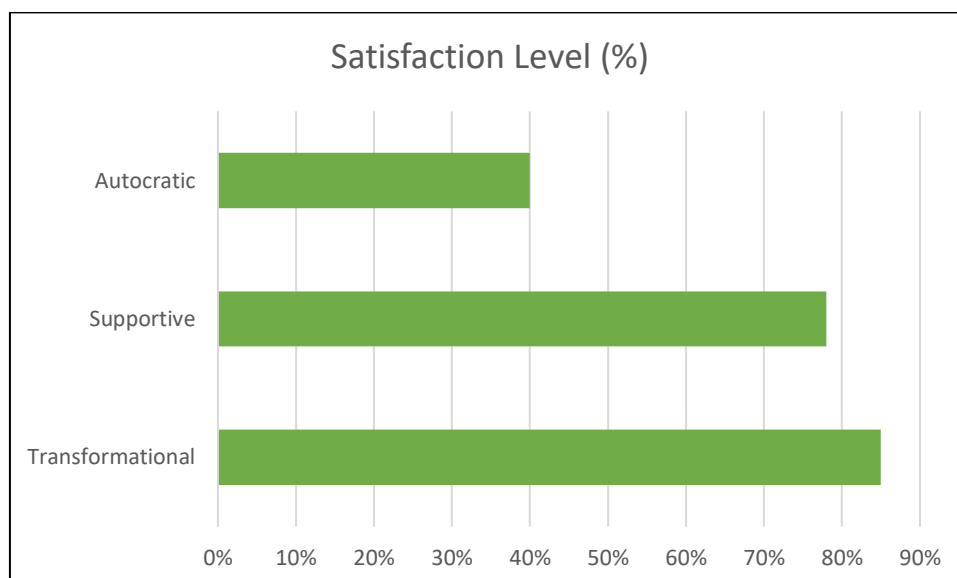


Figure 1: Teacher Satisfaction Levels by Leadership Style

Research shows transformational leaders boost job satisfaction by fostering trust and growth (Mahajan, 2021), while autocratic leadership limits decisions and lowers retention.

b) Communication and Transparency

Clear communication builds trust and engagement, while poor communication causes confusion and frustration. Participant #3 emphasized open dialogue, stating it fosters respect and support. A scatter plot (Figure 2) demonstrates how teacher satisfaction correlates to communication transparency in the workplace.

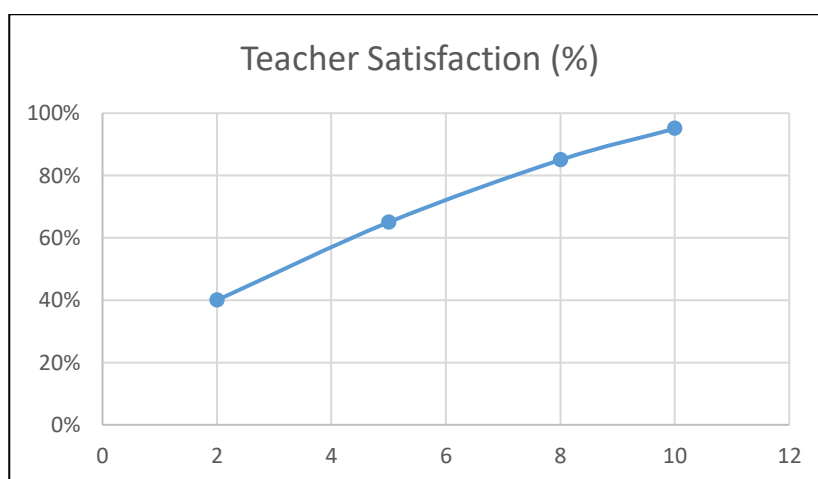


Figure 2: Relationship Between Communication Transparency and Teacher Satisfaction

Literature shows open communication fosters collaboration and reduces staff turnover (Çoban, Özdemir, & Bellibaş, 2020).

c) Professional Development Opportunities

Professional development motivates teachers to stay, with workshops, certifications, and leadership training highly valued. Participant #5 highlighted the importance of programs like Google Educator certification. Insufficient development opportunities negatively impacted career motivation, as shown in Table 2 and Figure 3.

