

## **THE ANALYSIS OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP STYLES – PERCEPTIONS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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**Abstract.** *The aim of this research was to determine which leadership style is perceived as the most dominant by the secondary school students, when the teachers' behaviours are presented through transformational, transactional and passive-avoidant leadership components. The perception of teacher leadership styles was also investigated in relation to various socio-demographic parameters. A total number of 500 secondary school students of final grade from Nis in the Republic of Serbia, participated in the research. Since this research was based on Transformational and Transactional Theories, information about teacher leadership style and leadership factors was collected through the adapted Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire - MLQ (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The research results indicate that, according to the students' perceptions, secondary school teachers practice both transactional as well as transformational leadership style, i.e., in the schools covered by the research a full range leadership model is articulated. Also, the research confirmed that variables such as gender, school type, educational profile, academic performance of the participants affect the perception of teachers' leadership styles.*

**Key words:** *leadership behavior, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, multifactor leadership questionnaire*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Even though the influence of leadership on the effectiveness of the organization has been actively discussed and debated since the twentieth century, not much has been written about its importance for the quality of education in that period. Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, given the results of some studies, certain initiatives have been launched to consider educational leadership as the key factor in organizational success or failure. However, it seems that during such actions, the analyses of the leadership behaviour of

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those who are in formal or managerial positions within the school organization were “under scrutiny”, while those who directly contribute to the effectiveness and quality of the teaching process and better student achievement remained on the side-lines. Precisely because of linking leadership and hierarchical leadership in schools, and attributing leadership characteristics to directors of educational institutions, supervisors and those with formal titles, not much space was left for teacher leadership in research papers. Over time, progressive schools and districts across developed countries recognized the importance of leadership in those directly involved in the teaching process, and the concept of teacher leadership came to the fore, which was eventually supported by professional and scientific literature, with various theoretical and research perspectives. Thus, it begins to occupy an important place in the scientific research works of numerous authors, discussions and assessments of experts in various working and operational groups, legislative debates and analyses of advisory bodies and professional bodies in the international arena. At both the implicit and the explicit level, modern studies prove that teacher leadership behaviour is crucially important for the effectiveness of student learning, and the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of the teaching process. The influence of teachers' leadership style is reflected in the use of innovative and productive approaches in teaching, developing a productive and favourable school climate, and improving the overall quality of learning and functioning, and creating a modern education policy accompanied by reforms in education. Therefore, teacher leadership is one of the most important concepts of management and leadership in education, and it is especially important that this concept is given more attention in future education reforms in Serbia. Teacher leadership role is just as important, irreplaceable and invaluable as the role of the principal. Unlike globally, in Serbia education, there is an evident lack of systematic initiatives for conducting research that would take into account the characteristics of effective leadership behaviour of teachers. This is also emphasized by authors such as Andevski, Arsenijević and Spajić (2012), noting that there are currently a small number of research papers that deal specifically with studying and determining the leadership characteristics of employees in education, especially teaching staff. Unfortunately, the claim of these authors seems to be especially true about our schools. Also, there is a small number of individual research efforts by several individuals highlight the need to refocus on teacher leadership whose initiative affect the quality, success and effectiveness of the teaching process.

Given that in the education process, teacher is seen as the main figure in planning, organizing and monitoring student activities and consequently is in the position of leader - leadership style could be seen as a type of specific teacher behaviour, special manner and special approach to students through constant adjustment to the requirements of their mutual interactions and education context (Jovanović, 2017). Alibabić (2008, p. 253) also states that leadership style includes aligned activities, processes and leadership tools. Patterns of teacher behaviour, which reflect both the implicit and explicit actions, are slowly but surely gaining their place in the authors' research interest, and it can be said that they occupy the central place in the analysis of numerous contemporary theories. Among these theories, the relationship theory and the leadership theory are often mentioned as the most effective ones, the most detailed and the most comprehensive in the context of education, according to the results of studies from the international space. As such efforts have not been a priority of research interest in Serbia so far, there is more reason to initiate the first individual attempts to analyze the transformational and transactional style of teacher leadership.

## 2. THEORIES OF TRANSFORMATIONAL AND TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP – FULL RANGE LEADERSHIP THEORY

In the last 20 years, researchers and practitioners have focused intensively on the paradigm of transformational and transactional leadership. Ever since 1985, when Bass (1985) published his initial work on the theory of transformational leadership, the international space has been flooded with various research ventures that have argued the positive impact of the transformational approach on both subjective and objective performance. Needless to say, such activities covered many spheres from politics, sports, the army, medicine, and later on - education. In order to highlight the far-reaching positive effects of transformational and transactional leadership in the organizational context, several meta-analytical studies have been conducted in which all previous results have been concisely presented.

According to the theory of transformational leadership, both leaders and followers meet higher goals in the process of mutual growth and development. Transformational leadership is defined as a leadership approach that causes changes in the individual but also in the social system. In its ideal form, transformational leadership creates valuable and positive changes in followers with the goal of transforming and developing them into future leaders. This theory primarily focuses on people with a strong ability to anticipate, create, innovate and change, i.e., visionaries, creatives, innovators, and most importantly, on people who are not afraid to initiate radical changes and introduce major innovations. Theorists of the transformational approach claim that the most important thing is for the leader to persuade the members of the organization to believe in his vision of success, but of course the interest of the organization always comes first. According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership is a process in which leaders and followers raise each other's levels of morale and motivation. Transformational leaders with their vision and the strength of their personality become role models for followers and a driving force in changing their own expectations, perceptions and motivation for the purposes of common goals and vision. The crucial segment of Burns' theory of transformational leadership is not to make changes within the environment and meet goals, but rather to change people themselves: leaders and followers. Bass (1985), referring to Burns' interpretations of this type of leadership, gave his view, believing that transformational leadership is a way for leaders to have an effect on followers, in terms of believing, admiring and respecting leaders.

