

# The Impact of Leadership on the Communication Satisfaction of Primary School Teachers in Serbia

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## Abstract

This paper presents the results of research into the effects of leadership on the communication satisfaction of teachers. The data was obtained by giving questionnaires to 362 teachers from 57 primary schools in Serbia. Leadership is shown to have a strong and positive impact on the communication satisfaction of teachers in Serbian primary schools. The following dimensions of leadership have the strongest influence: Core Transformational Leadership Behavior, Contingent Reward Behavior, and Intellectual Stimulation. The moderating effect of teachers' gender and age was examined with the observed relationships. The moderating effect of gender was confirmed in three dimensions of communication satisfaction: Communication Climate, Horizontal & Informal Communication, and Organizational Integration. Any moderating effect of age was not confirmed. Primary school principals in Serbia should devote considerable attention to developing leadership and communication skills. This would serve to achieve an increase in communication and job satisfaction among teachers, which potentially creates the conditions for the improved and effective functioning of schools.

**Keywords:** Leadership • Communication satisfaction of Teachers • Primary schools • Serbia

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### Leadership and Communication in Schools

A number of authors have dealt with the influence of leadership styles on job performance, organizational commitment and satisfaction (Breckenridge, 2000; Vries, Roe, & Taillieu, 1998). Kabacoff (2002) remarked that it would be useful to know what impact personal characteristics such as age have on leadership practices which are theoretically based on some suggested principles. The reference of Bycio, Hackett, and Allen (1995) suggests that leadership has a significant effect on organizational performance. Agle, Nagarajan, Sonnenfeld, and Srinivasan (2006), on the other hand, found that organizational performance was associated with the subsequent perceptions of the CEO's charisma but that the perceptions of the CEO's charisma were not associated with the subsequent organizational performance. Similar to this, De Hoogh et al. (2004) revealed that charismatic leadership was positively related to the outcome of common-source and multi-source perceptual performances (i.e., positive work attitude of subordinates) and to the profitability of an organization. However, it was unrelated to the liquidity and solvency of an organization.

Many references point out the importance of leadership in schools (Aubrey, Godfrey, & Harris, 2013; Barnett & McCormick, 2012; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Pashiardis, Savvides, Lytra, & Angelidou, 2011). Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley, and Beresford (2000) concluded that diverse countries from different school contexts have revealed the powerful impact of leadership processes on school effectiveness and improvement. According to Xie & Shen (2013), teacher leadership is still confined to the classroom level. According to Sergiovanni (1991), educational leadership can no longer be viewed simply as the practice of implementing policy and maintaining the system. The principal must put new strategies and new processes in place, as well as develop a new mind set for the success of the education system. The Leadership Trust (2011) reported that leadership practices for predicting and developing change include being a facilitator, a mediator and a process consultant. They also involve the ability to propose ideas for improving workplace practices and running effective group communication.

A number of authors indicated that communication is central to leadership (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999; Den Hartog & Verburg, 1997; Frese, Beime, & Schoenborn, 2003; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996; Riggio, Riggio, Salinas, & Cole, 2003; Spangler &

House, 1991; Towler, 2003). Some research studies examined the effects of leadership styles in relation to effective communication skills (Fairhurst, 1993) as well as interpersonal communication (Quick & Macik-Frey, 2004).

Truly effective leaders have built two-way patterns of communication. These kinds of leaders establish a series of formal and informal channels allowing communication to flow freely in either direction (Batsis, 1987). Effective, successful leaders must have a realistic view of communication and its direct and indirect effects. They must understand the complexity of communication, which at first seems simple to most people (Clampitt, 2005). According to Witherspoon (1997), leadership exists only through communication, and the main function of such communication is to further develop shared meanings in order to seek and use information effectively. In a review of the aforementioned relevant studies on leadership and communication, it was found that the majority of them dealt with leadership styles, organizational effectiveness, organizational culture, and organizational commitment, and that few researchers focused on the relationship between effective leadership and communication satisfaction. There is a limited amount of literature that combines research in the fields of communication and leadership despite the vast amount of literature dealing with these fields separately (Hunt, Tourish, & Hargle, 2000).