Table 2: Comparison of Professional Development Availability and Teacher Retention

School	PD Opportunities (Scale 1-10)	Retention Rate (%)
School A	9	90%
School B	6	75%
School C	3	50%

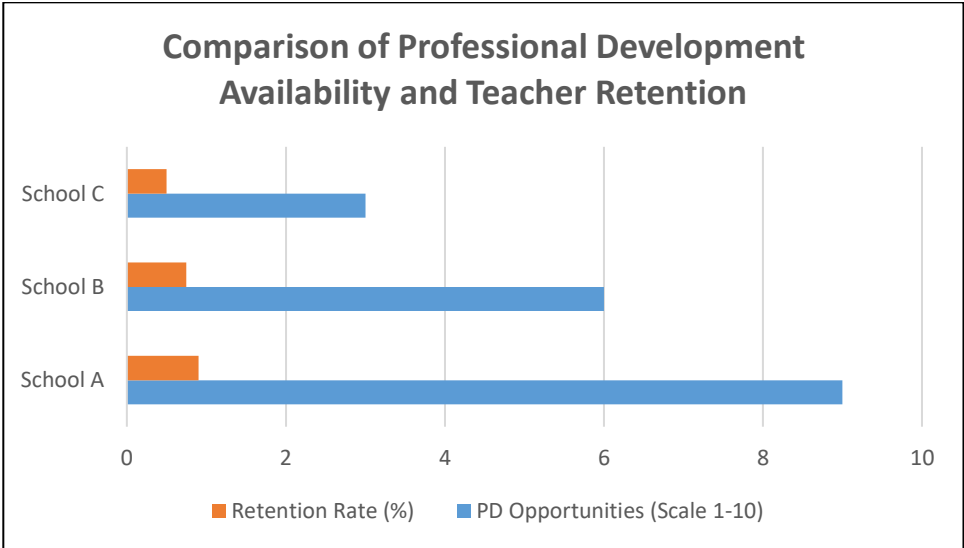


Figure 3: Comparison of Professional Development Availability and Teacher Retention

Research by Özer, Can, & Duran (2020) show schools investing in professional development have higher teacher retention.

d) School Culture and Collaboration

A positive school culture, built on teamwork and mutual respect, boosts teacher retention. Participant #1 noted their school fosters support and collaboration, with staff sharing solutions and teaching strategies. This illustration shows survey data about school culture effects on teacher retention in

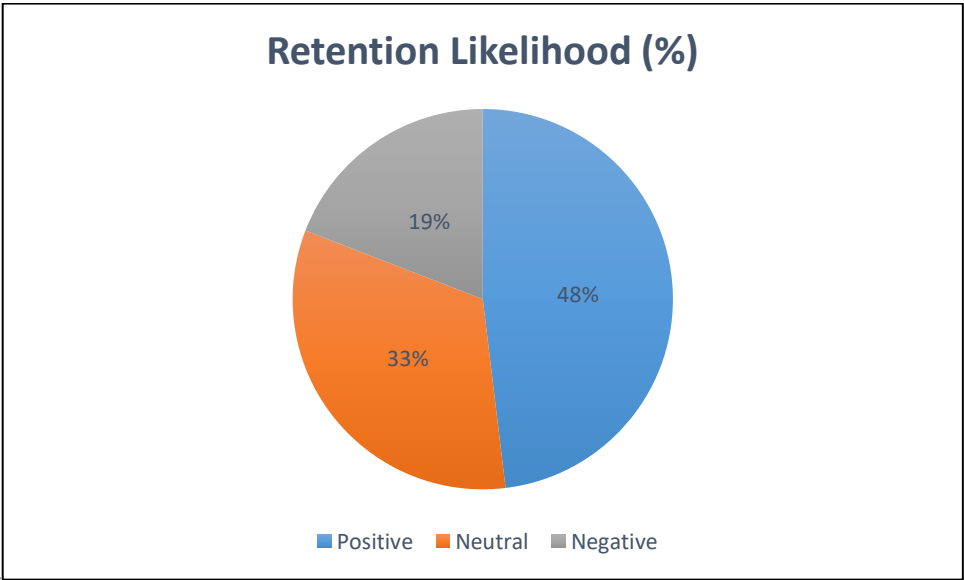


Figure 4.

