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## The Mediating Role of Social Motivation on the Relationship between School Leadership and Social Justice

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# The Mediating Role of Social Motivation on the Relationship between School Leadership and Social Justice

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## Abstract

This research aims to examine the relationship between school leadership, social motivation and social justice based on perceptions of the teachers at public schools and to reveal whether the perceived social motivation of the teachers have a mediating role in this relationship. 1222 teachers at public schools in Pendik district of Istanbul province in 2022-2023 academic year who were selected using the stratified sampling method based on the number of teachers per school grades participated in the study. In this quantitative study, School Leadership Scale for measuring teachers' perceptions regarding school principals' leadership behaviors, Social Motivation Scale for measuring participants' perceptions regarding social motivation, and Social Justice Scale for measuring participants' perceptions regarding social justice were used. Pearson correlation analysis, Independent sample t-test and structural equation model were used for descriptive analyses. Finally, whether the direct and indirect effects obtained in the structural equation model are significant was examined by bootstrapping analysis. The results of the research showed significant relationships between teachers' perceptions of school leadership, social motivation, social justice besides social motivation's mediating role on the relationship between school leadership and social justice. Finally, the findings obtained in the research were discussed in line with the relevant literature and suggestions were presented.

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## Introduction

Leaders are very important for the success of the organization they are in. Leaders take an active role in the realization of many organizational processes such as the creation and establishment of organizational culture, the efficient work of employees by adapting to this culture and values, and the discovery of their talents. (Eryeşil & İraz, 2017). Similarly, school leadership is accepted as an important variable affecting the school as well as being an important factor in the realization of the goals of education in general and the goals of the school and courses in particular. According to Çelik (2012), who defines school leadership as a complex structure, school administrator is responsible for establishing school culture. As a successful leader, the school administrator can create an effective school culture and climate, increase teachers' job satisfaction and motivation, and help develop a healthy school personality (Çelik, 2012). School leadership should be a means of developing these elements as well as benefiting from the culture and climate of the school. Because each school has a social and psychological

life space. A school leadership that does not affect this will not be able to achieve exactly what it is intended for.

As in all organizations, the most important capital of educational organizations is employees. Working in a social environment, employees can be expected to contribute to the success of the organization to the extent that their social needs are met in the workplace where they spend a very important part of their lives. Social motivation of individuals at school is important for the smooth functioning of the institution. As a matter of fact, motivation not only increases the efficiency of the employee, but also positively affects the efficiency of the organization and management. In order for organizations to be successful and effective in all circumstances and to provide a quality service, they must first motivate their staff (Aydm, 2011) and should be sensitive to teachers' social requirements (Bursalioglu, 2013).

Social motivators are as important as economic motivators in the lives of employees because humans are social beings and therefore have social needs. These tools have not been taken into account until today and their importance has only just begun to be recognized. In this respect, these tools are used extensively today. Social tools are of great importance especially for public institutions, because public personnel do not have any additional expectation in terms of salaries, and they receive a constant and fixed salary. Rather than economic tools, what public employees expect are needs such as appreciation for their work, adaptation to the environment, and opportunities for development.

Meeting these needs will increase the self-confidence of public employees and enable them to be motivated and work more efficiently in accordance with the organizational goals of the institution. Therefore, school administrators should strive to fulfill the expectations of teachers in order to achieve their organizational goals and achieve the desired level of success, and they should use motivational tools to motivate teachers. Thus, a school environment that increases the motivation of teachers is created. (Yılmaz & Ceylan, 2011). If it is desired to achieve organizational goals in education, importance should be given to realization of individual goals of teachers as school employees. The contribution of motivated teachers to organizational success is beyond doubt. The duty of motivating teachers to their jobs, increasing their efficiency and thus ensuring that they reach satisfaction in their jobs is primarily the responsibility of school administrators (Karaköse & Kocabaş, 2006).

