

## The Relationship Between Supportive Behaviors of School Administrators and Psychological Empowerment According to Teacher Perceptions

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### Abstract

This study aims to determine the relationship between school administrators' supportive behaviours and psychological empowerment according to teacher perceptions, relational survey model as a quantitative research method was used. The population of the study consisted of 400 teachers working at primary schools in central Bolu, Turkey in the 2020-2021 academic year. As data collection instruments, Administrator Support Scale (PSS) and Psychological Empowerment Scale (PES) were used. Since the data showed normal distribution, parametric tests were employed in the analysis of the data. According to the results of the study, the fact that the teachers' perceptions of the supportive behaviors of the school administrators in terms of emotional and educational support are at the level of slightly agree shows that school administrators are inadequate at supporting teachers emotionally and educationally. Since the school administrators who should be the closest source of information in the professional development of the teachers have supervision and guidance duties, it should be taken into consideration that they are incapable of supporting the teachers in educational sense. That the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment in the dimension of self-determination are at the moderate level is also a striking result. There is a positive and highly significant relationship between the supportive behaviours of school administrators and teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment. Supportive behaviors of school administrators are a significant predictor of teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment.

**Keywords:** Administrator support; empowerment; psychological empowerment; administrator; teacher.

## Öğretmen Algılarına Göre Okul Müdürlerinin Destekleyici Davranışları ile Psikolojik Güçlendirme Arasındaki İlişki

### Öz

Öğretmen algılarına göre okul müdürlerinin destekleyici davranışları ile psikolojik güçlendirme arasındaki ilişkiyi belirlemeyi amaçlayan araştırmada nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden ilişkisel tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma evrenini, 2020-2021 eğitim-öğretim yılı Bolu il merkezinde bulunan ilkokullarda görev yapan toplam 400 öğretmen oluşturmuştur. Araştırmada; "Müdür Desteği Ölçeği" ve "Psikolojik Güçlendirme Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Veriler normal dağılım gösterdiği için verilerin analizinde parametrik testler uygulanmıştır. Araştırma sonucuna göre; öğretmenlerin okul müdürlerinin duygusal ve öğretimsel destekleyici davranışlarına yönelik algılarının kısmen katılıyorum düzeyinde olması, okul müdürlerinin duygusal ve öğretimsel anlamda öğretmenleri desteklemede yetersiz kaldıklarını göstermektedir. Öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişiminde en yakın bilgi kaynağı olması gereken okul müdürlerinin denetleme ve rehberlik görevleri bulunduğundan öğretimsel anlamda öğretmenleri desteklemede yetersiz kalmaları düşünülmeli gereken bir durumdur. Öğretmenlerin psikolojik güçlendirme algılarının özerklik boyutunda orta düzeyde çıkması da dikkat çeken ve çarpıcı bir sonuçtur. Okul yöneticilerinin destekleyici davranışları ile öğretmenlerin psikolojik güçlendirme algıları arasında pozitif yönlü yüksek düzeyde anlamlı bir ilişki vardır. Okul müdürlerinin destekleyici davranışları öğretmenlerin psikolojik güçlendirme algıları üzerinde anlamlı bir yordayıcıdır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Müdür desteği, güçlendirme, psikolojik güçlendirme, yönetici, öğretmen.

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## INTRODUCTION

Rapid changes and developments in the 21st century necessitate the innovation and change in education as well. It is considered that in terms of ensuring a sense of work, increasing the teachers' competence and enabling them to have a self-determination at work, administrator support has an important role for teachers who will ensure this innovation and change in schools which are one of the most important educational organizations because the administrators' support to teachers, who are at an important point in increasing the quality of educational activities, will motivate them more and empowerment them psychologically at a higher level. In this context, school administrators had an important place in preparing an environment suitable for psychological empowerment and personal development and in providing the support needed by teachers when necessary (Özocak & Yılmaz, 2020).

### Literature Review

#### Administrative support

Managerial support has been defined by various researchers. Managerial support is defined by Burke Borucki and Hurley (1992) as managers' support, encouragement, and care for employees. According to Cohen, Underwood, and Gottlieb (2000), the manager's response to the employee's expectation of help by using emotional, material and information resources for the help employees need; while it is defined by Bhanthumnavin (2003) as the organizational support of the manager for the employee and the positive business relationship between the manager and the employee; Powell (2011) states that managerial support is when managers observe the contributions of their staff and care about their well-being; Çakmak-Otluoğlu (2012), on the other hand, defined it as providing opportunities for employees to develop their skills, dedicating time to their career goals, and supporting their career-oriented education.