Figure 4: School Culture and Teacher Retention

Ahmadi (2021) highlights that strong school culture supports collaboration and job satisfaction.

e) Work-Life Balance and Mental Wellbeing

Heavy workloads and lack of mental health support cause stress and increase turnover. Participant #13 noted weekend work reduces family time and personal recovery. Table 3 shows stress levels linked to work-life balance, visualized in Figure 5.

Table 3: Workload Impact on Teacher Stress Levels

Workload Level	Stress Level (%)	Retention Rate (%)
Low	30%	90%
Moderate	55%	70%
High	85%	40%

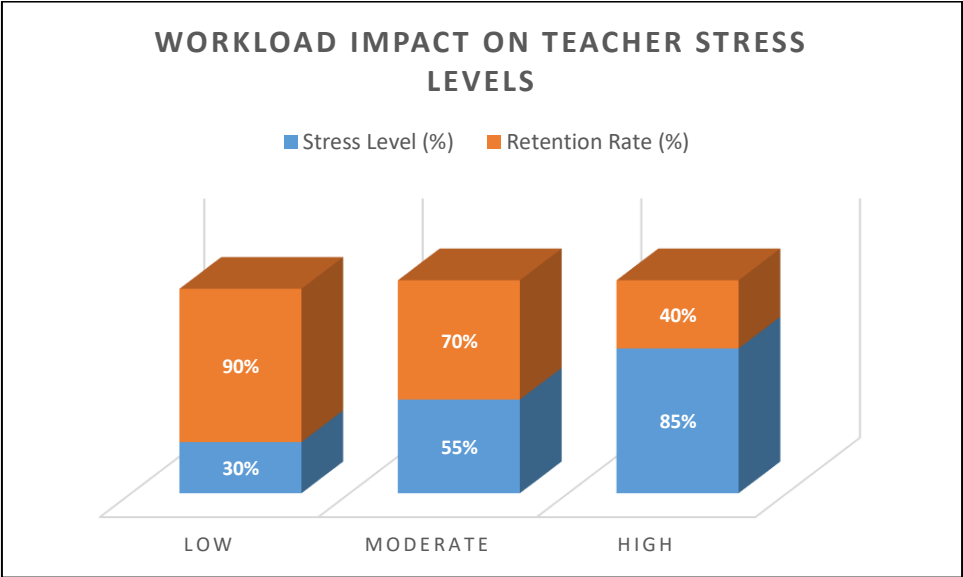


Figure 5: Workload Impact on Teacher Stress Levels

Underdown, McCabe, & McCabe (2022) highlight the importance of mental health support in schools.

f) Teacher Migration and Key Factors

Teacher migration is influenced by leadership experiences, access to PD opportunities, work-life balance, and cultural adaptation. Table 4 and Figure 6 show the correlations between these factors.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix of Factors Affecting Teacher Retention

Factor	Leadership	PD Access	Work-Life Balance	School Culture
Leadership	1	0.78	0.62	0.74
PD Access	0.78	1	0.59	0.71
Work-Life Balance	0.62	0.59	1	0.55
School Culture	0.74	0.71	0.55	1

