

# EXAMINING THE CONCEPT OF EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS TEACHERS: A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

# İsmail KARATA޹, Latif AYDOS²

<sup>1</sup>Bayburt Üniversitesi Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi e-posta: ismailkrts34@gmail.com ORCID ID: 0000-0002-1237-4670

<sup>2</sup>Gazi Üniversitesi Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi e-posta: aydost@gazi.edu.tr ORCID ID: 0000-0002-1378-2537

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#### **Abstract**

The concept of empowerment emerged due to the need for an organizational concept that could increase employee productivity in response to fundamental technological and commercial changes in organizations in the private and public sectors. The concept of empowerment is expressed as employees feeling useful and discovering their talents at the end of the work done. It is also defined as delegating authority/transferring power to others (employees). In this context, educational organizations, like other organizations, have a dynamic structure. Mobility and transformation constantly occur in the education and training process. Therefore, within the scope of educational organizations, it is thought that the most critical factors for schools to achieve organizational goals are strong school leaders and teachers. In this regard, it is understood that adopting a management approach aimed at empowering school principals and teachers, depending on complex environmental and organizational situations, can produce positive results. In this context, teacher empowerment is predicted to be an excellent way to create strong and effective school teams. Teacher empowerment is often used to describe how teachers are given a say in decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning in their schools. Teacher empowerment involves opportunities for teachers to engage in power structures and develop their sense of responsibility/selfdetermination in their schools. Within the framework of the teaching profession, physical education and sports teachers have a unique role in educational activities and in ensuring students' cognitive, emotional, social, physiological and motoric development (holistic development). Accordingly, the research was conducted to examine the concept of empowering leadership in the context of physical education and sports teachers. Many relevant national and international publications were examined in this qualitative research using the literature review approach. As a result of this literature review, it was concluded that when physical education and sports teachers are empowered, various positive individual and organizational outcomes can be achieved effectively and efficiently. For this reason, it is thought that it is crucial to create a school climate that will enable physical education and sports teachers to display behaviours that will empower them.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, empowering leadership, teacher, physical education and sports teacher, teacher empowerment



# GÜÇLENDİRİCİ LİDERLİK KAVRAMININ BEDEN EĞİTİMİ VE SPOR ÖĞRETMENLERİ BAĞLAMINDA İNCELENMESİ: NİTEL BİR ARAŞTIRMA

#### Öz

Güçlendirme kavramı, özel ve kamu sektörlerindeki organizasyonlarda temel teknolojik ve ticari değişikliklere göre çalışan üretkenliğini artırabilecek bir örgütsel kavrama ihtiyaç duyulması neticesinde ortaya çıkmıştır. Güçlendirme kavramı, yapılan işin sonunda çalışanların faydalı olduklarını hissetmeleri ve yeteneklerini keşfetmeleri olarak ifade edilmektedir. Ayrıca yetki devri/gücü başkalarına (çalışanlara) devretme şeklinde de tanımlanmaktadır. Bu çerçevede, diğer örgütler gibi eğitim örgütleri de dinamik bir yapıya sahiptir. Eğitimöğretim sürecinde sürekli bir şekilde hareketlilik ve dönüşüm meydana gelmektedir. Dolayısıyla eğitim örgütleri kapsamında okulların örgütsel amaçlara ulaşması amacıyla en önemli faktörlerin güçlü okul liderlerinin ve öğretmenlerin olduğu düşünülmektedir. Bu doğrultuda karmaşık çevre ve örgüt durumlarına bağlı olarak okul müdürlerinin ve öğretmenlerin güçlendirilmesine yönelik bir yönetim anlayışının benimsenmesinin olumlu sonuçlar üretebileceği anlaşılmaktadır. Bu kapsamda öğretmen güçlendirmenin, okulda güçlü ve etkili ekiplerin oluşturulması için mükemmel bir yol olduğu öngörülmektedir. Öğretmen güçlendirme kavramı genellikle, öğretmenlere okullarında öğretme ve öğrenme ile ilgili karar alma süreçlerinde ne ölçüde söz hakkı verildiğini tanımlamak için kullanılmaktadır. Öğretmenlerin güçlendirilmesi, öğretmenlere güç yapılarına dahil olma ve okullarında sorumluluk/öz belirleme duygularını geliştirme fırsatları sağlamayı içermektedir. Öğretmenlik mesleği çerçevesinde beden eğitimi ve spor öğretmenleri; eğitim-öğretim faaliyetlerinde ve öğrencilerin bilissel, duygusal, sosyal, fizyolojik ve motorik gelişimlerinin (bütünsel gelişim) sağlanmasında benzersiz bir role sahiptir. Buna göre araştırma, güçlendirici liderlik kavramının beden eğitimi ve spor öğretmenleri bağlamında incelenmesi amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Alanyazın taraması yaklaşımı kullanılan bu nitel araştırmada, ulusal ve uluslararası ilgili birçok yayın incelenmiştir. Bu alanyazın taraması neticesinde, beden eğitimi ve spor öğretmenleri güçlendirildiğinde, çeşitli bireysel ve örgütsel olumlu ürünlere etkin ve verimli bir şekilde ulaşılabildiği sonucuna varılmıştır. Bu nedenle beden eğitimi ve spor öğretmenlerini güçlendirecek davranışların sergilenmesini sağlayacak okul ikliminin oluşturulmasının oldukça önem arz ettiği düşünülmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimler:** Güçlendirme, güçlendirici liderlik, öğretmen, beden eğitimi ve spor öğretmeni, öğretmen güçlendirme.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