Leader behaviour that this author is talking about is intended to motivate members of the organization in three ways: (1) raising awareness of the importance of tasks and values, (2) focusing on team and organization goals rather than one's own goals, and (3) by awakening higher order needs (Bass, 1985, p. 20). Transforming, motivating and encouraging followers to find new and unique ways to overcome the status quo and face the changing environment to achieve the expected results, transformational leaders achieve through charisma, intellectual stimulation and individual appreciation. Therefore, this type of leadership is focused on possible processes of influencing leaders on the performance and achievements of not only group members, but each member individually to fulfill their full potential (Jovanović & Ćirić, 2016). This is especially important in the school context in the teacher-student relationship. Teachers of transformational leadership style lead by personal example in working with students, and in order to have students involved, they tend to use relationships, inspiration and motivation. They are adorned with courage and self-confidence, and they do not lack the readiness to invest their own sacrifice in work for the common goal.

They provide their students with an inspiring mission and vision and develop their identity, clearly showing commitment, tolerance and focus on goals, but also a willingness to take risks.

On the other hand, the essence of transactional leadership is the exchange. In fact, the leader provides the followers with the necessary resources and reward in exchange for motivation, productivity and effective accomplishment of tasks. Thus, the simplest definition of transactional leadership could be that it is the process of exchange between leaders and followers (Bass, 1985, 1990, 2000; Burns, 1978). Transaction or social exchange is the key to established relationships between leaders and followers. Transactional leaders focus on motivating followers by reward and discipline, i.e., positive and negative reinforcement, and they specify to followers the type of reward they can expect for different types of behaviour. Such a leader does not individualize the needs of followers or focus on their personal development but seeks to focus on short-term needs. As such, transactional leadership style is not enough, but transactional leadership gains its full effect only in combination with transformational leadership. In this regard, research conducted in the school context most often shows the presence of two types of leadership – task-oriented leadership and relationship-oriented leadership. While transactional leadership is task-oriented and linked to expectations, results evaluation, and project planning, transformational leadership refers to behaviours that emphasize engagement in the interpersonal dimension, trust transfer, and conflict resolution. Transformational and transactional theory can overcome the shortcomings of both because research evidence suggests that the same leader can often show both transactional and transformational behaviour in different situations (Avolio & Bass, 2004), but each leader has a little more of one type of leadership style and less of another (Bass, 1999). Thus, through this theory, leader behaviour can be described and adequately evaluated. While transformational leaders are characterized by charisma and shared vision, and encouraging others towards high productivity, transactional leadership is based on a “give and take” relationship, i.e., a relationship between leaders and followers is established through exchange, such as rewarding someone for meeting a goal.

If we understand that leadership has its share in the efficiency, quality and success of the organization as much as 40-50%, and if educational institutions and those who manage them want to provide the consumers of their services – students with the highest quality of education, it is necessary to bring effective leaders in the education groups. It is well known that teachers have received new roles over time, which are constantly changing one year after another, but the latest role attributed to them (and at the same time the most challenging one) is the one concerning leadership in terms of influencing students, involvement in decision-making, exchange of ideas and visions, respect, harmony, motivation... which is achieved through different styles.

It is important to keep in mind, as suggested by other authors such as Bass and Avolio (1993), that one leadership style may not be appropriate in all areas of education. Clearly, leadership styles in the context of education are differently understood, and they first proved to be beneficial in the relationship theory and leadership theory, which are the focus of this research.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to investigate which leadership style is perceived as the most dominant by the secondary school students, when the teachers' behaviours are presented through transformational, transactional and passive-avoidant leadership components. Also, study was oriented toward exploring correlations between students' perceptions of teacher leadership style and various socio-demographic variables. The methods applied in this research have been chosen in accordance with the nature of the problem, the research topic, research aim and research tasks, as well as in accordance with the stipulated hypotheses. Since this study is descriptive in nature and aimed to shed light on and determine the relationship between a number of variables in the first stage of the research, the focus was on identifying the characteristics of teacher leadership behaviour. The starting point was the assumption that students perceive the transformational leadership style of teachers as dominant.

#### 3.1. Research sample

The research sample consisted of a total of 500 participants, i.e. students from secondary schools in Nis, Serbia. It included participants of both genders, from different schools, different educational profiles, different economic status and academic achievement. The structure of the sample is presented according to: gender (Table 1), type of school and field of work (Table 2), educational profile (Table 3), economic status (Table 4) and academic achievement (Table 5).

**Table 1** Sample structure according to gender of participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	164	32.8
Female	336	67.2
Total	500	100.0

The research within this paper also included collecting data from the participants on the type of school they attend, i.e., the education profile. The data in the following table refer to the ratio of participants from different Nis schools within the entire sample (Table 2). Speaking about the type of school, the well-known categorization into general education and vocational schools was taken into account. However, in order to better understand the structure of the sample, participants from these two categories of schools were classified into subcategories based on the education profile, and the category of general education schools then included the subcategory of grammar schools, and the category of vocational schools the following subcategories: law, business, medical, tourism schools.