According to Andenevski and Arsenijevic (2012), employees in education with well-developed leadership characteristics tend to have positive and constructive attitudes toward life, better communication and improved teamwork abilities.

### Serbian Educational Management and Leadership in Schools

According to Kovačević, Maksimović, Marković, Radišić, and Raković (2012), at the beginning of the last decade various reform processes were initiated in the Serbian education system. From 2002-2005, reform goals were aimed at the democratization and decentralization of the education system; i.e., for increasing school autonomy in terms of pedagogy, organization and finance. Since 2008 the new wave of reforms has focused on quality and equity in education and the inclusiveness of the education system has become more standardized and improved. In line with the set objectives of reform, important documents and regulations have been adopted in which school autonomy (encouraging

internal school development), professional responsibility, the role of teachers and principals, as well as the cooperation of teachers and principals within the collective, have been placed at the foreground. These documents were identified and teachers were assigned new roles. In keeping with the contemporary vision of the teaching profession, teachers are expected to be the leaders of change, to take care of their professional development, to be competent and creative practitioners, and to have positive effects on all stakeholders of school life, thus extending cooperation and partnership. Moreover, the legislature also took care to provide a quality, clear organizational and supportive school environment for all its stakeholders. In order for the new regulations, rules and statutory provisions to be implemented into practice and the desired changes brought about, mechanisms for monitoring and implementation should be provided. According to the aforementioned authors, the assumption is that there is insufficient co-operation and teamwork in Serbian schools. The research of Pantic, Closs, & Ivošević (2010) indicates that for teachers, individuality and isolation prevail more than mutual cooperation at work, which is also the case in some other countries. For this reason it is important to establish regulations for the implementation of such reforms, as well as understanding and recognizing the real needs of teachers in order to create appropriate conditions for desirable behaviors and thus mutual cooperation between teachers and their leaders.

Apathy and discontent with the current system are partly conditioned by teachers' previous bad experiences. It is assumed that the accumulation of negative experiences they have had in the past affects the low level of motivation and willingness to re-engage teachers in new initiatives. The majority of employees in this area are also unhappy with their salary, the volume of administrative work, and the lack of a reward system for recognizing quality work (Kovačević et al., 2012).

The school environment is a specific social environment. From this angle, we can assume that communication within the school is both directly and indirectly affected by many factors. Among them, the impact of the style of managerial leadership plays an important role (Kovačević et al., 2012). The principal should have professional knowledge, skills and abilities. They should exhibit organizational and managerial behavior and their work should serve as an example to everyone in the institution, thus contributing to its reputation.

The highest score will be gained by a principal who develops confidence, motivates and organizes teamwork, respects different opinions, and provides communication based on mutual cooperation; in other words, one who gives timely and adequate information to all. A leader should have knowledge of effective communication techniques and the ability to create situations and activities that provide opportunities for their application. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between leadership and the communication satisfaction of teachers in primary schools in Serbia. Another significance to this work lies in the fact that similar studies have not been carried out in Serbia. These results are expected to have practical significance, and they can create the ability for greater satisfactory communication between teachers as well as greater efficiency in schools.

### Theoretical Framework

Leadership is often defined in organizational theory literature as an influential process that guides the behavior of individuals and groups towards the achievement of goals (Yukl, 2006). House, Woycke, and Fodor (1985) defined four types of leadership: supportive, directive, achievement-oriented, and participative leadership, while Bass, Avolio, and Goodheim (1987) proposed the transactional-transformational paradigm. Burns (1978) created a theory of transformational leadership that describes leaders as inspirational guides helping teachers and staff to achieve a higher level of morale and motivation at work. These leaders can alter the workplace, encouraging collaboration and raising the role of the follower to leader. Transformational leadership refers to those leaders who support or emphasize empowerment within their teachers. Transformational leadership is made up of the following four dimensions: idealized influence (charisma), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Chemers, 1997).

Transactional leadership refers to a process where there is an evolution between the leader and the follower, and the leader is not interested in the follower's concerns or needs (Avolio & Bass, 2004). These leaders have certain skills and expect respect when leading an organization. They tend to believe that followers are motivated through reward and punishment. Hackman and Johnson (2004) claim that transactional leaders rely heavily on rewards to motivate followers and on negative feedback and criticism to prevent poor performance.