It is obvious that schools should have functions of teaching certain values and gaining the right behaviors rather than providing academic knowledge and skills and preparing students for professional life. It is important to ensure social justice in education in order to develop the abilities, participation and knowledge competencies of individuals living in the society and thus to improve the society and to create a more desirable society in the future. In this respect, schools should promote respect for human rights, social justice and equal opportunities. Schools and their leaders have an important role in the creation of a fair relationship network in society. In this regard, the leadership behaviors of school administrators should ensure that both students and other school staff develop a sense of justice and equality (Cunningham and Cordeiro, 2003: 190). As a matter of fact, the efforts of teachers and leaders are important to reduce unequal conditions in schools and ultimately to ensure social improvement (Boyles, Carusi & Attick, 2009).

The common point of social justice and education is that the individual can “take action”. Action is about being able to improve and express oneself despite the inhibiting factors in an institution. Self-improvement refers to 'developing one's capacity and experience'; self-expression refers to 'taking an active role on the conditions of one's own actions. Since it is the social conditions that create injustice, justice is also about action and process (Enslin, 2006). Therefore, social justice in education is to increase the capacity of individuals to act. In addition, social justice in education is to develop social cooperation along with individual development by enabling everyone to develop through education (Walker, 2003). Social justice in education, which is considered as an actional service area, ensures the elimination of the deprivation phenomenon experienced by disadvantaged groups, which has become evident due to the social structure (Tomul, 2009).

Alsburly and Shaw (2005) states that social justice and equity in education expands the boundaries of the school. In this sense, Scanlan (2007) states that educational leaders should provide effective services to all students in general and to disadvantaged students in particular. Educational leaders can provide effective education and guidance service to disadvantaged students by building strong relationships with funders, supporters, business circles, governmental and non-governmental organizations that constitute the school environment (Tomul, 2009: 126-137). Thus, school administrators have the greatest responsibility for the provision of social justice in schools. As a matter of fact, school administrators' key roles to bring about change and transformation in schools can't be ignored. In a qualitative study conducted at five different schools by Mafora (2013), interviews with teachers and students revealed deficiencies in school administrators' social justice practices and it was emphasized that they should be leaders in ensuring social justice.

There are many theoretical and empirical studies on leadership. The characteristics of leader and leadership, behavioral characteristics of the leader, power relationship, conditions and situations that reveal the leader and leadership have been emphasized. Although there are studies in which school leadership, social motivation and social justice variables are investigated separately, there are no studies that explore the relationship between these three variables, which is the current research's contribution to the field.

This research aims to examine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school leadership, social justice and social motivation and to identify the mediating role of social motivation through structural equation modeling. It is considered that the results obtained can provide data on which initiatives are taken to ensure and improve social justice in educational environments, provide information about the factors that motivate teachers socially, and shed light on both pre-service and in-service training programs to be organized to improve school administrators' competencies in leadership.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

The relationship between teachers' perceptions of school leadership behaviors, social justice and social motivation was examined using structural equation modeling. The proposed model for the relationship between the research variables was tested with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Figure 1 presents the model.

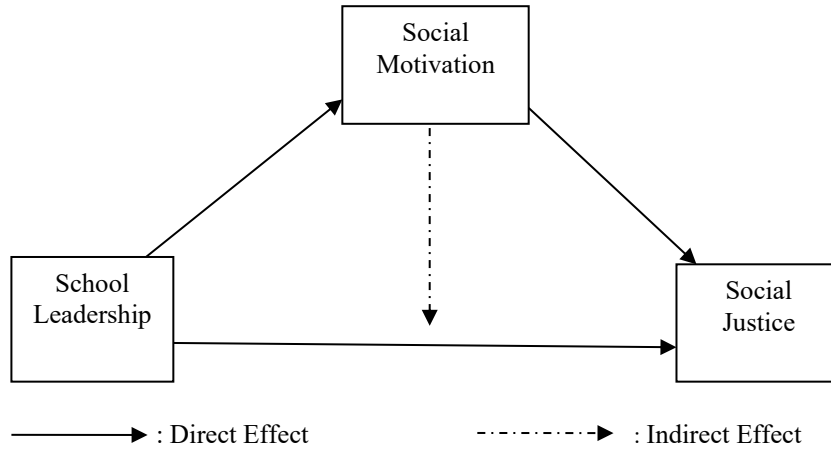


Figure 1. The Proposed Model for the Relationship between School Leadership, Social Motivation and Social Justice