oday, organizations are experiencing large-scale structural changes. In order to increase both their flexible structures and their productivity, these organizations consider traditional (classical) management approaches within the scope of employees empowered by leaders, and various tasks previously performed by managers are now performed by authorized employees (Arnold et al., 2000). This situation has caused empowerment to come to the fore in organizations (institution, organization, organization, business, etc.) and empowering leadership behaviours to be discussed in the literature (Dilekçi & Sezgin Nartgün, 2020). In today's increasingly competitive workplace, organizations must accurately identify and respond to changes in internal and external environments to maintain competitive advantage (Ireland & Webb, 2007). In uncertain organizational situations, management efforts alone are insufficient to ensure that organizations survive or continue to thrive, and employee initiative to offer ideas for change and raise issues with existing business processes is crucial (Tian & Chae, 2023). In particular, employee constructive voice behaviour – the voluntary expression of constructive ideas, concerns, or opinions on work-related matters –



dramatically contributes to organizational innovation and successful adaptation to dynamic work environments (Detert et al., 2013; Duan et al., 2017; Mowbray, Wilkinson, & Tse, 2015; Nechanska, Hughes, & Dundon, 2020; Ng & Feldman, 2012).

The concept of empowerment was introduced in the field of management in the 1980s and emerged as a result of the need for an organizational concept that could increase employee productivity (Bartunek & Spreitzer, 2006) according to fundamental technological and commercial changes in organizations in the private/public sector (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2011; Hill & Huq, 2004). These changes include increased customer focus, more flexible, horizontalized and decentralized organizational designs, and improvements in quality and efficiency for most organizations (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Milakovich, 1995; Milakovich, 2005). The nature of work has also changed significantly in recent years, becoming more complex and cognitively demanding (Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007), and highly qualified and educated "knowledge workers" constitute a rapidly growing segment of the workforce (Parker, Wall, & Cordery, 2001). Depending on this change, empowering leadership has emerged as a particular form of leadership, different from other approaches such as directive, transactional and transformational leadership (Pearce et al., 2003). Empowering employees based on this leadership involves increasing individual motivation in the workplace by delegating responsibility and authority to the lowest organizational level where an appropriate decision can be made (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Therefore, empowering leadership can be generally defined as "behaviours that share power with subordinates" (Vecchio, Justin, & Pearce, 2010, p. 531).

According to Wang, Hou and Li (2022), the situational empowerment perspective emphasizes the practice of empowerment in organizational situations. It defines empowering leadership as a set of management practices that empower subordinates. The psychological empowerment perspective, on the other hand, emphasizes the psychological dimension of the empowerment experience and defines it as a motivational tool that eliminates feelings of powerlessness by increasing the motivation level of employees. In a way, empowering leadership means delegating the leader's authority (p. 4). In this context, empowering leadership is more about delegating personal authority and job responsibilities so that subordinates have a certain autonomy in motivating themselves (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). In addition, empowering leaders have a certain degree of positivity when delegating authority; however, they can also cause employees to feel that the leader does not want to manage, which can reduce the effectiveness of leadership (Wang et al., 2022).

It is considered essential to determine the reflections of empowering leadership behaviours in the educational context, especially on physical education and sports teachers, who have a unique role in ensuring students' cognitive, affective and physical development (holistic development) (Lumpkin, 2011). However, no qualitative research has been found in the relevant literature examining empowering leadership in physical education and sports teachers. Therefore, the results obtained in this study, which was carried out as a literature review, will contribute to filling a significant gap. In this context, this qualitative study aims to examine the concept of empowering leadership in the context of physical education and sports teachers.



## 2. Empowerment and Empowerment Types

This part of the study presents information about the concept of empowerment and types of empowerment.