Managerial support has serious contributions to the attitudes and behaviors of the employees and provides the development of the perceptions and impressions of the employees about the organization (DeConinck & Johnson, 2009). All kinds of behaviours, attitudes, positive and negative actions that the manager will show to the employees as the representative of the organization can affect the commitment of the employee with the organization as well as ensuring that the relationship with the manager is positive (Demarais & White, 2004). The supportive behaviours of administrators have a positive effect on teachers' starting and continuing work (Lashley & Boscardin, 2003), reducing stress and burnout, teacher engagement, and job satisfaction (Littrell, Billingsley, & Cross, 1994). Teachers supported by administrators voluntarily help administrators' requests (Tindle, 2012). The supportive behaviours of the managers will increase the quality of the work environment by meeting the wishes and needs of the employees and will enable the employees to develop positive attitudes towards the organization and thus to exhibit behaviours that will increase organizational productivity (Lambert & Hogan, 2009). In case of little or no supportive behaviours of school administrators, decrease in student motivation, poor decision-making by teachers, and student discipline problems occur (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004), causing teachers to experience more stress and loss of motivation (Singh & Billingsley, 2001). In this sense, it can be stated that the supportive behaviours of school administrators can affect the effective and productive work of teachers.

In the literature, administrator support is defined as emotional, instrumental, informative, and evaluative by House (1981), as emotional, instrumental, and professional evaluator by Littrell, Billingsley and Cross (1994), Bhanthumnavin (2000) as informational, material and emotional, Günbayı, Dağlı and Kalkan (2013), as emotional support, instrumental support, and instructional support, and this research was handled within the scope of these dimensions. Material administrator support is the administrator's provision of material, time, finance, and human resources that employees need to achieve their goals (Bhanthumnavin, 2000). Emotional administrator support is showing interest, love and respect, valuing, accepting, helping employees cope with difficulties and stress, and help them in conflict resolution (Rooney & Gottlieb, 2007). Instrumental administrator support is that school administrators provide the space, time, material and all resources that teachers need. Instructional administrator support, on the other hand, is the provision of up-to-date and useful information and guidance to teachers in order to support the professional development of teachers, to give constructive and continuous feedback on the work of teachers, and to present their classroom practices more effectively (Littrell et al., 1994).

The support of the administrators is very important in creating a school environment that allows teachers to work in a peaceful and comfortable way, showing attention to their problems, and creating a communication environment where their ideas, wishes and complaints are considered important, and a school culture and climate where their success is appreciated (Ertürk, 2021a). As a matter of fact, it is seen in the literature that many organizational behaviour issues with administrator support are the subject of research. Administrator support

includes intrinsic motivation (Khalid, Rathore, & Aslam, 2017), happiness (Bardakoğlu, Akgündüz, Kızılcıoğlu, & Yeşilyurt, 2017), quality of leader-member interaction (Özkara, Taş, & Aydın, 2019), job satisfaction (Qureshi & Hamid, 2017), job stress (Naidoo, 2018; Wickramasinghe, 2012), performance (Azman, Sieng, Ajis, Dollah & Boerhannoeddin, 2009), organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors (Şama & Kolamaz, 2011; Günbayı et al., 2013; Wang, 2014), teacher leadership (Savaş, 2016) and organizational cynicism (Özkara, Taş, & Aydın, 2019).

It is also considered to be important that school administrators support teachers instrumentally, emotionally, and educationally in order for the teachers to see their works meaningful, gain competence in it and be self-determined in doing their job. In this context, teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment emerge. As a matter of fact, Limon (2022) emphasized that school principals should create an empowering school environment. In this context, it can be said that the supportive behaviors of school principals are very important in creating an empowering school environment in schools.