According to Clampitt & Downs (1993), communication satisfaction is believed to be a multidimensional as opposed to one-dimensional construct because employees are not merely satisfied or dissatisfied with communication; they express varying degrees of satisfaction regarding distinct categories of communication. According to Downs & Hazen (1977), communication satisfaction can simply be defined as how employees feel about communication efforts and different aspects of their communication. Similarly, Pace & Faules (1994) suggest that communication satisfaction presents a single affective response to the desired outcome resulting from the communication that takes place within an organization.

Redding (1972) uses the term communication satisfaction to indicate the overall satisfaction of an employee in his communication environment. Since the development of the CSQ (Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire), these factors have been widely used to assess communication satisfaction within organizational contexts (Mount & Back, 1999). Communication satisfaction has many implications for organizations because it affects many key organizational outcomes. Multiple studies have examined the relationship between communication satisfaction and employee productivity (Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Pincus, 1986), job performance (Pincus, 1986; Tsai, Chuang, & Hsieh, 2009), organizational effectiveness (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004), and organizational performance (Snyder & Morris, 1984). Communication satisfaction has also been shown to influence an employee's level of job satisfaction, commitment, and work motivation (Gregson, 1991; Orpen, 1997; Varona, 1996). Communication dissatisfaction may cause stress, absenteeism, low feedback, burnout and a higher turnover rate for employees (Ahmad, 2006).

Based on the above-made considerations, the following hypotheses were set forth in this paper:

H1: Leadership has a statistically significant correlation with the communication satisfaction of primary school teachers in Serbia.

H2: Leadership has a statistically significant predictive effect on the communication satisfaction of primary school teachers in Serbia.

H3: Gender has a moderating effect on the correlation between the dimensions of leadership and the dimensions of communication satisfaction for primary school teachers in Serbia.

H4: Age has a moderating effect on the correlation between the dimensions of leadership and the

dimensions of communication satisfaction for teachers in primary schools in Serbia.

## Method

### Survey Instruments (Measures)

**Transformational Leadership Behavior:** To measure transformational leadership behavior, the Transformational Leadership Behavior Inventory (TLI) was used (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). The alpha-reliability coefficients for the dimensions were high, ranging from .898 to .972. The questionnaire consisted of six dimensions dealing with transformational leadership behavior: articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering the acceptance of group goals, having high performance expectations, providing individualized support, and providing intellectual stimulation. Since the first three dimensions had high intercorrelations, they were merged into a single construct called core transformational leadership behavior (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Rich, 2001; Podsakoff et al., 1990).

**Transactional Leadership Behavior:** The measurement of transactional leadership behavior was carried out over two dimensions: contingent reward behavior and contingent punishment behavior. For the measurement of contingent reward behavior, a four-item contingent reward behavior scale was used. A three-item contingent punishment behavior scale was used to measure contingent punishment behavior (MacKenzie et al., 2001; Podsakoff, Todor, Grover, & Huber, 1984). In this paper, all items related to leadership (transformational and transactional leadership behavior) were evaluated by the respondents using a seven-point Likert scale. This was done following the example of MacKenzie et al. (2001). The alpha-reliability coefficients for the two dimensions of transactional leadership behavior ranged between .903 and .948.

**Communication Satisfaction:** For measuring communication satisfaction the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) from Downs & Hazen (1977) was used. It is one of the most comprehensive surveys because it estimates the direction of flow of information in both formal and informal communication channels. The Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire has been used in many papers (Akkirman & Harris, 2005; Carriere & Bourque 2009; Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Zwijze-Koning & de Jong, 2007). Reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) for the dimensions

of communication were high, ranging from .873 to .952. The Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire consists of 40 items covering eight dimensions. Seven dimensions from the CSQ were covered in this paper using a ten-point Likert scale. The names of the dimensions for communication satisfaction are shown in Table 1.