## 2.1. Empowerment

The literature on the concept of empowerment is quite extensive, but when this literature is examined, it is seen that no widely accepted definition includes the essential elements in the empowerment process, and it is understood that each researcher examines the concept of empowerment in a different way (Hassan, DeHart-Davis, & Jiang, 2019; Robbins, Crino, & Fredendall, 2002). Bandura (2002) expresses empowerment as employees feeling useful and discovering their talents at the end of the work (activity).

Empowerment is defined by Thomas and Velthouse (1990) and Conger and Kanungo (1988) as delegation of authority/transferring power to others (employees). However, although there is increasing interest in empowerment, understanding the structure of the concept of empowerment and the processes underlying this structure was initially minimal (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). On the other hand, regarding the development process of the concept of empowerment, it has been revealed that this concept is an essential factor in organizational effectiveness (Ahearne, Mathieu, & Rapp, 2005). In addition, empowerment has been discussed from different perspectives, contributing to this concept becoming a widely used element within the scope of organizational research (Höpfl, 1994).

#### 2.2. Empowerment Types

Empowerment is the capacity to energize employees and give them the power to achieve superior success (Zhang, Ye, & Li, 2018). In the context of the literature, empowering leadership behaviours can generally be discussed from two perspectives (Hassan et al., 2019). According to the first perspective, power is shared, leadership activities become the focus, and employees are offered more autonomy and responsibility, while from the second perspective, the motivation of the employees is taken into consideration, and their reactions towards empowerment are focused on (Srivastava, Bartol, & Locke, 2006). It cannot be claimed that these perspectives on empowerment are completely compatible or unrelated (Menon, 2001). In this context, empowerment is discussed from two perspectives: structural empowerment, as proposed by Kanter (1993), and psychological empowerment, as proposed by Spreitzer (1995) (O'Brien, 2011; Royer, 2011).

# 2.2.1. Structural Empowerment

The concept of structural empowerment is based on Kanter's (1993) theory of power in organizations, and within this framework, the concept of power is defined as the capacity to mobilize resources and achieve goals (Kanter, 1993). It is suggested by Kanter (1993) that the characteristics of the workplace are more decisive in terms of employees' attitudes and behaviours towards work than their personality traits or socialization experiences. In this regard, it is stated that employees feel empowered when their work environment provides them with opportunities for professional development and they gain the "power" they need to perform their duties effectively (Kanter, 1993). In this context, it is argued that structural empowerment is a powerful organizational tool for improving the professional skills and competencies of employees, improving the quality of working life and



reducing stress in organizations (Heron & Bruk-Lee, 2020; Laschinger et al., 2004; Meng et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2018).

Kıral (2015) states that structural empowerment is the implementation of activities such as giving managers responsibilities to employees, delegating authority, ensuring maximum involvement of employees in the decisions taken, increasing employee motivation, and creating healthy and positive communication with employees. Kaya and Altınkurt (2018) express the concept of structural empowerment as organizations creating a facilitating work environment for their employees. In addition, structural empowerment promotes the psychological empowerment of staff (Laschinger, Finegan, & Shamian, 2001) and can contribute to positive workplace outcomes such as increased confidence (Laschinger, Almost, & Tuer-Hodes, 2003).

The components of structural empowerment are resources, formal and informal powers, information, opportunities and supports (Kanter, 1993), and in this approach, empowerment is expressed as giving decision-making authority and authority to employees (Menon, 2001). Structural empowerment also refers to having access to information, support, adequate resources, and opportunities to learn and grow at work (Kanter, 1977). According to this approach, organisations (institutions) should support their employees to make them feel powerful (Dilekçi & Sezgin Nartgün, 2020). The organisation's structure should also be designed to facilitate this empowerment process (Kaya & Altınkurt, 2018). Leaders are essential in creating empowering workplace conditions that can lead to positive personal and organisational outcomes (Cummings et al., 2010). In this context, it is suggested that empowered employees are more productive and willing to develop (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Within the framework of this empowerment, the activities that organisational managers should implement regarding their managerial behaviour are emphasised (Dilekçi & Sezgin Nartgün, 2020). In other words, organisational managers who display structural empowerment behaviours delegate certain powers to their employees, support and encourage them to work as a team, create a positive communication network with them, value their opinions in decisions regarding the organisation, provide them with available information and resources, and meet the physical needs of the organisation (Kıral, 2015). It is claimed that these structural empowering behaviours also positively affect psychological empowerment, another type of empowerment (Tolay, Sürgevil, & Topoyan, 2012). Empowering employees, improving their attitudes and increasing organisational effectiveness is also beneficial (Kanter, 1979). Access to materials and equipment, as well as time and financial resources, is required to achieve organisational goals (Kanter, 1977; Laschinger, 2008). Accordingly, when leaders provide these social structures to their employees, employees feel empowered and enabled to accomplish their work in a way that adds value (Kanter, 1993). However, while the activities that organisational managers should do within the scope of structural empowerment come to the fore, their employees' feelings, thoughts and perceptions are in the background (Dilekçi & Sezgin Nartgün, 2020).