### **Psychological Empowerment**

The concept of the empowerment of employees can be defined as a process with psychological and behavioral dimensions that increase their decision-making skills, and enable them to develop through cooperation, sharing, and teamwork (Koçel, 2015). The empowerment of employees could be achieved by giving them autonomy, making them feel competent and appreciating their work (Aryee & Chen, 2006). Emphasizing that empowerment is important in both personal and organizational dimensions, the teacher's ability to have a word in decisions about the school and to show her expertise increases her motivation (Dilekçi & Sezgin Nartgün, 2020). Empowerment is a process with behavioral and psychological dimensions. While behavioral empowerment focuses on administrative practices in the empowerment of employees (Ertürk, 2021b), psychological empowerment refers to the employee's perception of whether they feel empowered. It bears importance how administrative practices of the administrators are perceived by the employees. The psychological dimension of the empowerment differs from administrative practices, highlighting the employees' perceptions of the empowerment practices and their experiences (Arslantaş, 2008). Psychological empowerment refers to the fact that the employees find their works meaningful, feel competent about it, have the decision-making skill, and think that they play an active role in their own work (Sağlam-Arı & Ergeneli, 2003). Psychological empowerment is discussed in four dimensions: *meaning*, *competence*, *self-determination*, and *impact*. *Meaning* refers to the compatibility between requirements of the work and the employees' beliefs, values, and judgments; *competence* is the sum of the perceptions that the employees develop about how adequate (expert, competent) they are in their work; *self-determination* is the perceptions that the employees can take the initiative related to their work and implement it by making decisions on their own; *impact* refers to the employee's belief on whether they have an impact on the administrative practices and outcomes of the organization (Spreitzer, 1996).

Psychological empowerment enables the employees to take initiative, identify the risk, promote innovation, benefit from intra-organizational entrepreneurship and creativity, respond to the problems faster and cope with high uncertainties (Bakan, 2015). Since the administrators in organizations with psychological empowerment practices transfer more authority and responsibilities to the employees, these employees will have new experiences and learn more as a result of the authority and responsibilities they receive (Doğan, 2019). Psychologically empowered employees see themselves as more capable and believe that they will have an impact on their work in a meaningful and valuable way. They also believe that they will feel happy and can create a spacious organizational climate by reflecting their positive feelings to their colleagues (Çavuşoğlu & Güler, 2016). Psychological empowerment enables the employees to increase their work efficiency, to produce quality products and services in a certain period of time as a result of taking responsibility for themselves, to have more initiatives and responsibilities, to reveal their creative and innovative ideas, and it enables the administrators to have more time to do their important work (Baltaş, 2001). Psychological empowerment plays an important role in improving the performances of the employees, increasing levels of organizational commitment (Chen et al., 2007; Spreitzer et al., 1997) and having lower turnover intentions; moreover, supportive attitudes of the administrators towards the employee empowerment positively affects job satisfactions of the employees (Podsakoff et al., 2000) and organizational efficiency and productivity also improve (Sheikhepoor & Sheikhepoor, 2015). Previous studies have showed that psychological empowerment has a positive correlation with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work performance, organizational citizenship behaviors and innovative behaviors; a negative correlation with turnover intentions and strain (Seibert, Wang & Courtright, 2011). The fact that psychological empowerment is associated with many organizational behaviors emphasizes the administrator behaviors that can affect the employees' perceptions of psychological empowerment in the first place. In this respect, the investigation

of whether the supportive behaviors of school administrators affect the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment reveals the authenticity of this study. Therefore, it is deemed as important to reveal the effect of supportive behaviors of school administrators on teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment in terms of their contribution to the literature and guiding the practitioners. In this context, the aim of this study is to determine the relationship between the supportive behaviors of school administrators and psychological empowerment according to teacher perceptions.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were answered:

1. What is the level of teachers' perceptions of school administrators' support and psychological empowerment?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the support of school administrators and teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment?
3. Is the support of school administrators a predictor of the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment?

## METHOD

### Research Design

In this study, survey model that as a quantitative research method was used. The relational survey model is a model that aims to determine the existence of co-change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2011). The purpose of using the specified model is to determine the thoughts and attitudes of the teachers participating in the research towards the supportive behaviors of school administrators and psychological empowerment, and the degree of relationship between these two variables (Balcı, 2013).