### Participants and Data Collection

The research was carried out in Serbian primary schools. The respondents, elementary school teachers in Serbia, completed the questionnaire. They expressed their perception of leadership as well as communication satisfaction in their school through their responses. The questionnaire was made up of items measuring the dimensions of transformational leadership behavior, transactional leadership behavior, and communication satisfaction. In addition, the questionnaire contained questions relating to general information about the respondents, including their gender and age (in this study, the age and gender of teachers were used as moderators to examine the relationship between the dimensions of leadership in primary schools and the dimensions of communication satisfaction for teachers). The questionnaire was completed in school during breaks. The examiner presented the questionnaires to the teachers, gave some general instructions, and waited for teachers to complete the questionnaire. The examiner also gave answers to all questions that the respondents had while completing the questionnaire.

A total of 383 teachers ( $N = 383$ ) from 57 schools completed the questionnaire. After initial analysis,

21 questionnaires were rejected because of a significant disparity of results. Thus, the final number of respondents became  $N = 362$ . The sample of 362 subjects consisted of 250 women and 112 men. This smaller sampling of men was a result of the gender distribution of employees in the Serbian education system. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (2011), of all the employees in their education system, 67% are women and 33% are men. If we look solely at primary schools, the percentage of women is even higher than in secondary schools and higher education. According to age, the subjects were divided into three groups: young teachers up to 35 years old, middle-aged teachers (35 to 50 years old) and older teachers (over 50 years of age). The ages of the respondents were as follows: 93 young teachers, 197 middle-aged and 72 older teachers.

### Results

The research results were obtained by applying appropriate statistical procedures and methods. In particular, the following analyses were done: descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis, and hierarchical regression analysis for testing the moderating effects of gender on the dimensions of leadership and communication satisfaction of teachers. Hierarchical regression analysis was also used for testing the moderating effects of age on the dimensions of leadership and communication satisfaction of teachers. The results of the research follow below.

Table 1  
*Descriptive Statistics for the Dimensions of Leadership and Communication Satisfaction*

Dimensions	Abbreviations	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Cronbach's Alpha
Core transformational leader behavior	L1	1.00	7.00	5.54	1.46	.955
High performance expectations	L2	1.00	7.00	5.65	1.27	.898
Supportive leader behavior	L3	1.00	7.00	5.35	1.61	.972
Intellectual stimulation	L4	1.00	7.00	5.35	1.52	.965
Contingent reward behavior	L5	1.00	7.00	5.16	1.68	.948
Contingent punishment behavior	L6	1.00	7.00	5.24	1.43	.903
Organizational perspective	CS1	1.00	10.00	6.98	2.16	.891
Communication with supervisors	CS2	1.00	10.00	8.12	2.10	.952
Communication climate	CS3	1.00	10.00	7.30	2.17	.948
Personal feedback	CS4	1.00	10.00	7.15	2.26	.935
Horizontal & informal communication	CS5	1.00	10.00	7.51	2.04	.883
Media quality	CS6	1.00	10.00	7.24	2.08	.878
Organizational integration	CS7	1.00	10.00	7.45	2.05	.898
Number of Valid Participants $N = 362$						

## Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics for the dimensions of leadership and communication satisfaction are shown in Table 1. In the table, among other things, the names of the dimensions and their abbreviations, mean size, standard deviation, and Cronbach's alpha-coefficients are given for each dimension. The values for the Cronbach's alpha-coefficients ranged in the interval from  $\alpha = 0.878$  to  $\alpha = 0.972$ .

## Correlational Analysis

Table 2 presents the results of the correlational analysis of the correlational dimensions of leadership to the dimensions of communication satisfaction. These results refer to the total sample of respondents ( $N = 362$ ). The Pearson correlation was used. In Table 2, statistically significant correlations are indicated as follows: \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ . It may be noted that all correlations were statistically significant \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

Table 2  
Pearson Coefficients of Correlation between Leadership and Communication Satisfaction Dimensions

	CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4	CS5	CS6	CS7
L1	.698**	.739**	.651**	.720**	.701**	.690**	.694**
L2	.503**	.484**	.434**	.518**	.528**	.442**	.522**
L3	.646**	.734**	.607**	.661**	.686**	.611**	.646**
L4	.685**	.692**	.630**	.717**	.685**	.640**	.680**
L5	.675**	.733**	.657**	.730**	.700**	.674**	.701**
L6	.457**	.400**	.441**	.493**	.449**	.426**	.489**

Statistically significant correlations are indicated as follows: \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

## Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the predictive effects of leadership dimensions (independent variables) on communication satisfaction (dependent variables). The results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 3. The bold values in Table 3 denote statistically significant coefficients.