As the Figure 1 illustrates, the independent and dependent variables are respectively school leadership and social justice perception. Social motivation is the mediating variable. The model proposes that school leadership behaviors will directly predict teachers' perception of social justice; social motivation will directly predict teachers' perception of social justice; school leadership behaviors of school administrators perceived by teachers will directly predict teachers' social motivation; and teachers' perception of school leadership behaviors will indirectly, significantly predict teachers' perception of social justice through teachers' social motivation.

### Population and Sample

6903 teachers at public schools in Pendik, Istanbul province constitute the population of the research. Within the scope of the research, proportional stratified sampling method was used. Proportional stratified sampling method is a sampling method that ensures that the homogeneous subsets of the research population, which differ in terms of various characteristics, are represented in the sample with the equal proportions they exist in the universe (Babbie, 2010). In this respect, when determining the number of participants, the representation rate of the number of teachers working at primary, middle and high school levels in the population was taken into consideration. Among the 6903 teachers constituting the population of this study, 1222 teachers were surveyed. Descriptive information about the participant teachers is presented in Table 1.

Examining Table 1, 844 (69.1) of the teachers who constitute the sample group of the quantitative part of the research are female, 378 (30.9) are male. 1097 (89.8) of the teachers in the sample group are undergraduate and 125 (10.2) are postgraduate graduates. Of the teachers in the sample group, 423 (34.6) are social science teachers, 355 (29.0) are science-math teachers, 315 (25.8) are classroom teachers, and 129 (10.6) are arts and sports teachers. Of the teachers in the sample group, 243 (19.9) have a professional seniority 1-4 years, 355 (29.0) have a professional seniority 5-9 years, 377 (30.9) have a professional seniority 10-14 years, and 247 have a professional seniority 15 years or more. Of the teachers in the sample group, 319 (26.1) work in primary schools, 442 (36.2) in middle schools, and 461 (37.7) in high schools.

Table 1. Findings on Teachers' Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Group	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Gender	Female	844	69.1
	Male	378	30.9
Education level	Undergraduate	1097	89.8
	Postgraduate	125	10.2
Branch	Social	423	34.6
	Science-Math	355	29.0
	Classroom	315	25.8
	Art and Sport	129	10.6
Professional Seniority	1-4 years	243	19.9
	5-9 years	355	29.0
	10-14 years	377	30.9
	15 years and over	247	20.2
School level	Primary school	319	26.1
	Middle school	442	36.2
	High school	461	37.7
Total		1222	100

### Data Collection Tools

In order to measure the school leadership behaviors perceived by teachers, School Leadership Scale developed by Beycioğlu et al. (2018) consisting of 3 dimensions (support, openness and cooperation) and a total of 31 items was used. In order to measure teachers' perception of social justice, Social Justice Scale developed by Turhan (2007), which consists of 38 items in total, was used. In order to measure teachers' perception of social motivation, Social Motivation Scale, which was developed for the research, was used, consisting of 4 dimensions ( helpfulness, belonging, interpersonal relations-work environment and rewarding-appreciation) and 20 items. Scale usage permissions were obtained.

Social Motivation Scale, which was developed for this research has 20 items and four dimensions called helpfulness, rewarding-appreciation, belonging and interpersonal relations-work environment. Each item in the scale was designed in Likert type with 5 options and graded in the range of "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)". For reliability analyses, Cronbach's Alpha values and test-retest reliability values calculated based on the items included in each factor in the Social Motivation Scale were calculated. All reliability values were found to be over .70, being a high reliability level. It is seen that Cronbach's Alpha values vary between .70 and .89. It was found that  $\alpha=.870$ , for the first factor,  $\alpha=.834$  for the second factor,  $\alpha=.804$  for the third factor,  $\alpha=.702$  for the fourth factor, and  $\alpha=.894$  for the total score. For the stability analysis, when the correlation coefficients between two applications made to the same group with a three-week interval were examined,  $r_{1-2}=.87$  for the first factor,  $r_{1-2}=.92$  for the second factor,  $r_{1-2}=.84$  for the third factor, and  $r_{1-2}=.72$  for the fourth factor and  $r_{1-2}=.94$  for the total score. Therefore, it can be stated that the internal consistency and stability value of the scale is high.