### Study Group

The study group of the research consisted of 400 teachers working in primary schools in the city center of Bolu in the 2020-2021 academic year, and the sample was not taken since it was aimed to reach the entire study population. Valid data were collected from 283 of these teachers and analyzed. Of the participating teachers, 136 women and 147 male, 49 are in the age range of 20-30, 61 are in the age range of 31-40, 76 are in the age range of 41-50, and 97 are in the age range of 51 and over. 36 of the teachers have 1-5 years, 45 have 6-10 years, 49 have 11-15 years, 60 have 16-20 years and 93 have 21 years or more seniority.

### Data Collection Instrument

In this study, Empowering Leadership Scale and Psychological Empowerment Scale were used.

### School Administrator Support Scale

The scale was developed by Litrell (1992) and redesigned by DiPaola (2012) as 4 dimensions (emotional, evaluative, instrumental and professional support). The Administrator Support Scale adapted to Turkish by Günbaşı et al. (2013) consists of three sub-dimensions and a total of 16 items: *emotional support* (4 items), *instrumental support* (4 items) and *educational support* (8 items), which was used in this study. Developed as a 6-point Likert scale, I strongly disagree (1); disagree (2); partially disagree (3); "I partially agree (4); I agree (5); I strongly agree (6)". The ranges used to evaluate the scale are: "1.00-1.83" strongly disagree, "1.84-2.67" disagree, "2.68-3.50" partially disagree, "3.51-4.33" partially agree, "4.34-5.17" agree and "5.18-6.00" strongly agree. Günbaşı et al. (2013) calculated the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale as .82 in *emotional support*, .94 in *educational support*, .88 in *instrumental support* and .95 in the whole scale. As for this study, the Cronbach Alpha score was calculated as .83 in *emotional support*, .92 in *educational support*, .87 in *instrumental support* and .93 in the whole scale.

### Psychological Empowerment Scale

Psychological Empowerment Scale, which was developed by Spreitzer (1995), adapted by Sürgevil, Tolay and Topoyan (2013) and consists of four dimensions which are *meaning*, *competence*, *self-determination* and *impact* has three items under each dimension. This scale was graded with 5-point Likert type in this study. Accordingly, the participants were asked to indicate to what extent they agree with the statements related to psychological empowerment by marking one of the options from *1-strongly disagree*, *2-disagree*, *3- neutral*, *4-agree*, *5-strongly agree*. Scale, "1.00-1.79" too low; ".80-2.59" low; "2.60-3.39" medium; "3.40-4.19" often; and "4.20-5.00" were evaluated at all time intervals. Sürgevil et al., (2013) calculated the Cronbach Alpha coefficient

as .84 in *meaning*, .85 in *competence*, .85 in *self-determination*, .90 in *impact*. As for this study, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated as .87 in *meaning*, .86 in *competence*, .88 in *self-determination* and .91 in *impact*. Depending on the internal reliability score, it can be said that the scale is considered reliable because the internal reliability scores of the dimensions in all structures are over Cronbach Alpha .70.

**Data Analysis**

The data of the research were collected in an online survey. The scales were sent to 400 teachers in the research population via e-mail, and feedback was obtained from 283 teachers. The study data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 20. Skewness and Kurtosis coefficients were checked for the normality of the data. The fact that Skewness and Kurtosis values fall between +1.5 and -1.5 indicates that the data shows normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Upon the analysis, it was determined that the data addressed normal distribution given that the total of the administrator support scale (Skewness: -.524; Kurtosis: .251), and sub-dimensions such as emotional support (Skewness: -.845; Kurtosis: .362), instrumental support (Skewness: -.751; Kurtosis: 1,023) and educational support (Skewness: -.812; Kurtosis: .492); psychological empowerment scale (Skewness: -.544; Kurtosis: .123), and sub-dimensions such as meaning (Skewness: -1,180; Kurtosis: -.162), competence (Skewness: -.783; Kurtosis: .005), self-determination (Skewness: -.628; Kurtosis: .712) and impact (Skewness: -.211; Kurtosis: -.174) are between +1.5 and -1.5. Therefore, parametric tests were employed. In this context, descriptive analysis of teachers' perceptions of school administrator support and psychological empowerment; pearson correlation analysis for the relationship between school administrator support and psychological empowerment; multiple regression analysis was conducted for the predictive level of school administrator support for psychological empowerment.