**Table 2** Sample structure according to school type and field of work

School type	N	%	Field of work	N	%
General	173	34.6	Grammar school	173	34.6
			School of Law and Business	77	15.4
Vocational	327	65.4	Medical	87	17.4
			Tourism	68	13.6
			School of Economics	95	19.0
Total	500	100.0	Total	500	100.0

The research sample included students from 4 high schools and 4 vocational schools. Data on their educational profile are shown in the following table.

**Table 3** Sample structure according to school type and educational profile of students

School name	N	%	Educational profile	N	%
"Bora Stanković" Grammar School	41	8.2	Social sciences and linguistics	21	4.2
			Natural Sciences and Mathematics	20	4.0
"Stevan Sremac" Grammar School	41	8.2	Social sciences and linguistics	21	4.2
			Natural Sciences and Mathematics	20	4.0
"Svetozar Marković" Grammar School	50	10.0	Social sciences and linguistics	28	5.6
			Natural Sciences and Mathematics	22	4.4
"9. maj" Grammar School	41	8.2	General education profile	41	8.2
			Business administrator	26	5.2
			Legal technician	10	2.0
			Fire protection technician	18	3.6
			Insurance officer	23	4.6
School of Law and Business	77	15.4	Nurse/medical technician	17	3.4
			Dental nurse	20	4.0
			Physiotherapist	21	4.2
			Nurse - educator	29	5.8
			Culinary technician	56	11.2
Tourism School	68	13.6	Tourism technician	12	2.4
			Economy technician	69	13.8
School of Economics	95	19.0	Finance technician	26	5.2
			Total	500	100.0
Total	500	100.0	Total	500	100.0

In order to avoid unrealistic assessments of the economic status of families that may arise due to the specifics of the developmental period in which the participants find themselves or their subjectivity, it seemed wise that each category of family economic status has its own descriptions. Based on these, students were able to give estimates of the family's economic status, because the assumption was that such descriptions are closer to students and that they will be more objective by using them. Thus, the description "we live pretty badly" refers to the category of low economic status, "we have enough money for the most basic needs" belongs to the category of average economic status, "we have enough not to worry" belongs to the category of high economic status and "we live much better than others" to the category of very high economic status. Data obtained from student ratings are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4** Sample structure according to economic status of families

Economic status	Frequency	Percent
Low	11	2.2
Average	239	47.8
High	238	47.6
Very high	12	2.4
Total	500	100.0

The research sample consisted of students of different school achievement. During the research, students were asked for information on the overall average grade at the end of the semester of the previous school year, as they are senior grade students, based on which they are classified as unsatisfactory, satisfactory, good, very good and excellent in school.

**Table 5** Sample structure according to school achievement of participants

School achievement	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative %
Unsatisfactory	3	.6	.6
Satisfactory	16	3.2	3.8
Good	52	10.4	14.2
Very good	129	25.8	40.0
Excellent	300	60.0	100.0
Total	500	100.0	
Mean		4.41	
St. deviation		0.85	

### 3.2. Instrument

Information on the dominant leadership style of teachers and leadership factors was collected with an adapted *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire – MLQ*<sup>1</sup> (Avolio & Bass, 1995, 2004). In this research, the Rater form was used, i.e., students rated the leadership behaviour of teachers, and it took an average of 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Participants in the study answered a total of 45 items of the standard version of the multifactor questionnaire (MLQ 5x-Short), using a five-point scale of behavioural assessment (“never”, “rarely”, “sometimes”, “often” and “always”). Students rated the frequency of certain behaviours described with items in the scale. If we keep in mind that this instrument rates a wide range of leadership types, from passive leaders to leaders who reward those with whom they work, to those who transform followers so that they themselves take on the role of leader, it can be concluded that the essence of the instrument is to rate different leadership styles: transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant. All subscales of leadership style consist of 4 items and 9 scales contain 36 items that measured the components of: transformational leadership (idealized influence - attribution, idealized influence – behaviour, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration), of transactional leadership (potential/contingent rewards, active management by exception, and passive management by exception), non-leadership (*laissez faire*).

Since MLQ is protected by copyright, after paying the license to use the questionnaire to an authorized publishing house, consent was obtained which defines more detailed conditions for its use, translation and adaptation to research needs (Agreement No. 487). The permission to use this instrument and the manner of its public display is clearly specified in the agreement between the interested parties. In addition to the MLQ instrument, a scoring key was received (Avolio & Bass, 2004) to evaluate the research findings. The scoring key was used to connect data from each scale with different dimensions, which increases the chances of being able to obtain results from correct measurements.

<sup>1</sup> *Source:* This instrument (Rater form) has been translated and adapted to the cultural and educational context and specific needs of the research. The author received a special permission (*Agreement No. 487*) of the publisher, MIND GARDEN, Inc., [www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com) from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire by Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio. Copyright © 1995, 2000, 2004 by Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 6 shows the descriptive indicators of each subscale on the scale of teacher leadership styles, i.e., the descriptive indicators of the components of leadership styles.