Confirmatory factor analysis results show that the fit index values ( $\chi^2/df=3.83$ , RMSEA=.080, CFI=.914, IFI=.915, TLI=.900, SRMR=.064) are at a good level, which proves that 4-dimensional structure of the Social Motivation Scale consisting of 20 items is valid.

The "School Leadership Scale", developed by Beycioğlu et al. (2018), for which validity and reliability studies were conducted, was used in order to reveal the views of teachers on school leadership. School Leadership Scale including 31 items, three dimensions called support, cooperation and openness was prepared in 5-point Likert type with answers ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)". Exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis processes were conducted by Beycioğlu et al. (2018, pp. 29-31) to reveal the scale's validity. Within scope of exploratory factor analysis, KaiserMeyerOlkin= .961 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= 7035,720  $p=,000$  values were reached, which means acceptable values for factor analysis. It was found that "the common variance value range of the three factors defined in relation to the items varied between 0,50 and 0,76 ". In addition, it was stated that "the item-total correlation values were in the range of 0,62 and 0,80" and "the scale is three-dimensional with construct validity".

Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was calculated by Beycioğlu et al. (2018, p. 32) as  $\alpha= 0,97$  for the School Leadership scale,  $\alpha= 0,95$  for the cooperation dimension,  $\alpha= 0,93$  for the support dimension, and  $\alpha= 0,86$  for the openness dimension. The two-half test correlation values of the scale were calculated above 0,70. Accordingly, it was concluded that the overall internal consistency of the measurement tool was high. The measurement results were considered as evidence of the high degree of the scale's reliability. For this research, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was obtained  $\alpha=0,98$  for the whole School Leadership Scale,  $\alpha=0,96$  for collaboration dimension,  $\alpha=0,94$  for support dimension and  $\alpha= 0,92$  for openness dimension.

Social Justice Scale is a one-dimensional scale developed by Turhan (2007, p.90) aiming to determine the level of teachers' perception of social justice in schools. Social Justice Scale with 38 items was structured as a 5-point Likert-type scale. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the scale was found as  $\alpha=,99$  and validity coefficient KMO= .89 value was obtained (Turhan, 2007, s.90). An exploratory factor analysis to examine the scale's construct validity was carried out by Sağdıç (2018). Accordingly, total explained variance of all factors was calculated as 65.688%. However, the eigenvalue explanation ratio of the first factor (eigenvalue=16.780) was found to be more than three times the eigenvalue explanation ratio of the second factor (eigenvalue= 2.013). Therefore, it was concluded that this result showed that the scale was one-dimensional (Büyüköztürk, 2011, p.137). For this research, Social Justice Scale received 0,950 value for Cronbach Alpha coefficient and was used as one-dimensional.

## **Data Analysis**

Analysis studies started with the determination of the extreme values in the data set. In order to determine the extreme values, the standard z scores of the variables of the research were calculated and the data with a value outside the range of z score [-3,3] were accepted as an extreme value. After removing extreme values in the data set, calculations for skewness and kurtosis coefficients were made in order to check if variables in the data set

fulfill the assumption of normal distribution. A total of 34 participants were excluded from the data set from missing data and data with extreme values, and analyzes were carried out on 1222 people. Descriptive statistics related to the variables in the data set are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Variables in the Data Set