Whether there is a multicollinearity problem among the independent variables that does not fit the regression analysis was examined with r coefficients, Variance Amplification Factor (less than Variance Inflation Factor/VIF:10) and tolerance values (greater than 0.2). It has been determined that the r coefficients are lower than .80. In order to avoid the problem of multicollinearity, the r coefficient between the independent variables should be below 0.9 (Field, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). It was determined that the VIF value ranged between 2.14 and 3.91. The tolerance value is between .37 and .74. These obtained values show that there is no multicollinearity problem between the variables (Field, 2009; Stevens, 2009).

**Research Ethics**

This research was examined in the Ethics Committee of Human Studies in Social Sciences at XXX and was found ethically appropriate.

**FINDINGS**

**Teachers' Perceptions of School Administrators' Supportive Behaviors**

Based on the teachers' perceptions, supportive behaviors of school administrators are shown below.

**Table 1.** Teachers' Perceptions of School Administrators' Supportive Behaviors

Scale and Dimensions	n	$\bar{x}$	Sd
Emotional Support	283	4.28	0.38
Instrumental Support	283	4.99	0.52
Educational Support	283	4.02	0.74
Total Administrator Support Scale	283	4.23	0.56

According to Table 1, while the supportive behaviors of the school administrators based on the teachers' perceptions were found to be at the level of *I agree* in *instrumental support* ( $\bar{x}$ =4.99), it was at the level of *slightly agree* in the sub-dimensions such as *emotional support* ( $\bar{x}$ =4.28), *educational support* ( $\bar{x}$ =4.02) and the whole *administrator support scale* ( $\bar{x}$ =4.23). This finding indicates that while they slightly support in *emotional support*, *educational support* and in the whole *administrator support scale*, they are supported strongly in *instrumental support*.

### Teachers' perceptions on the psychological empowerment

Teachers' perceptions on the psychological empowerment are shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Teachers' Perceptions of Psychological Empowerment

Scale and Dimensions	n	$\bar{x}$	Sd
Meaning	283	3.71	0.48
Competence	283	3.89	0.49
Self-Determination	283	2.29	0.68
Impact	283	3.42	0.89
Total Psychological Empowerment Scale	283	3.26	0.51

As shown in Table 2, teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment were found to be at high level in the dimensions of meaning ( $\bar{x}$ =3.71), competence ( $\bar{x}$ =3.89), impact ( $\bar{x}$ =3.42) and the total of the *psychological empowerment scale* ( $\bar{x}$ =3.26), but at *moderate* level in the sub-dimension of *self-determination* ( $\bar{x}$ =2.29). These findings show that teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment are high in *meaning*, *competence*, *impact* and the whole *psychological empowerment scale*, but it is moderate in *self-determination*. It is a remarkable finding that the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment in the dimension of self-determination are moderate.

### The relationship between the supportive behaviors of school administrators and teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment

Regarding the relationship between the supportive behaviors of school administrators and teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment, Pearson correlation coefficient results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Pearson Correlation Coefficient Regarding the Relationship Between the Supportive Behaviors of School Administrators and Teachers' Perceptions of Psychological Empowerment

Administrator Support Scale and Sub-Dimensions		Psychological Empowerment Scale and Sub-Dimensions				
		M*	C*	S*	I*	PE*
Emotional Support	r	.71**	.42**	.73**	.39**	.56**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Instrumental Support	r	.58**	.63**	.41**	.28**	.52**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Educational Support	r	.76**	.78**	.79**	.72**	.70**
	p	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000
Total Administrator Support	r	.71**	.79**	.78**	.27**	.77**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

\*\*p<0.01, \*M: Meaning; \*C: Competence; \*S: Self-Determination; \*I: Impact; \*PE: Psychological Empowerment

Correlation coefficient as absolute value indicates a strong correlation between 0.71-1.00; moderate correlation between 0.70-0.31 and a weak correlation between 0.30-0.00 (Büyüköztürk, 2011).