#### 2.2.2. Psychological Empowerment

The concept of psychological empowerment, which was founded by Conger and Kanungo (1988) and developed by Thomas and Velthouse (1990) and Spreitzer (1995), has different definitions in the literature. Psychological empowerment is defined by Kaya and Altınkurt (2018) as motivating employees to gain self-efficacy and, accordingly, making them feel powerful. It is expressed by Tolay



et al. (2012) as a psychological state that enables employees to gain experience to achieve the success of empowerment interventions in the organization. Öztürk Çiftçi (2019) argues that the basis of psychological empowerment is how the activities are perceived by the employees rather than the activities carried out by the management to empower the employees psychologically. Psychological empowerment: It is pointed out that it is an internal motivational structure that reflects the psychological process of individuals to obtain resources, gain control and autonomy, and ensure proactive participation in one's work role (Schweitzer & Simon, 2021; Spreitzer, 1995).

It is stated that psychological empowerment expresses individuals' beliefs and autonomy in completing tasks and reflects the degree to which individuals influence the organization's strategy (Spreitzer, 1995). In this regard, psychological empowerment reflects individuals' intrinsic motivation and affects work-related products (Hill, Kang, & Seo, 2014). Therefore, psychological empowerment may be a key internal factor influencing strategy adherence (Yao, Zhang, & Sun, 2023). Additionally, it is stated that psychological empowerment is effective in the self-efficacy of employees (Kaya & Altınkurt, 2018). According to Zhang and Bartol (2010), empowering leadership positively affects psychological empowerment, both intrinsic motivation and participation in the productive process. Accordingly, it is suggested that intrinsic motivation and participation in the productive process positively affect employees' productivity. Additionally, it is stated that empowering role identity moderates the link between empowering leadership and psychological empowerment, and the leader's encouragement of productivity moderates the relationship between psychological empowerment and productive process participation (p. 107).

Psychological empowerment is intrinsic task motivation at the individual level and consists of four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination (autonomy/choice) and impact (Spreitzer, 1995). The meaning dimension occurs when a job role overlaps with a person's beliefs and values (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) and is the perception that the person cares about the purpose of her/his job (Spreitzer, 1995). According to Spreitzer (1995), the competency dimension is self-efficacy beliefs or confidence in performing work activities, also known as mastery of behaviour. The self-determination dimension (the extent to which a person perceives workplace autonomy) differs from competence, defined as mastering workplace behaviours, as manifesting itself in the initiation of these behaviours. Effect size is the extent to which an individual can influence organizational outcomes, unlike learned helplessness. The person's personality shapes the degree to which a person feels psychologically empowered and affects the degree to which the person feels motivated and committed to his or her job (p. 1443-1444).

It is claimed that psychological empowerment creates a positive effect on employees and contributes to a change that reveals confidence in their perceptions, feelings, thoughts and actions (Öztürk Çiftçi, 2019). On the other hand, according to Dilekçi and Sezgin Nartgün (2020), if an opposite situation develops, employees feel powerless, and the need to empower them becomes a critical situation for organizations. Therefore, it is crucial to identify situations that create a feeling of powerlessness among employees within the organization. Once these situations are identified, empowerment strategies can be used to eliminate the conditions that create the feeling of powerlessness (p. 296-297). However, it is not always possible to eliminate external conditions, and empowering subordinates may not be sufficient unless strategies create direct personal effectiveness for employees (subordinates) (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). On the other hand, psychological empowerment is also



defined as an intrinsic task motivation that reflects a sense of control over the job (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). This motivation is based on the employee's belief that she/he can do the job on her/his own and find meaning in the work she/he can do (Spreitzer, 1995). Therefore, since empowering conditions such as decision autonomy, responsibility and challenge enable employees to accept what they have (Liden, Wayne, & Sparrowe, 2000), psychologically empowered employees can be highly motivated, resilient, and focused (Spreitzer, 1995). It is also argued that psychological empowerment makes employees feel that their work is meaningful and they have complete freedom to carry out their work, which motivates them internally and increases their self-efficacy (Iqbal et al., 2020).