Sub-Dimension	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Skewness Standard Error	Kurtosis	Kurtosis Standard Error
<b>School Leadership Scale</b>						
Cooperation	55.33	10.38	-.06	.07	-.39	.14
Support	44.33	9.48	-.57	.07	.41	.14
Openness	15.61	2.86	-.43	.07	.08	.14
Scale Overall	115.28	21.61	-.19	.07	-.17	.14
<b>Social Motivation Scale</b>						
Helpfulness	30.07	3.29	-.04	.07	-1.00	.14
Rewarding-Appreciation	21.92	2.80	-.65	.07	-.09	.14
Belonging	19.64	3.56	-.15	.07	-.58	.14
Interpersonal Relations-Work Environment	13.69	1.40	-.41	.07	-1.45	.14
Scale Overall	85.33	8.72	.06	.07	-.81	.14
Social Justice Scale	147.23	17.87	.08	.07	.12	.14

As seen in Table 2, the skewness coefficients values for School Leadership Scale overall and its dimensions are between -.06 and -.57, and the kurtosis coefficients are between -.17 and .41. In addition, the skewness coefficients values for Social Motivation Scale with its dimensions were between .06 and -.65, and the kurtosis coefficients were between -.09 and -1.45. It was determined that the skewness coefficient of the scores obtained from the Perception of Social Justice Scale was .08 and the kurtosis coefficient was .12.

Skewness and kurtosis coefficients are frequently used to determine whether the data meet the assumption of normal distribution. George and Mallery (2010) state that if the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of a data set are in the range of  $[-2,2]$ , the normality assumption is met. Since the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of all variables of the study are in the range of  $[-2,2]$ , it can be stated that the normality assumption is met. In the research, social motivation's mediating effect on the relationship between school leadership and social justice perceptions was identified using Bootstrap technique. In this respect, extreme value, normal distribution, linearity, multicollinearity, and singularity assumptions were evaluated and it was seen that all assumptions were met.

## Findings

Pearson correlation analysis results applied for determining the relationships between teachers' social motivation,



social justice perceptions and school leadership behaviors of school administrators on the basis of perceptions of teachers are shown in the Table 3.

Table 3. Correlation Analysis Results for the Relationship between Teachers' Social Motivation, Social Justice Perceptions and School Leadership Behaviors

	SLS Cooperation	SLS Support	SLS Openness	SLS Overall	SMS Helpfulness	SMS Rewarding-Appreciation	SMS Belonging	SMS Interpersonal Relations-Work Environment	SMS Overall	SJS Overall
SLS Cooperation	1									
SLS Support	.859**	1								
SLS Openness	.830**	.785**	1							
SLS Overall	.967**	.956**	.876**	1						
SMS Helpfulness	.411**	.382**	.337**	.409**	1					
SMS Rewarding-Appreciation	.335**	.311**	.351**	.344**	.437**	1				
SMS Belonging	.585**	.589**	.454**	.600**	.583**	.468**	1			
SMS Interpersonal Relations-Work Environment	.121**	.200**	.224**	.175**	.423**	.562**	.325**	1		
SMS Overall	.521**	.517**	.462**	.538**	.824**	.768**	.831**	.634**	1	
SJS Overall	.539**	.539**	.480**	.559**	.546**	.377**	.672**	.415**	.669**	1

\*\* p<.01, SLS: School Leadership Scale SMS: Social Motivation Scale SJS: Social Justice Scale

Table 3 shows that there are positive and statistically significant relationships between all observed variables in the research. Figure 2 illustrates the path analysis established regarding social motivation’s mediating role on the relationship between school leadership and social justice.

As demonstrated in the Figure, there is a direct path analysis between perceived school leadership and social motivation and social justice perception, and an indirect path analysis including social motivation’s mediating effect between perceived school leadership and social justice perception. The structural model analysis results for

the model with path analysis are presented in Table 4.