Table 3 shows the existence, magnitude with direction of correlation between administrator support and psychological empowerment. According to teachers' perceptions, there is a strong correlation between *emotional support* and the dimensions of the psychological empowerment such as *self-determination* ( $r=.77$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) and *meaning* ( $r=.71$ ;  $p<0.01$ ); a moderate positive correlation between the dimensions of *competence* ( $r=.42$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), *impact* ( $r=.39$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) and the whole scale ( $r=.56$ ;  $p<0.01$ ); a moderate correlation between *instrumental support* of school administrators and the dimensions of psychological empowerment such as *meaning* ( $r=.58$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), *competence* ( $r=.63$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), *self-determination* ( $r=.41$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) and the whole scale ( $r=.52$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) but a weak positive correlation with *impact* ( $r=.28$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Also, there is a strong positive correlation between *educational support* of school administrators and the dimensions of psychological empowerment such as *meaning* ( $r=.76$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), *competence* ( $r=.78$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), *self-determination* ( $r=.79$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), *impact* ( $r=.72$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) and the whole scale ( $r=.70$ ;  $p<0.01$ ); a strong positive correlation between the total administrator support scale and the dimensions of psychological empowerment such as *meaning* ( $r=.71$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), *competence* ( $r=.79$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), *self-determination* ( $r=.78$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) and the whole scale ( $r=.77$ ;  $p<0.01$ ); but a weak positive correlation with *impact* ( $r=.27$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), which refers to significant relationships as a whole.

### The Prediction Level of School Administrators' Supportive Behaviors on Teachers' Perceptions of Psychological Empowerment

The results of multiple regression analysis of the supportive behaviors of school administrators to predict the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** The Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for the Emotional Support, Instrumental Support and Educational Support of the Administrator Support Scale to Predict the Dimension of Meaning of Psychological Empowerment

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	$\beta$	Std. Er.	$\beta$	t	p	F	p	R <sup>2</sup>
Meaning	Stability	1.83	.48		3.81	0.00	72.34	0.00	0.67
	Emotional S.	0.59	.34	.63	1.74	0.00			
	Instrumental S.	0.34	.19	.36	1.82	0.00			
	Educational S.	0.48	.16	.51	2.94	0.00			
Competence	Stability	1.02	.31		3.29	0.00	75.47	0.00	0.82
	Emotional S.	0.12	.10	.19	1.23	0.00			
	Instrumental S.	0.45	.12	.47	3.75	0.00			
	Educational S.	0.30	.16	.26	1.88	0.00			
Self-Determination	Stability	1.03	.27		3.84	0.00	68.42	0.00	0.57
	Emotional S.	0.12	.09	.21	1.33	0.00			
	Instrumental S.	0.53	.18	.59	2.94	0.00			
	Educational S.	0.42	.10	.44	4.35	0.00			
Impact	Stability	1.01	.25		3.97	0.00	60.32	0.00	0.35
	Emotional S.	0.23	.20	.29	1.13	0.00			
	Instrumental S.	0.37	.07	.33	4.83	0.00			
	Educational S.	0.44	.08	.47	5.15	0.00			
Psychological Empowerment	Stability	1.43	.24		5.95	0.00	76.42	0.00	0.62
	Administrator S.	0.82	.09	.76	9.12	0.00			

\* < 0.01 S: support

As illustrated in Table 4, all the sub-divisions of administrator support were found to be significant predictors of the dimensions of psychological empowerment such as *meaning* ( $F=72.34$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), *competence* ( $F=75.47$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), *self-determination* ( $F=68.42$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) and *impact* ( $F=60.32$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). It was concluded that the total administrator support scale was a significant predictor of the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment ( $F=76.42$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). While the administrator support and sub-divisions explained the perceptions of psychological empowerment as %67 of the total variance in *meaning* ( $R^2=0.67$ ), %82 of the total variance in *competence* ( $R^2=0.82$ ), %57 of the total variance in *self-determination* ( $R^2=0.57$ ), %35 of the total variance in *impact* ( $R^2=0.35$ ); total administrator support scale explained 62% of the total variance in teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment ( $R^2=0.62$ ). p values showed that emotional, instrumental and educational support dimensions were significant predictor variables on the dimensions of meaning, competence, self-determination and impact which are the sub-dimensions of psychological empowerment; also, the total administrator support scale was found to be significant predictor variable on the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment ( $p<0.01$ ). These findings show that the emotional, instrumental and educational support provided to teachers by school administrators has an effect on the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment.