**Table 6** Descriptive indicators of *MLQ* scale

Components of leadership styles	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	St.deviation
Idealized influence* behaviour	500	1	4	2.48	0.88
Idealized influence * attribution	500	1	4	2.45	0.92
Inspirational motivation	500	1	4	2.63	0.88
Intellectual stimulation	500	1	4	2.49	0.91
Individualized consideration	500	1	4	2.43	0.88
Contingent rewards	500	1	4	2.61	0.87
Management by exception*active	500	1	4	2.66	0.93
Management by exception*passive	500	1	4	1.52	0.73
<i>Laissez-faire</i>	500	1	4	1.28	0.81

As the number of items describing each subscale is low, the data in the table above are not surprising, although they go beyond the limits of interpretation (higher degree of agreement  $AS > 3$  and lower degree of agreement  $AS < 3$ ). However, the values of standard deviation indicate that the data are within the expected range and as such interpretable. Thus, by calculating mean values, it was found that participants had a slightly higher tendency to agree with items related to the following four dimensions/components: active management by exception, contingent rewards (often called conditional rewards), inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation. As we can notice, the first two places are occupied by the dimensions of transactional leadership style, and the third and fourth places are occupied by the dimensions of transformational leadership style. Regarding the choice of items towards which students were less inclined, i.e., the three less important dimensions are the following ones: idealized influence (behaviour), idealized influence (attribution) and individualized consideration. All three belong to the transformational leadership style. Finally, students show the least tendency to agree with the items in the dimension of transactional leadership (passive management by exception) and non-leadership factor (*laissez faire*).

After the formation of new variables, the normality of data distribution of newly acquired Kolmogorov-Smirnov variables was examined. The obtained data can be seen in Table 7.

**Table 7** Normality test of variables distribution

Leadership style	K-S test	<i>P</i>
Transformational	0.082	0.000
Transactional	0.111	0.000
Passive-avoidant	0.612	0.000

Based on the results shown in the table, it can be noticed that the empirical distribution of statistical data deviates significantly from the normal distribution ( $p < 0.05$ ) for the examined sample. Since the preconditions for the use of parametric tests were not met, for the purpose of comparison, a non-parametric test was applied, more specifically the Friedman test for dependent samples. Given that the essence of this test is to rank the



data, the mean values of the ranks for all participants are compared with the expected values, and it was assumed that the most common leadership style was the transformational one. Whether the obtained ranks support this assumption or not is shown by the Friedman test data shown in Table 8.

**Table 8** Representation of teachers' leadership style

Leadership style	Mean rankings	<i>P</i>
Transformational	2.19	0.000
Transactional	2.5	
Passive-avoidant	1.31	

From the data obtained, statistically significant differences can be observed in terms of perceived representation of different leadership styles. Namely, the participants included in this research perceived the transactional leadership style of their teachers as more prevalent compared to the transformational and passive-avoidant. The values of mean ranks indicate the highest representation of transactional leadership style of teachers and the lowest representation of passive-avoidant leadership style. The results of a research conducted in Romania (Cuciuc et al., 2015) show that students perceive their teachers (mother tongue and mathematics teachers) as more transactional than transformational in their leadership style. The authors provided two alternative explanations for this perception of teacher leadership style: (1) the average and below-average level of student academic success and (2) the subjective influence of the level of performance and self-confidence of students.

However, the research findings shown above should be interpreted with some caution. Namely, although according to the participants' perception, the transactional teacher leadership style was presented as more prevalent, the difference between the values of mean ranks of the first two separate leadership styles is not large. In both cases, the values of the mean rank exceed 2, which means that the transformational style of teacher leadership does not "lag" behind the transactional one. More precisely, it could be said that high school teachers in Nis use transactional and transformational leadership style, i.e., the schools covered by the research include a model of teacher transformational-transactional leadership. This confirms one of Pounder's (2008) conclusions from a study conducted at the Hong Kong University business school that, despite the fact that the relevant literature (not only pedagogical, but in general) suggests that effective leaders are those who are more active and engaging (transformational) and less passive (transactional), most leaders are likely to be transformational-transactional.

According to the previously presented findings that speak about the potential presence of the model of overall leadership and based on the essence of the transformational-transactional leadership paradigm, it could be said that teachers can apply two different types of behavioural components in trying to influence their students. Moreover, although these two approaches to managing tasks and activities are slightly contradictory, they are not treated in this way, although they have different effects on student motivation and performance. Regardless of a commonly-held view in the literature that these leadership styles primarily concern organizational leaders, this paper is based on Harrison's (2011) thesis that they are sufficiently analogous to instructional leadership to make these leadership theories applicable to educational institutions. Certainly, teachers (as well as organizational leaders) coordinate and direct the activities of the educational group

through communication and control, maintaining the status of superiority due to power and expertise. Their efficiency and effectiveness are assessed in the same way that they manage group dynamics and students, i.e., by outcomes and participation. Also, certain clarifications are necessary when talking about the transactional behaviour of teachers due to the potential negative connotations associated with them. Bolkan & Goodboy (2009) define transactional leadership style as a process of exchange that “reinforces” conformist behaviour of followers in relation to the demands of leaders without necessarily generating enthusiasm and engagement related to tasks and activities. With this in mind, Harrison speaks of the instrumental, task-oriented approach of transactional leaders who extrinsically condition their followers, use rewards to stimulate good outcomes, and critique to prevent poor performance (Harrison, 2011). Although in this style of leadership the emphasis is on transaction or exchange between leaders and followers, in the education context such transactions imply that the teacher together with students identify what is important or necessary and define requirements and rewards for certain tasks.

Although it is well-known, and research results confirm it, that transformational leadership style encourages motivation and performance of followers more than transactional leadership style, high efficiency and effectiveness of teacher leaders is reflected in the combined application and synergy of both styles, and in some respect, one complements the other. Since most of the students from this research perceived the transactional teacher leadership style as more prevalent, and since the transformational teacher leadership style is not far behind it, in order to better emphasize their effects, we could talk about transformational-transactional leadership style. Realistically, these are the predominant (prevalent) dimensions in both styles.