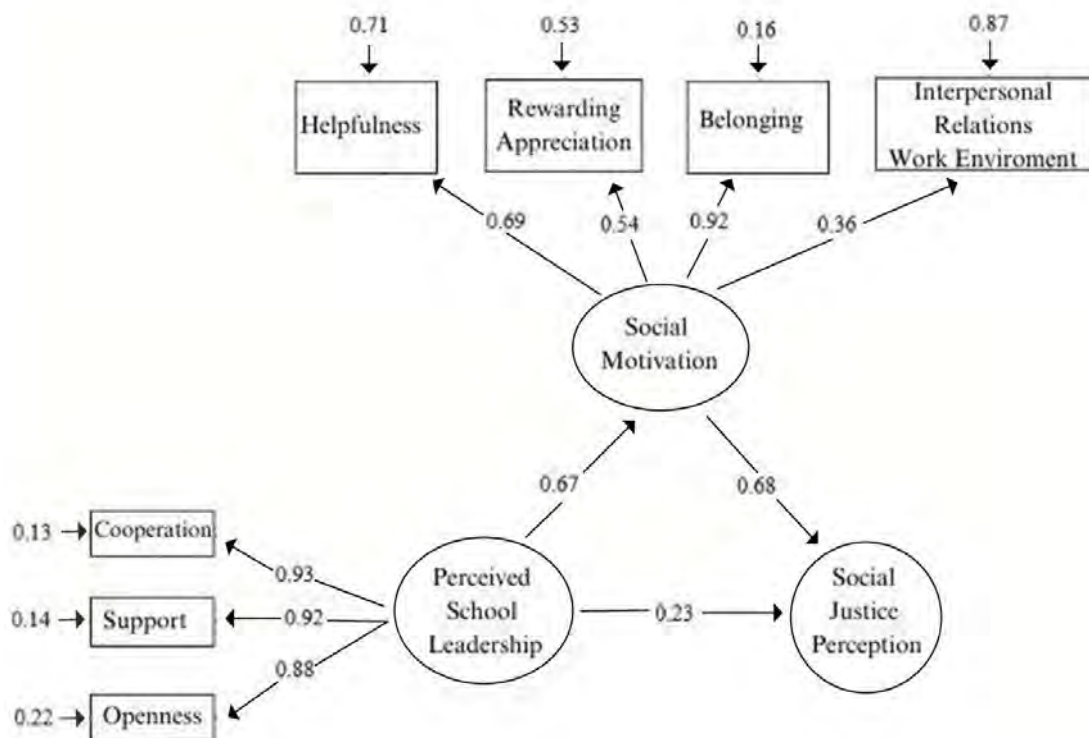


Figure 2. Path Analysis Used to Test the Mediating Model

Table 4. Mediated Structural Model Analysis Results

Variable	$\beta$	S.E.	C.R. (t)	p
Perceived School Leadership $\rightarrow$ Perceived Social Justice	0.23	0.01	14.69	.000
Perceived School Leadership $\rightarrow$ Social Motivation	0.67	0.02	23.93	.000
Social Motivation $\rightarrow$ Social Justice	0.68	0.02	24.47	.000

According to the results of SEM analysis given in Table 4, it is seen that administrators' school leadership behaviors perceived by teachers significantly predicted social justice ( $\beta = .23$ ;  $p < .001$ ) and social motivation ( $\beta = .67$ ;  $p < .001$ ). Similarly, the effect of the mediating variable social motivation on social justice perception ( $\beta = .68$ ;  $p < .001$ ) was also found to be significant. In order to test social motivation's mediating role on the relations between administrators' school leadership behaviors perceived by teachers and teachers' perceptions of social justice, path analysis through bootstrap method was conducted. Accordingly, the results of the analysis conducted to reveal the mediating role of social motivation on the relation between administrators' school leadership behaviors perceived by teachers and teachers' perceptions of social justice are shown in Table 5.

As shown in Table 5, the direct effect of school leadership behaviors perceived by teachers on teachers' perception of social justice was significant before the inclusion of mediating variable to the model ( $\beta = .61$ ;  $p < .01$ ). When the variable social motivation, was added to the model, this effect of school leadership behaviors perceived by teachers on teachers' perceptions of social justice decreased ( $\beta = .32$ ;  $p < .01$ ), but the effect remained significant.