## Discussion

In this study aimed at determining the relationship between school administrators' supportive behaviors and psychological empowerment according to teacher perceptions. It was concluded that the supportive behaviors of school administrators were at the level of slightly agree in the dimensions of emotional and educational support and the total administrator support scale; however, it was at the level of I agree in the dimension of instrumental support. Supporting teachers emotionally requires school administrators to be competent in terms of positive psychology because trust, empathy, virtuous behaviors, participation in decision making, good relationships, effective communication, and psychological well-being are the issues of positive psychology that will contribute school administrators to support teachers emotionally the fact that school administrators have competence in these issues will increase the level of emotional support they will give to teachers.

It is thought-provoking that school administrators who are expected to provide the teachers with educational support to run the educational facilities effectively and efficiently are supporting them moderately instead since school administrators are primarily responsible for the quality of the education carried out in the school. Therefore, the moderate level of educational support which is closely related to the educational activities should be questioned by school administrators who are expected to provide teachers with instant guidance and help. In the studies on the administrator support in the related literature (eg., Derinbay, 2011; Doğan, 2014; Ertürk, Keskinçilic Kara, & Güneş, 2016; Özdemir, 2010; Özdemir-Demirel, 2012), it was concluded that teachers have a high level of perceptions of administrator support, unlike the results of this study. These differences may be caused by the situation that school administrators have become incompetent in providing teachers with the necessary support required and is caused by the fact that the professional development of school administrators has been overshadowed by the rapid changes brought about by the 21st century. In fact, both school administrators and teachers should pay attention to their professional development as educators in order to be aware of the changes and innovations. School administrators who do not show progress in professional development cannot possibly provide academic and emotional support to teachers.

According to the results of this study, the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment is at the high level in the dimensions of meaning, competence, impact, and the total psychological empowerment scale but at moderate level in the dimension of self-determination. This moderate level of perception can be attributed to the fact that the teachers' free and independent act in doing their work and their participation in the decision-making process is limited. This can cause educational activities that require the autonomy of teachers to occur in a vicious circle. In fact, autonomy allows teachers to use their decision-making skills and professionalism in line with different paradigms. It also enables them to know what, why and how they are doing, and pass this understanding onto other colleagues. Self-determination also affects the motivation of employees, job satisfaction, and the quality of the work done. The responsibilities such as the development of the education and training of the students, the success in education and the contributions of the teacher to the school, the use of various teaching methods and the professional development of the teacher are the functions of teachers' self-determination. Therefore, since self-determination is very important for teachers, students, the educational process and schools (Ertürk, 2020), and that schools give their teachers greater self-determination increases teachers' commitment to the schools and enables them to make more constructive decisions for their students to learn (Dee, Henkin & Singleton, 2006). Raising the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment in terms of self-determination will be beneficial for all stakeholders of education. In addition, in classrooms with self-determined teachers, students expect the teachers to take guiding actions such as determining the purposes of activities, setting the time and identifying difficulties (Phan, 2012). Teacher autonomy has a positive effect on students' creative behavior (Iwata, 2013). An employee who has the right and the opportunity to choose in the work environment will also have the right and power to demonstrate his/her free will, thus, being more flexible (Aryee, & Chen, 2006), creative and initiative taker (Garfield, 1993). Although it is possible to come across studies in the literature (Altınkurt et al., 2016; Çekmecelioğlu & Eren, 2007; Odabaş; 2014; Okan & Yılmaz, 2017) in which it was concluded that teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment are high and which are similar to the results of this research, teachers' perception of psychological empowerment is at a moderate level. There are also studies (Özdemir & Gören, 2017) that concluded that Balçık (2018), in his study, found that teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment had the highest meaning dimension and the lowest effect dimension; Duman (2018), on the other hand, concluded that the participants' perceptions of the significance dimension were very high, their perceptions of the competence dimension were moderate, and their perceptions of the autonomy and influence dimension were high.

According to the results of this study, there are positive significant correlations between the supportive behaviors of school administrators and the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment. There is a strong correlation between the emotional support of school administrators and the dimensions of psychological empowerment such as self-determination and meaning; a moderate positive correlation between the dimensions of competence, impact and the whole scale; a moderate correlation between the instrumental support of school administrators and the dimensions of psychological empowerment such as meaning, competence, self-determination, and the whole scale; a strong positive correlation between the educational support of school administrators and the dimensions of psychological empowerment such as meaning, competence, self-determination, impact, and the whole scale; and a strong positive correlation between administrator support scale and the dimensions of psychological empowerment such as meaning, competence, self-determination and the whole scale. In other words, as the supportive behaviors of school administrators increase, the teachers will find

their work more meaningful, be competent in doing their jobs, have the self-determination to do their work freely and independently and have impact on school activities.