The next group of factors, which was assumed to be important for students' perception of certain components of teacher leadership styles, are various sociodemographic parameters. The research included gender, type of school, education field, academic success and economic status of the participants. The differences in students' perceptions of teachers' leadership styles by gender were first examined. To examine these differences, the Mann–Whitney U test was used. The data are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9** Gender differences in perception of teacher leadership style

Leadership style	Gender	N	Mean ranks
Transformational	Male	179	207.35
	Female	352	271.56
	p	0.000	
Transactional	Male	179	213.69
	Female	352	268.47
	p	0.000	
Passive-avoidant	Male	179	279.22
	Female	352	236.48
	p	0.000	

As these are categorical variables, the difference between them actually speaks to their connection, because if students differ in terms of a certain leadership style, then that style is related to gender. Also, as the prevailing opinion was that the comparison by groups will give more precise data on the relations between categorical and continuous variables, techniques were used to compare groups, i.e., samples. Certainly, the data shown in the table indicate that in the opinion of male and female participants, there is a difference in teachers' leadership

style. Female students perceive transformational and transactional leadership style as more prevailing, unlike male students, i.e., male participants. On the other hand, male participants perceive passive-avoidant leadership style as more frequent than female participants. Similar to these results, based on his research, Lashway (2000) came to the conclusion that students are more inclined to evaluate teachers through the manifestation of active forms of management in relation to female students. The boys and girls from his research agreed that “bad” teachers are those who demonstrate passive leadership skills and do not require students to put in the extra effort. All teachers who practiced active leadership and clearly had higher expectations from students, were evaluated more positively by both genders. Finally, the results indicated that boys were more likely to respond favourably to task-oriented transactional leaders who praised and rewarded, but also sanctioned bad behaviour by refraining from rewarding. Examining the effects of student gender on the perception of transformational and transactional leadership of teachers, Walumbwa & Ojode (2000, 2004) came to the conclusion that female students identify themselves with the characteristics that describe transformational leadership, while male students, unlike female students, identify themselves with characteristics of transactional leadership. (Poulson et al., 2011) emphasize that in assessing the leadership style of teachers, student preferences come to the fore. Therefore, a teacher who teaches in a style that matches the student's expectations will be assessed as more appropriate.

After this, gender differences in the perceptions of the frequency of teachers' leadership style components was checked. The obtained data are shown in the following table (Table 10).

The obtained results show that there is a statistically significant difference in the perception of the frequency of teacher leadership practice in relation to student gender. More specifically, female students believe that all components of teacher leadership styles are frequent, except in the case of the passive management by exception where no statistically significant difference was found, and laissez-faire where a statistically significant difference was found but in favour of male participants. More precisely, the table shows that female students perceive intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation as the most common components of transformational leadership, and not far behind them are active management by exception and contingent rewards as components of teacher transactional leadership. It is interesting to note that male participants most often perceive the non-leadership factor (laissez-faire) as a component of the passive-avoidant leadership style of teachers.

In order to compare the results obtained by examining the perceptions of teacher leadership styles by the participants from different schools (type of school: grammar school and vocational school), the Mann-Whitney U test for independent samples was used. The data are shown in Table 11.

**Table 10** Gender differences in the perception of the frequency of teachers' leadership style components

Components <sup>2</sup>	Gender	N	Mean ranks
II*B	Male	179	217.39
	Female	352	266.66
	p	0.000	
II*A	Male	179	223.89
	Female	352	263.49
	p	0.000	
IM	Male	179	210.19
	Female	352	270.17
	p	0.000	
IS	Male	179	207.11
	Female	352	271.68
	p	0.000	
IC	Male	179	223.38
	Female	352	263.74
	p	0.000	
CR	Male	179	218.52
	Female	352	266.11
	p	0.000	
ME*A	Male	179	216.50
	Female	352	267.10
	p	0.000	
ME*P	Male	179	257.77
	Female	352	246.95
	p	0.216	
LF	Male	179	291.74
	Female	352	230.37
	p	0.000	

**Table 11** Significance of differences in students' perceptions of teachers' leadership styles from gymnasium and vocational schools

Leadership style	School type	N	Mean ranks
Transformational	Grammar school	171	<u>334.42</u>
	Vocational	360	233.50
	p	0.000	
Transactional	Grammar school	171	<u>314.43</u>
	Vocational	360	243.00
	p	0.000	
Passive-avoidant	Grammar school	171	253.63
	Vocational	360	271.87
	p	<b>0.200</b>	

<sup>2</sup> Components of teachers' transformational leadership style: idealized influence (behaviour) – II\*B, idealized influence (attribution) – II\*A, inspirational motivation – IM, intellectual stimulation – IS, individualized consideration – IC. Components of teachers' transactional leadership style: contingent rewards – CR, management by exception/active – ME\*A, management by exception/passive – ME\*P, laissez faire – LF.

Data shown indicate that there is a difference in the perception of transformational and transactional teacher leadership style depending on the type of school. If we look at the data related to the perception of transformational and transactional leadership style of teachers, it can be seen that they are somewhat more prevailing in general education schools (grammar schools) compared to vocational schools. These data are underlined in the table. However, when it comes to the perception of the passive-avoidant style of teacher leadership, no statistically significant differences were obtained between schools of different types, which is supported by the data in **bold**. After this step, the next step was to check the differences in perceptions of the frequency of using individual components of teacher leadership styles depending on the type of school. The data are shown in Table 12.