This situation can be evaluated as social motivation is a partial mediator between school leadership and social justice (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In bootstrap analyses, whether there is an indirect effect is decided by looking at the CI (confidence interval) values obtained at 95% confidence interval. According to the results of the bootstrap analysis, school leadership was identified to have an indirect effect on teachers' perception of social justice through social motivation ( $\beta = .29$ ; 95%CI [0.26 - 0.32],  $p < .01$ ).

Table 5. The Mediating Role of Social Motivation in the Relationship between School Leadership and Social Justice Perceived by Teachers

Predictor Variables	Outcome Variables			
	Social Motivation		Perceived Social Justice	
	$\beta$	S.E.	$\beta$	S.E.
Perceived School Leadership <sup>1</sup>			0.61**	0.02
R <sup>2</sup>			0.38	
Perceived School Leadership	0.54**	0.01		
R <sup>2</sup>	0.29			
Perceived School Leadership			0.32**	0.02
Social Motivation			0.53**	0.04
R <sup>2</sup>			0.58	
Indirect Effect			0.29 (0.26-0.32)	

<sup>1</sup>Before the mediator was added, <sup>2</sup>After the mediator was added, \*\*  $p < .001$ , Values in parentheses are upper and lower confidence intervals. Bootstrap resampling number 5000

The fact that the upper and lower confidence interval values obtained do not include the value of 0 indicates that the indirect effect is significant and the mediation effect occurs (MacKinnon vd., 2004, ss. 112-113). In conclusion, social motivation was accepted to have a partial mediation effect on the relationship between school leadership behaviors and social justice based on teachers' perceptions. Goodness of fit indices for the model are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Goodness of Fit Indices for Mediated Model

Index	Scale Value	Fit values	
		Good fit	Acceptable fit
X <sup>2</sup>	186.4	$0 \leq \chi^2 \leq 2df$	$2 < \chi^2 \leq 5df$
X <sup>2</sup> /sd	3.70	$0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 2$	$2 < \chi^2/df \leq 5$
RMSEA	.076	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$	$.05 < RMSEA \leq .08$
SRMR	.059	$0 \leq SRMR \leq .05$	$.05 < SRMR \leq .10$
NFI	.93	$.95 \leq NFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq NFI < .95$
NNFI	.94	$.95 \leq NNFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq NNFI < .95$
CFI	.92	$.95 \leq CFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq CFI < .95$
GFI	.93	$.95 \leq GFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq GFI < .95$
AGFI	.94	$.95 \leq AGFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq AGFI < .95$

Examination of Table 6 shows that  $\chi^2/sd$ , RMSEA, SRMR, NFI, NNFI, CFI, GFI and AGFI fit indices are within the acceptable range and the model put forward is confirmed.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

Within the scope of the research, the relationship between school leadership, social motivation and social justice was examined. The correlation analyses conducted for these variables demonstrated a statistically significant and positive relationship between support, openness and cooperation, which constitute school leadership's sub-dimensions; helpfulness, rewarding-appreciation, belonging, interpersonal relations-work environment, which constitute the sub-dimensions of social motivation; and social justice. Moreover, according to the research results, school leadership behaviors of school administrators perceived by teachers significantly predicted teachers' perception of social justice; school leadership behaviors of school administrators perceived by teachers significantly predicted teachers' social motivation; teachers' social motivation significantly predicted teachers' perception of social justice. It was concluded that the model established for the partial mediation role of social motivation in the relationship between school leadership and social justice was significant.

In the national and international literature, there are no studies directly addressing the relationships between school leadership, social motivation and social justice or related to social motivation's mediating effect on the relationship between school leadership and social justice. However, there are various studies with similar components in terms of subject and sample. Li, Bao (2020) developed an interactional process approach in which social motivation has a mediating role between ethical leadership and positive work behaviors and reached the result that there are positive relations between ethical leadership and positive work behaviors of employees and social motivation has a partially mediating effect in this relationship. Eva et al. (2019) found employees' social motivation's mediator role between ethical leadership and internal organizational citizenship behaviors. They also found although ethical leadership increases employees' social motivation, this only has an effect on employees' organizational citizenship behaviors at the work place, but not after leaving the organization. According to Le's (2015) study, psychological collectivism has a positive correlation with participation in creative work and social motivation partially mediates the relationship between psychological collectivism and participation in creative work .