It emerged that the dimensions of administrator support scale such as emotional, instrumental and educational support were significant predictors of the sub-dimensions of psychological empowerment such as meaning, competence, self-determination and impact, and the total administrator support scale was a significant predictor on the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment. In this context, school administrators need to show supportive behaviors in order for teachers to care about their work, find their duties and responsibilities meaningful, rely on their skills to perform work-related tasks, have the necessary skills for their work, act autonomously, make their own decisions while doing their jobs and have self-control over their work. Psychological empowerment provides the employees with extra freedom, opportunity, authority and responsibility in participation in decisions (Ro & Chen, 2011), enables them to take a more active role within the organization (Fuller et al., 1999), makes them feel safer with their roles and influences within the organization, and enables them to achieve the desired success (Sheikhepoor, & Sheikhepoor, 2015) and make effective organizational differences due to their distinctive attitudes and behaviors. (Psoinos et al., 2000). Therefore, the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment in schools could be kept at a high level, thus, enabling them to exhibit positive organizational behaviors. This will emerge by the supportive behaviors of school administrators towards teachers.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the fact that the teachers' perceptions of the emotional and educational supportive behaviors of school administrators are at the level of *slightly agree* indicates that school administrators are inadequate at supporting teachers emotionally and academically. Moreover, it needs to be investigated that school administrators who are expected to be the closest source of information in the professional development of teachers are inadequate at supporting them in educational way when considering their supervisory and guidance duties. It is very challenging for an administrator who is inadequate at supporting teachers to ensure professional development by guiding them. It is also a concern that the teachers have moderate level of perceptions on psychological empowerment in terms of self-determination since it is very important for teachers to be able to make important decisions in educational activities in a professional way, organize classroom environments and workshops, take part in educational planning, facilities and development of these processes, and in administrative actions (Ertürk, 2020), the capability of teachers to work independently plays an important role in psychological empowerment perceptions. For this reason, teachers' self-determination should be taken into consideration by both the school itself and supreme institutions, and studies should be carried out to ensure the autonomy of teachers. The positive relationship between the supportive behaviors of school administrators and the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment and the effect of administrator support on the related perceptions are very important in terms of investigating the importance of supportive behaviors of school administrators.

## Suggestions

In line with the findings and results of the study, the following recommendations have been suggested. In order to increase the supportive behaviors of school administrators in the dimensions of emotional and educational support and the total administrator support scale, administrators should pay full attention when listening to the teachers, be more honest and outspoken towards teachers, support their decisions and make teachers feel valued. School administrators should ensure that the teachers are aware of the current teaching methods and techniques by providing recommendations for the development of teaching in their in-class practices, guide the planning, implementation and evaluation practices of teachers, and support their participation in trainings that will contribute to the professional development such as conferences and symposiums. School administrators should be fair in the distribution of school resources and tasks. It should be emphasized that the facilities for the professional development of school administrators should be reviewed in a way ensuring the emotional and educational support for teachers. In order to increase the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment in the dimension of self-determination, teachers should be given opportunities to act independently and freely in the way they do their jobs; especially, teachers should be allowed to make their own decisions in work-related matters. School administrators should support teachers emotionally, educationally and instrumentally because the supportive behaviors of school administrators are significant predictors of the teachers' perceptions of psychological empowerment. A qualitative study could be conducted to determine the supportive behaviors of school administrators. A qualitative study could be conducted to investigate the factors that play a role in the psychological empowerment of teachers.

## Limitations of the Study

This research is limited to the opinions of 283 teachers working in primary schools in Bolu city center on "School Administrator Support" and "Psychological Empowerment" scales.

#### Statements of Publication Ethics

This research was evaluated ethically at the meeting of the Human Research Ethics Committee of Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, dated 29.04.2021 and numbered 2021/04 (Protocol No: 2021/162).

#### Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest in this research. The research was carried out without any commercial or financial support from any legal person, institution or organization.

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