**Table 12** The differences in perceptions of the frequency of using individual components of teacher leadership style depending on the type of school

Components	School type	N	Mean ranks
II*B	Grammar school	171	295.78
	Vocational	360	226.97
	p	0.000	
II*A	Grammar school	171	300.30
	Vocational	360	224.62
	p	0.000	
IM	Grammar school	171	302.02
	Vocational	360	223.72
	p	0.000	
IS	Grammar school	171	306.98
	Vocational	360	221.15
	p	0.000	
IC	Grammar school	171	301.86
	Vocational	360	223.81
	p	.000	
CR	Grammar school	171	296.26
	Vocational	360	226.72
	p	0.000	
ME*A	Grammar school	171	283.49
	Vocational	360	233.35
	p	0.000	
ME*P	Grammar school	171	243.48
	Vocational	360	254.15
	p	<b>0.431</b>	
LF	Grammar school	171	237.94
	Vocational	360	257.03
	p	<b>0.159</b>	

According to the data shown in the table, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the perception of the frequency of using certain teacher leadership styles depending on the type of school. All components of teacher leadership styles are rated as more frequent in general education schools compared to vocational schools. Speaking about the transformational teacher leadership style, and judging by the mean rank values, the most prevailing component is intellectual stimulation in general education schools in relation

to vocational schools, followed by inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, idealized influence - attribution and idealized influence - behaviour. Moreover, the situation with transactional leadership is similar, i.e., the prevalence of all components is different based on the type of school. More precisely, the contingent rewarding component in general education schools is more prevailing than in vocational schools, followed by the component of active management by exception. The only exception is in the case of passive management by exception and laissez-faire where no statistically significant difference was observed. Although all components of teacher leadership styles have been rated as common in general education schools, the components of intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and individualized consideration stand out.

Furthermore, in order to check the differences in the perceptions of teacher leadership styles among students from schools of different education profiles, and to avoid potential errors of less precise association of variables, and given that these are more independent samples, it is most appropriate to apply Kruskal-Wallis test. The data are shown in the table below (Table 13).

**Table 13** Significance of differences in the perception of teacher leadership style based on educational profile

Leadership style	Education profile	N	Mean rank
Transformational	School of Law and Business	77	207.27
	Medical School	88	205.27
	Grammar School	172	<b>312.14</b>
	Tourism School	68	239.49
	School of Economics	95	223.76
	p	0.000	
Transactional	School of Law and Business	77	219.23
	Medical School	88	228.24
	Grammar School	172	<b>292.92</b>
	Tourism School	68	241.66
	School of Economics	95	225.91
	p	0.000	
Passive-avoidant	School of Law and Business	77	243.87
	Medical School	88	246.10
	Grammar School	172	240.10
	Tourism School	68	<b>276.74</b>
	School of Economics	95	259.99
	p	0.434	

From the aspect of the education profile, the data showed that the transformational teacher leadership style is most prevailing in grammar schools and least present in medical schools. Transactional leadership style is also most noticeable in grammar schools and least in law and business schools, while passive-avoidant style is most prevailing in tourism school and least in grammar schools.

Table 14 shows the results of Kruskal-Wallis test, which was used to examine the difference in students' perceptions of the frequency of individual components of teacher leadership styles grouped according to education profiles.

**Table 14** The differences in students' perception of the frequency of individual components of teacher leadership style according to educational profiles

Components	Education profile	N	Mean rank
II*B	School of Law and Business	77	<u>209.37</u>
	Medical School	88	219.40
	Grammar School	172	<b>296.91</b>
	Tourism School	68	252.09
	School of Economics	95	227.48
	p	0.000	
II*A	School of Law and Business	77	<u>219.44</u>
	Medical School	88	<u>192.45</u>
	Grammar School	172	<b>301.38</b>
	Tourism School	68	238.04
	School of Economics	95	246.25
	p	0.000	
IM	School of Law and Business	77	<u>203.21</u>
	Medical School	88	<u>224.47</u>
	Grammar School	172	<b>303.10</b>
	Tourism School	68	233.89
	School of Economics	95	229.61
	p	0.000	
IS	School of Law and Business	77	226.36
	Medical School	88	<u>203.19</u>
	Grammar School	172	<b>307.94</b>
	Tourism School	68	245.40
	School of Economics	95	213.54
	p	0.000	
IC	School of Law and Business	77	<u>213.69</u>
	Medical School	88	<u>213.99</u>
	Grammar School	172	<b>301.58</b>
	Tourism School	68	236.73
	School of Economics	95	231.53
	p	0.000	
CR	School of Law and Business	77	<u>214.03</u>
	Medical School	88	225.36
	Grammar School	172	<b>297.02</b>
	Tourism School	68	240.66
	School of Economics	95	225.93
	p	0.000	
ME*A	School of Law and Business	77	<u>228.16</u>
	Medical School	88	232.19
	Grammar School	172	<b>284.42</b>
	Tourism School	68	242.52
	School of Economics	95	229.87
	p	0.005	
LF	School of Law and Business	77	241.10
	Medical School	88	253.88
	Grammar School	172	237.08
	Tourism School	68	277.79
	School of Economics	95	259.75
	p	0.318	
ME*P	School of Law and Business	77	250.59
	Medical School	88	240.28
	Grammar School	172	242.80
	Tourism School	68	266.52
	School of Economics	95	262.36
	p	0.657	

In this table, questions about the perception of teacher leadership styles are elaborated according to the categories of components and education profiles, and the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test show that in the case of the education profile variable, there is at least one group of students who differ statistically from others in the perception of the components of transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant teacher leadership. More precisely, the obtained data indicate that there are differences in the visibility of the components of different teacher leadership styles from the aspect of the school field of work/education profile.