The expected role of a leader is to make arrangements to ensure that the school provides the necessary resources and environment for the benefit of all those who interact with it, primarily the staff within the school, parents or all segments of society. In addition to these roles, school leaders have many other roles such as creating a vision and mission, being a guide, being seen as a community leader, providing support, making necessary arrangements for the transfer and transmission of cultural values, creating a safe school environment in all respects, facilitating adaptation as the subject of this change and development in today's changing and developing societies, and placing school processes on the basis of equality and justice (Balyer, 2012). In this respect, social justice plays an effective role in creating a democratic, equal, supportive and fair educational environment, respecting differences and ensuring the formation of a democratic society (Furman & Shields, 2003, s.52). According to Ladson Billings (1995), leadership that is more equitable for marginalized students and focuses on creating equitable schools can

be described as good leadership (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Thus, the creation of a supportive school environment and the prevention of arbitrary interference by the society is seen as a prerequisite for the creation of a healthy school climate (Hoy & Tarter, 1997).

It is seen that many researches deal with school leadership's effect on teachers' perception of social justice and motivation. Examining the relationship between social justice practices of school administrators and educators' commitment to the school administrator and citizenship behaviors they exhibited based on teachers' perceptions in his research, Bozkurt (2018) found significant and positive connections between leadership for social justice, commitment to the school administrator, citizenship behaviors. Özdemir (2009) examined the relationship between high school teachers' perceptions of ethical leadership and social justice and identified positive, significant relationship between social justice perception and ethical leadership's all sub-dimensions. Furthermore, the behavior that affected the perceptions of social justice the most was the social responsibility of administrators and the behavior that affected the perceptions of social justice the least was the behavior of educational administrators to create an ethical school culture and climate (Özdemir, 2009). Duygu (2021), who examined the relations between school leadership and motivation taking into account perceptions of preschool teachers concluded that an increase in the levels of "Support" and "Collaboration", school leadership's sub-dimensions, increased the motivation, while the increase in the level of "Openness" decreased the motivation. In their research, Şama and Kolamaz (2011) defined significant, positive relations between leaders' supportive behavior and the identification and internalization dimension of teachers' organizational commitment.

School leadership has the strongest effect on teacher motivation (Evans, 1998). Therefore, school leaders should make every effort to provide an environment that fosters teacher motivation (Hoy and Miskel, 1982). Some factors that school leaders should take into consideration in order to increase and improve teacher motivation were considered important. Among these which are also in parallel with results of the present study are teachers' feeling of affiliation with others, rewarding, creating a sense of success and recognition, sense of involvement in the decision-making process, school leader's support (Fox, 1986) ; fairness and consistency with all staff, praise in society, appreciation of individual and team achievements (Ramsey, 1997). In conclusion, the present research revealed that social motivation has a significant mediating role on the relation between school leadership and social justice. Yet, while discussing the findings and conclusions, the fact that the current study has limitations should not be ignored. This research is limited to the views of teachers working in one district of İstanbul.

## **Recommendations**

The relations between school leadership, social motivation and social justice in terms of teacher perceptions constitute the focus of the current research. Similar researches dealing with school leadership, social motivation and social justice from the perspective of school administrators may be carried out. The present study includes the views of teachers working at public schools. For this reason, it may be suggested to conduct the study with teachers working at private schools so that whether the perceptions differ at public and private schools can be investigated. In addition, experimental studies including qualitative data can be carried out. In-service training programs should be organized for school principals by the Ministry of Education to show and understand the

importance of school leadership behaviors, social justice and social motivation.

## Ethics Committee Approval Information

Ethical committee approval (88451, no. 5/3) was obtained from Marmara University Research Ethics Committee, Türkiye.

## Notes

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