Table 3  
Regression Analysis (Dependent Variable: CS dimensions;  
Predictors: L dimensions)

Dependent	Independent	$\beta$	t	Sig.	R <sup>2</sup>	F	F Sig.
CS1	L1	.311	4.316	.000	.547	71.408	.000
	L2	.009	.160	.873			
	L3	.050	.663	.507			
	L4	.158	1.860	.064			
	L5	.225	3.096	.002			
	L6	.073	1.515	.131			
CS2	L1	.332	5.065	.000	.624	98.135	.000
	L2	.003	.059	.953			
	L3	.241	3.540	.000			
	L4	.004	.047	.962			
	L5	.272	4.112	.000			
	L6	-.005	-.110	.913			
CS3	L1	.293	3.839	.000	.492	57.196	.000
	L2	-.059	-1.011	.313			
	L3	.034	.434	.665			
	L4	.102	1.129	.260			
	L5	.295	3.828	.000			
	L6	.109	2.151	.032			
CS4	L1	.282	4.209	.000	.609	92.072	.000
	L2	-.001	-.027	.978			
	L3	-.044	-.640	.523			
	L4	.182	2.308	.022			
	L5	.361	5.354	.000			
	L6	.084	1.888	.060			
CS5	L1	.254	3.618	.000	.570	78.573	.000
	L2	.084	1.554	.121			
	L3	.161	2.212	.028			
	L4	.043	.524	.600			
	L5	.268	3.792	.000			
	L6	.046	.978	.329			
CS6	L1	.410	5.573	.000	.527	66.009	.000
	L2	-.047	-.836	.404			
	L3	-.041	-.536	.592			
	L4	.063	.731	.465			
	L5	.329	4.439	.000			
	L6	.066	1.346	.179			
CS7	L1	.277	3.917	.000	.564	76.641	.000
	L2	.055	1.015	.311			
	L3	.021	.289	.773			
	L4	.067	.801	.424			
	L5	.335	4.705	.000			
	L6	.102	2.161	.031			

## Gender as a Moderator of the Relationships between Leadership (L) Dimensions and Communication Satisfaction (CS) Dimensions

The results of the correlational analysis for the dimensions of leadership and communication satisfaction, broken down by gender, are shown in Table 4.

Table 4  
Correlation Coefficients between L Dimensions and CS  
Dimensions for Men and Women

Gender		CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4	CS5	CS6	CS7
Men	L1	.750"	.716"	.741"	.782"	.760"	.786"	.696"
	L2	.525"	.589"	.584"	.637"	.613"	.566"	.592"
	L3	.691"	.676"	.634"	.651"	.671"	.599"	.611"
	L4	.741"	.705"	.716"	.747"	.741"	.727"	.696"
	L5	.701"	.740"	.693"	.737"	.716"	.671"	.712"
	L6	.540"	.550"	.598"	.621"	.577"	.604"	.577"
Women	L1	.686"	.745"	.628"	.704"	.686"	.666"	.694"
	L2	.495"	.455"	.392"	.489"	.504"	.410"	.501"
	L3	.637"	.749"	.602"	.664"	.692"	.614"	.657"
	L4	.674"	.690"	.611"	.711"	.674"	.621"	.679"
	L5	.672"	.735"	.651"	.730"	.701"	.676"	.703"
	L6	.441"	.370"	.405"	.465"	.421"	.388"	.471"

Statistically significant correlations are indicated as follows:

\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the moderating effect of gender. Hierarchical regression was used to analyze the significance of the regression coefficient of the product predictor variable for the independent variable  $L_p$ , the dependent variable  $CS_i$  and the moderating variable of gender. The results of the hierarchical regression analysis are presented in Table 5, but only those which confirmed the moderating effect of gender.