Therefore, talking about the individual components of transformational leadership, in all these cases, (intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, idealized influence (attribution and behaviour)), the highest average score was given by participants from grammar schools, and the lowest mostly from medical school and law and business school. A similar pattern was observed for the components of transactional leadership - in all of the above cases (contingent rewarding and active management by exception), the highest average value was calculated for grammar school students and the lowest for students from law and business school.

Finally, the results of the applied test regarding the representation of the components of passive-avoidant leadership style indicate that no statistically significant differences were obtained between schools in different fields of work. Although no statistical difference is significant in the observed variables, it is interesting that the participants from the tourism school gave the highest average score to the components of laissez-faire leadership and passive management by exception, and the lowest score was given to these components by students from grammar schools and medical schools.

The link between students' perceptions of certain components of teacher leadership styles and the participants' academic success was also checked. The first step was to check the connection between students' perceptions of teacher leadership styles and students' academic success using Spearman's correlation coefficient. The obtained data are shown in Table 15.

**Table 15** Correlation between the perceived teacher leadership style and participants academic success

	Transformational leadership style	Transactional leadership style	Passive-avoidant leadership style
Academic success			
Spearman's rho	.380	.371	-.168
p	.000	.000	.000

The remaining data collected during the survey confirm that the perception of teacher leadership style is in correlation with the participants' academic success. More specifically, there is a statistically significant correlation of low to medium intensity between student school success and perceived level of teacher leadership style. The direction of this connection is positive in the case of transformational and transactional teacher leadership (students with better academic success perceive transformational and transactional teacher leadership as more prevailing), while in the case of passive-avoidant leadership, the correlation is negative (students with lower average grades more often claim that passive-avoidant teacher leadership style is more frequent).



After this analysis, the correlation between the students' academic success and the components of teacher leadership styles was checked. In the first step, correlation between the components of teacher transformational leadership style and students' academic success were calculated. The data are shown in Table 16.

**Table 16** Correlation between the components of teacher transformational leadership style and students' academic success

	II*B	II*A	IM	IS	IC
Academic success					
Spearman's rho	.282**	.308**	.331**	.339**	.383**
p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

\*\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.01.

\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

The obtained data show that there is a statistically significant positive correlation of low to medium intensity between students' academic success and all components of teacher transformational leadership style. Students with better academic success believe that the components of transformational leadership style are more frequent in teachers. When it comes to medium intensity correlation, the highest values are seen between academic achievement and individualized consideration ( $r = .383$ ), intellectual stimulation ( $r = .339$ ), inspirational motivation ( $r = .331$ ) and idealized influence - attribution ( $r = .308$ ). A lower level of correlation was found between student achievement and idealized influence - behaviour ( $r = .282$ ).

After this step, the correlation between the components of teacher transactional leadership style and students' academic success were calculated.

**Table 17** Correlation between the components of teacher transactional leadership style and students' academic success

	CR	ME*A
Academic success		
Spearman's rho	.341	.355
p	.000	.000

\*\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.01.

\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

The obtained data indicate that there is a statistically significant positive correlation of medium intensity between students' academic success and all components of transactional teacher leadership style. Students with better performance in school perceive both components of transactional leadership style in teachers as more prevailing. In the next step (Table 18), the correlation between the components of teacher passive-avoidant leadership style and students' academic success were calculated.

**Table 18** Correlation between the components of teacher passive-avoidant leadership style and students' academic success

	ME*P	LF
Academic success		
Spearman's rho	-.308	-.241
p	.402	.000

\*\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.01.

\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

Based on the results presented, it can be seen that there is a statistically significant negative correlation of low intensity between school achievement and the laissez-faire component of the passive-avoidant leadership style of teachers. Students with better school performance believe that the laissez-faire component of the passive-avoidant style of teachers is less prevailing. On the other hand, no correlation was found between the passive management by exception component and student achievement in school.

As in the previous case, the correlation between the participants' economic status and their perception of teacher leadership style was examined by calculating Spearman's correlation coefficient. The obtained data are shown in Table 19.

**Table 19** Correlation between the participants' economic status and their perception of teacher leadership style

	Transformational leadership style	Transactional leadership style	Passive-avoidant leadership style
Economic status			
Spearman's rho	-.026	-.077	.046
p	.546	.075	.288

No statistically significant correlation was found between the economic status of students and their perceived leadership style of teachers. Differences in students' economic status are not accompanied by differences in their perceptions of teacher leadership styles. This finding was also tested on the components for each of the examined leadership styles and the finding remained largely the same, as we can see from the tables below.

**Table 20** Correlation between the components of teacher transformational leadership style and students' economic status

	II*B	II*A	IM	IS	IC
Economic status					
Spearman's rho	-.049	-.013	.015	-.064	-.066
p	.277	.769	.732	.151	.138

\*\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.01.

\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

Based on the data presented in the table, it can be said that no statistically significant correlation was found between the economic status of students and the components of the transformational teacher leadership style. This result indicates that the components of transformational leadership style do not correlate with students' economic status, i.e., the differences in students' economic status do not accompany differences in their perception of all listed components of transformational leadership: idealized influence (behaviour and attribution), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration.

**Table 21** Correlation between the components of teacher transactional leadership style and students' economic status

	CR	ME*A
Economic status		
Spearman's rho	-.052	-.110*
p	.248	.014

\*\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.01.

\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

The calculated correlation coefficients shown in Table 21 indicate that there is a significant correlation between the economic status of students and their perception of management by exception active. This result indicates that this component is negatively correlated with the economic status of students, i.e., the more stable the economic status of participants, the less they notice this component of the transactional model in their teachers. Thus, there is a statistically significant negative correlation between the economic status of participants and the observed characteristics of the transactional leadership of teachers, more specifically the presence of active management by exception. It is interesting that in the case of contingent rewarding, no statistically significant correlation was obtained with the estimated economic status of students.