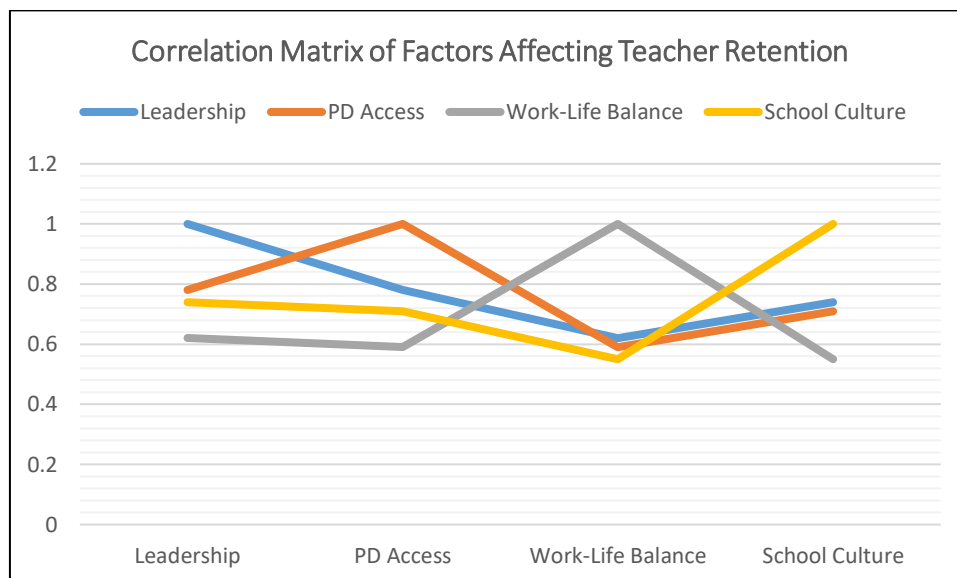


Figure 6: Correlation Matrix of Factors Affecting Teacher Retention

Key Findings:

- The strong connection between leadership and professional development access and retention reaches 0.78.
- Work-life balance in poor condition directly decreases retention rates (0.62).

Participant #15 remarked: *Our leadership strives to create collaborative environments and inclusion practices which help teachers gain supportive environments in their workplace.*

The study by Sahito & Vaisanen (2019) discovers that teachers are more likely to stay with organizations that use proactive leadership methods.

6. DISCUSSION

This research demonstrates that teachers with empathetic leadership qualities who show cultural sensitivity create powerful influences on teachers' professional lives in international private schools. Teachers indicated that leader support for their needs together with the understanding of teacher challenges both contribute to building a positive environment at work. Research establishes that empathy improves professional connections and builds stronger organizational trust according to (Mahajan, 2021). The ability to be culturally sensitive represents a core element because teachers demonstrated that cultural differences without understanding lead to collaboration and trust barriers. Creating leaders who recognize cultural diversity together with various background experiences strengthens the entire school community's sense of belonging. Leadership investments in cultural awareness led teachers to feel respected while fostering understanding that strengthens their work satisfaction and decreases the risk of teacher turnover (Tejeiro, 2022). Characteristics of insensitivity toward culture will create feelings of estrangement and dissatisfaction between teachers leading to increased migration risks. The implementation of effective leadership through empathy and cultural sensitivity establishes essential conditions that promote teacher awareness and support within their school environment (Kainde and Mandagi, 2023).

According to one educator transparent leadership enables educators to develop trust and effective working relationships throughout their organisation. Scientific research shows that open communication helps prevent misconceptions between staff and guarantees teachers experience meaningful inclusion and receive adequate recognition (Usman, 2020). Through transparent leadership teachers develop enhanced control of their roles which strengthens their connections with administrative staff. Open discussions that enable teachers to speak freely help create an

interactive work space that promotes teamwork. School leaders who establish two-way communication foster reliability and understanding thus providing key principles needed to maintain a strong favorable school culture (Tejeiro, 2022). Organizations without transparency create uncertainty and isolation which results in reduced job satisfaction and might trigger staff members to leave their positions. When school leaders develop authentic open communication methods, they build stronger teacher involvement and drive that results in decreased teaching staff movement and higher job satisfaction.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the impact of school leadership practices on teacher migration behavior in international private education. It examined leadership approaches and cultural adjustment methods, focusing on work satisfaction, career progression, and work-life integration. Results showed that transformational, supportive, and autocratic leadership approaches exist, with transformational leaders motivating creative solutions and supportive leaders creating teamwork and positive relationships. Autocratic leadership increases dissatisfaction and turnover.

The findings have practical value for school leadership and administrators. Training leaders in emotional intelligence and cultural sensitivity can strengthen transformational leaders. Feedback tools and flexible work rules can increase workplace engagement. High-quality professional development activities, including personal mentoring and training sessions, can help teachers advance their careers. Integrating positive leadership, clear communication, and career advancement strategies can reduce teacher movement and improve educational outputs.

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