Table 5  
Hierarchical Regression Analysis with Gender as a Moderator  
(Only Those Pairs where a Moderating Influence of Gender on  
the Correlations between Some L Dimensions and Some CS  
Dimensions was Confirmed)

Independent variable	Dependent variable	R square	F-change
L2	CS3	.188	83.527
		.189	.208
		.198	3.920
L4	CS3	.397	236.863
		.399	1.192
		.406	4.081
L6	CS3	.194	86.746
		.197	1.444
		.209	5.393
	CS5	.202	90.915
		.206	2.061
L6	CS7	.215	3.820
		.181	79.794
		.183	.770
		.193	4.200

#### Age as a Moderator of the Relationships between L Dimensions and CS Dimensions

The results of the correlational analysis on the dimensions of leadership and communication satisfaction for young teachers, middle-aged

teachers and older teachers are presented in Table 6. To test the moderating effect of age, hierarchical regression analysis was used. However, no moderating effect of age was confirmed.

Table 6  
Correlation Coefficients between L Dimensions and CS  
Dimensions

Age		CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4	CS5	CS6	CS7
Young teachers to ≤35 years	L1	.647"	.713"	.623"	.731"	.689"	.700"	.655"
	L2	.334"	.288"	.241"	.337"	.370"	.322"	.343"
	L3	.530"	.633"	.496"	.610"	.596"	.592"	.526"
	L4	.577"	.678"	.544"	.658"	.634"	.621"	.587"
	L5	.639"	.699"	.639"	.738"	.666"	.686"	.665"
	L6	.439"	.257"	.416"	.445"	.338"	.415"	.382"
middle-aged teachers (35 - 50)	L1	.693"	.729"	.620"	.686"	.668"	.664"	.677"
	L2	.534"	.533"	.473"	.548"	.539"	.448"	.554"
	L3	.641"	.746"	.595"	.639"	.673"	.590"	.630"
	L4	.724"	.710"	.656"	.722"	.688"	.660"	.686"
	L5	.670"	.739"	.635"	.693"	.687"	.652"	.678"
Older teachers (over 50)	L6	.412"	.390"	.399"	.449"	.426"	.377"	.478"
	L1	.762"	.785"	.751"	.796"	.785"	.748"	.770"
	L2	.626"	.595"	.571"	.673"	.659"	.581"	.650"
	L3	.793"	.809"	.759"	.776"	.826"	.686"	.820"
	L4	.713"	.665"	.664"	.772"	.728"	.619"	.760"
	L5	.746"	.765"	.737"	.828"	.795"	.716"	.815"
	L6	.582"	.554"	.559"	.645"	.613"	.551"	.621"

Statistically significant correlations are indicated as follows: \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$

## Discussion

### Correlation of the Dimensions of Leadership and Communication Satisfaction

Table 2 shows a statistically significant correlation between the dimensions of leadership and those of communication satisfaction for primary school teachers in Serbia. All correlations are strong and positive. This confirms hypothesis H1. From the dimensions of communication satisfaction, CS4, Personal Feedback, had the strongest correlation. If teachers are satisfied with leadership, then they are satisfied with the feedback they receive from the principal in order to resolve their problems adequately. A study carried out by Odhiambo and Hii (2012) found the support of a principal to be crucial to a teacher's ability to carry out their teaching effectively. According to Clampitt and Downs (1993), personal feedback has one of the greatest impacts on productivity. In contrast, from the dimensions of communication satisfaction, CS3, Communication Climate, had the lowest correlation. This is due to the relatively small influence of leaders in resolving conflicts between teachers, as well as the general relationships with each other that teachers need to address themselves in order to avoid partiality of the principal.

From the leadership dimensions, L1, Core Transformational Leader Behavior, had the



strongest correlation, followed by L5 and L4, Contingent Reward Behavior and Intellectual Stimulation respectively, which all had an extremely positive effect on the communication satisfaction of teachers. A transformational leader, i.e. the principal, encourages employees to communicate better with each other and improves the teacher-principal relationship. Acknowledgment of the principal promotes mutual communication in order to raise teaching to a higher and more modern level. The influence of intellectual stimulation is expected as teachers are people with higher education, so they generally appreciate any kind of intellectual stimulation and progress.