**Table 22** Correlation between the components of teacher passive-avoidant leadership style and students' economic status

	ME*P	LF
Economic status		
Spearman's rho	.028	.048
p	.536	.288

\*\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.01.

\* The correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

Based on the results obtained, it's clear that no statistically significant correlation was observed between the estimated economic status of students and the components of passive-avoidant teacher leadership style. This result indicates that the differences in the perception of passive exception management and teacher laissez-faire leadership are not related to the economic status of students.

By examining the relationship between the independent and control variables, the findings shown above could be presented by breaking them down into individual segments of the observed variables, as follows:

- While the transformational leadership components such as intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation, followed by transactional leadership components such as management by exception - active and contingent rewarding are most often observed by female participants, in the case of male participants such status has the non-leadership style. Generally speaking, based on the obtained data, it can be concluded that the perception of teacher leadership styles depends on the gender structure of the survey participants.
- By analyzing the relationship between the type of school attended by participants and their perception of individual components of teacher leadership styles, a somewhat more detailed picture of teacher leadership practice was obtained. That is, the perception of the components of teacher leadership styles is in a sense

related to the type of school that students attend. Higher mean rank values for the components of transformational leadership were observed in general education schools than in vocational schools. Also, although the mean rank values are somewhat lower, the transactional leadership style components are more frequent in general education schools than in vocational ones. However, such a trend is not present in the case of the components of passive-avoidant teacher leadership style and school type: the mean rank values for the observed components are not only the lowest but there is no statistically significant difference in their presence in general and vocational schools.

- Perception of the components of teacher leadership styles is in a sense related to the type of school students attend. Namely, the findings indicate that the components of transformational and transactional leadership are most frequently seen in grammar schools and are the least frequent in law and business schools. However, when it comes to the passive-avoidant leadership components, the situation is different. More specifically, the data indicate that the observed components of this style are mostly practiced by teachers in the tourism school and least in the grammar school (*laissez-faire*) and medical school (passive management by exception). In addition, no statistical difference in the frequency of the examined variables is significant. It can be said that there is a certain association between the education profile of students and their perceptions of the components of teacher leadership styles, but it is not at the level of statistical significance in all examined cases, and there are probably other factors that better explain differences in teacher leadership practice.
- The perception of the transformational teacher leadership style is positively correlated with the academic success of students, and although this correlation is mostly of medium intensity, it is still one of the most intense positive correlations when compared to the perception of all other components. The same trend of correlation (medium intensity) is observed in the perception of transactional teacher leadership style and academic success. While the correlation between the *laissez-faire* leadership style component and students' academic success is negative and statistically significant, the correlation between the management by exception-passive and academic success is not relevant. In general, based on the findings, it can be concluded that the academic success of students can have a significant share in their perception of teacher leadership.
- While the correlation between the perceived components of teacher transactional leadership style (specifically management by exception-active) and students' economic status is negative and statistically significant, all other correlations between the perceived components of teacher transformational and passive-avoidant leadership style and students' economic status are not statistically significant.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Leadership in education is an important field of scientific research and indisputably necessary for the successful education. Although many papers highlight the enormous importance of leadership in education, it is often linked to the hierarchical leadership present in schools, thus leadership characteristics are largely attributed to school principals, supervisors, and those with formal titles. In such papers, teacher leadership gained little

space, so the researchers neglected teacher leadership and its contribution to the quality of the teaching process. Over time, progressive schools and districts across developed countries recognized the importance of leadership behaviour of those directly involved in the process of teaching, so the concept of teacher leadership began to come to the fore, which has eventually been proven by professional and scientific literature, in various theoretical and research studies. In Serbia, unfortunately, such research efforts are very scarce or they are not a priority. Nevertheless, teacher leadership exists and takes place despite the lack of its clear and precise definition and study.

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## **ANALIZA LIDERSKIH STILOVA NASTAVNIKA – PERCEPCIJE UČENIKA SREDNJIH ŠKOLA**

*Istraživanje je sprovedeno sa ciljem utvrđivanja koji leaderski stil nastavnika učenici srednjih škola percipiraju kao dominirajući kada je ponašanje nastavnika predstavljeno kroz komponente transformacionog, transakcionog i pasivno-izbegavajućeg vođenja. Percepcije leaderskih stilova nastavnika ispitivane su i u odnosu na različite socio-demografske varijable. U istraživanju je učestvovalo ukupno 500 učenika završnih razreda srednjih škola u Nišu. S obzirom na to da je ovo istraživanje imalo uporište u teoriji transformacionog i teoriji transakcionog liderstva, informacije o leaderskom stilu nastavnika i faktorima liderstva prikupljene su putem adaptiranog multifaktorskog upitnika liderstva (Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire) – MLQ (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Rezultati istraživanja ukazuju da nastavnici srednjih škola u Nišu praktikuju i transakcioni i transformacioni leaderski stil, odnosno u školama obuhvaćenim istraživanjem je izražen model liderstva punog opsega. Takođe, istraživanje je potvrdilo da varijable poput pola, tipa škole, obrazovnog smera i školskog uspeha ispitanika participiraju u percepciji leaderskog stila nastavnika.*

*Ključne reči: leadersko ponašanje, transformaciono liderstvo, transakciono liderstvo, multifaktorski upitnik liderstva*