From the dimensions of leadership, L2, High Performance Expectations, had the weakest correlation, followed by L6, Contingent Punishment Behavior. The expectation of high performance from teachers leads to a reduction or even cessation of communication between the principal and teachers. Teachers are often not ready for changes, firstly because of the need to compromise personal comfort, and secondly, due to the feeling that they themselves know best how to do things. In addition, achieving high performance can be particularly unpopular if there is a required number of procedures and administrative duties that inhibit a teacher's creativity. Punishment can obviously only contribute to a reduction in the communication satisfaction of teachers. This is common at people who have higher education and generally expect more understanding and respect. Teachers believe that the results of their work are not so bad that they deserve to be punished.

### **Predictive Effects of the Dimensions of Leadership on the Dimensions of Communication Satisfaction**

Table 3 shows the high values of the corrected determination indexes of  $R^2$ , which ranged from 0.492 to 0.624. In this way, the predictive effects of leadership on the communication satisfaction of teachers in primary schools in Serbia were confirmed. Hence, hypothesis H2 was also confirmed. Based on the value of  $R^2$ , the following dimensions of communication satisfaction were found to be under the biggest influence of leadership: CS2, Communication with Supervisors ( $R^2 = 0.624$ ) and CS4, Personal Feedback ( $R^2 = 0.609$ ). Leadership plays an important role in the inspiration and motivation of followers, therefore the personal influence of the leader is very important. Personal influence is perhaps best

reflected through the dimensions CS2 and CS4. Similar results were obtained in several other papers. For example, Kandlousi, Ali, and Abdollahi (2010) found formal communication, rather than informal communication, to be a stronger predictor for organizational communication satisfaction. Teachers frequently do not want advice from their leader; they just want someone to listen to them (Heller, 2002). In the study carried out by Madlock (2008), a strong relationship was found between supervisor communicator competence and employee communication satisfaction. According to Stringer (2006), when employees have a high-quality leader-member exchange (LMX), there are also higher levels of job satisfaction, as well as mutual trust, more support, more consideration, and more effective communication.

It can be seen in Table 3 that from the dimensions of leadership, L5 and L1, Contingent Reward Behavior and Core Transformational Leader Behavior respectively, had the greatest impact on the communication satisfaction of teachers. Contingent reward (CR) transactional leader behavior refers to leader behavior which emphasizes and clarifies the roles and task requirements, as well as provides followers with material or psychological rewards contingent on the fulfillment of contractual obligations (Bass, 1998). The basic tenet of social exchange theory is that when an individual provides another with a benefit, the recipient feels an obligation to reciprocate (Blau, 1964). According to Howell, Neufeld, and Avoilo (2005), contingent reward is correlated with better communication. A number of research studies have confirmed that the use of contingent reward is positively associated with employee satisfaction, commitment and performance (Bass, 1990; Podsakoff, Todor, & Skov, 1982).

Dimension L1, Core Transformational Leader Behavior, shows the visionary characteristic of the principal. The major premise of transformational leadership theory is the leader's ability to motivate the follower to accomplish more than what he planned to accomplish (Krishnan, 2005). When leaders effectively communicate their vision, they gain the confidence of their followers, which in turn contributes to communication satisfaction between the leader and follower (Pavitt, 1999). According to Madlock (2008), there is a significant and positive relationship between the leadership style of a supervisor and the job and communication satisfaction of the employee. Bass (1985) cites a variety of field studies which demonstrate that transformational leader behavior



is positively related to an employee's satisfaction, self-reported effort, and job performance. In this paper, both contingent reward behavior and core transformational leadership have an effect on each dimension of communication satisfaction. These results are consistent with the results of this correlational analysis.

L3, Supportive Leader Behavior, and L6, Contingent Punishment Behavior, also have an impact on two dimensions of communication satisfaction. Supportive leadership shows concern for the wellbeing and personal needs of subordinates, which is similar to consideration, or people-oriented leadership styles. Supportive leadership can give rise to employee reactions, generating significant and positive relationships with the work behavior of employees (Judge, Piccolo, & Ilies, 2004)

#### **The Moderating Effect of Teacher Gender on the Correlation between Leadership Dimensions and Communication Satisfaction Dimensions**

Table 4 shows that there is a strong correlation between the dimensions of leadership and communication satisfaction for both male and female teachers. Further analysis as presented in Table 5 (hierarchical regression analysis), however, indicates a slightly moderating effect of gender on the observed relationship. Hierarchical regression analysis showed five relations in which there is a moderating effect from gender. It should be noted that the moderating effect of gender can be seen in three dimensions of communication satisfaction: CS3 (Communication Climate), CS5 (Horizontal & Informal Communication) and CS7 (Organizational Integration). Since the moderating effect of gender is not given in full, it can be concluded that hypothesis H3 is partly confirmed. The moderating effect of gender in these three dimensions has the following direction: leadership has a greater influence on the communication satisfaction of male teachers than on their female colleagues. All three dimensions are related to wider communication in the school. For men, it is harder to accept the imposition of the authority and will of the director. From the leadership dimensions, L6 (Contingent Punishment Behavior) is the most common of the moderating dimensions. Contingent punishment behavior has a greater effect on communication satisfaction in men than women. Men do not respond as well to the penalties and force shown by their leader.

#### **The Moderating Effect of a Teacher's Age on the Correlation between Leadership Dimensions and Communication Satisfaction Dimensions of Teachers**

Table 6 shows that there is a correlation between the dimensions of leadership and communication satisfaction of teachers in all three age groups (younger, middle-aged and older teachers). In this table it can be seen that leadership has a slightly greater impact on the communication satisfaction of older teachers. Hierarchical regression analysis, however, has not shown a moderating effect of age on the observed relationships. Therefore, hypothesis H4 was not confirmed.

#### **Conclusion**

For a positive change in the quality and effectiveness of school work, the necessary conditions are successful collaboration and communication within the collective. Good cooperation and successful management are the indicators of an efficient and effective school. Teachers expect leaders to contribute to the collaborative atmosphere by informing them timely, resolving conflicts, showing interest in the collective, and supporting, protecting and respecting them all. Principals need to learn how to master the skills of good communication and leadership.

According to the European Commission (2002), in order to achieve the strategic goals of education formulated by the European Union concerning the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of education, in Serbia, it is necessary to pay special attention to the principals and the management of schools. In the education policy of Serbia, the principal's role is changing. Instead of playing a mostly managerial role, the principal is expected to be a leader. Since principals do not gain the skills of a leader in their basic education, the need for training and professional development becomes necessary. Training is required in the field of social and communication competence as the basis for successful managers and leaders.

Research has shown that in the primary schools of Serbia, the perception of leadership (as seen by teachers) has a significant influence on the communication satisfaction of teachers. Also, it is proven that leadership dimensions have a statistically significant predictive effect on the dimensions of communication satisfaction. Dimensions L5 and L1, Contingent Reward Behaviour and Core Transformational Leader Behavior have the strongest predictive effect on

the dimensions of communication satisfaction. In addition, it was found that gender has a slightly moderating effect on the correlation between leadership and communication satisfaction dimensions. Leadership has a greater influence on the communication satisfaction of male teachers than female teachers. The moderating effect of the age of teachers on the leadership and communication satisfaction of teachers has not been confirmed. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that hypotheses H1 and H2 have been confirmed, and hypothesis H3 has been partially confirmed while hypothesis H4 has not been confirmed.

The research has shown that leadership has a strong and positive impact on the job satisfaction of teachers in Serbian primary schools. The principals of primary schools in Serbia should devote considerable attention to developing leadership skills and leader-member exchange development. In doing so, special attention should be paid to the visionary and strategic components of the work of principals, the intellectual stimulation

and fair reward for employees. Practically, this means that school teachers should regularly provide information about the goals and plans of the school, the results achieved, and the position of the school. Also, school principals should support and encourage teachers to improve their knowledge and creativity in their work, and to recognize and properly evaluate the results of teachers through cash prizes, public praise, recognition, etc.

It is proposed that seminars, courses and workshops in the field of leadership and management for schools in Serbia should be organized for the school principals. This is a relatively easy, quick and inexpensive way to promote leadership in schools. The benefits can be very large. By creating quality leadership in schools, it is possible to achieve the increased job satisfaction of teachers, and therefore better the performance of teachers and students, as well as the successful functioning of schools as a whole. This is not only important in theory, but for practice as well, which can be done through the training of principals.

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