## 3. Empowering Leadership in the Context of Physical Education and Sports Teachers

Today, when change, development and transformation are taking place rapidly, there is a need for employees who go beyond ordinary patterns, feel the problems and seek appropriate solutions to these problems, are self-sufficient and confident, and add value by sharing the knowledge they have (Bakan et al., 2012). According to Dilekçi and Sezgin Nartgün (2020), educational organizations, like other organizations, have a dynamic structure. Mobility and transformation constantly occur in the education and training process. In this process of movement and transformation in these organizations, many uncertainties and problems arise related to these uncertainties. In order to overcome these uncertainties and problems, new leadership approaches that are expected to be evaluated in the context of these organizations are needed. In this regard, the empowering leadership approach, considering the dynamics related to education, can be considered one of the new leadership approaches (p. 303). In this context, schools are functional institutions within the scope of education and are defined as places where students receive education, where educational activities are directly implemented and where concrete practices are carried out (Cafoğlu, 1995).

According to Konan and Çelik (2017), within the scope of educational organizations, the most essential factors for schools to achieve organizational goals are thought to be strong school leaders and teachers. In this regard, it is thought that adopting a management approach aimed at empowering school principals and teachers, depending on complex environmental and organizational situations, can produce positive outcomes (p. 331). In this context, empowerment is thought to be an excellent way to create strong and effective teams at school (Goyne et al., 1999). In this regard, an increasing number of studies on teacher empowerment in educational environments show that the feeling of empowering teachers has a significant impact on situations such as student success, job satisfaction, professional commitment and innovation (see Bogler & Somech, 2004; Lee et al., 2011; Sweetland & Hoy, 2000). On the other hand, it is stated in the relevant literature that not enough attention is paid to empowerment in educational organizations (Blase & Blase, 1996). However, within the framework of the importance given to teacher empowerment, it is understood that criticisms regarding leadership approaches within the traditional hierarchical structure and searches for alternative leadership structures are simultaneous (Reitzug, 1994). During this time frame, researchers appear to have emphasized only the relational dimension of empowerment (Blase & Blase, 1996). Bolin (1989), on the other hand, drew attention to the different dimensions of empowerment by expressing it as the participation of teachers in determining the goals and policies of the school and giving teachers the right to express their thoughts professionally in the teaching-learning process, instead of emphasizing only the relational dimension of empowerment. Similarly, Reitzug (1994) criticized the inadequacy of this conceptualization by emphasizing the epistemological roots of the concept of teacher empowerment regarding the decision-



making power transferred from school administrators to teachers in the education literature and made a significant contribution to the development process of teacher empowerment. The suggestions and criticisms made by Bolin (1989) and Reitzug (1994) caused teacher empowerment to be discussed more broadly from various perspectives (Dilekçi & Sezgin Nartgün, 2020). In this regard, it can be argued that teacher empowerment is firmly established in the education literature with the distribution of authority/responsibility or the call for school-based management (Yin et al., 2013).

Teacher empowerment is often used to describe how teachers are given a voice in decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning in their schools (Lin, 2014; Rice & Schneider, 1994). Teacher empowerment involves providing teachers with opportunities to become involved in power structures, develop autonomy, and develop a sense of responsibility in their schools (Lightfoot, 1986). The concept of teacher empowerment emerged from reform and school improvement efforts (Pounder, 1998) and has since been influenced by teachers' job satisfaction (Bogler & Nir, 2012; Rice & Schneider, 1994; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990), school and student achievement (Lyons et al., 2013; Marks & Louis, 1997) and is positively associated with professionalization (Maeroff, 1988). Additionally, teacher leaders reported feeling more powerful than non-leader teachers, which is thought to be related to increased opportunities to participate in decision-making in their schools (Rinehart & Short, 1991).

It is predicted that teacher empowerment will have a more substantial positive effect on teachers who need autonomy (Yun, Cox, & Sims, 2006), and the concept of teacher empowerment is defined as the opportunity and confidence of the teacher to act within the scope of their ideas and influence the way they do their job (Melenyzer, 1990). According to another definition, it helps to increase power through working together and sharing, to ensure cooperation in the school, to adopt the understanding of development and structuring, to provide opportunities for principals to facilitate work/transactions and develop resources, to include teachers in decisions, to prioritize awareness, assistance and evaluation and it is stated as a process in which the teacher is given the responsibility of a task that is planned to be carried out (Acaray, 2010). In this regard, teacher empowerment can also be expressed as a process in which school participants develop the competence to take responsibility for their progress and solve their problems (Bogler & Somech, 2004). In addition, Kıral (2019) defines the concept of teacher empowerment as the work carried out by the school administrator in the context of the teacher, which turns teachers into volunteers to carry out relevant activities in school environments and to achieve the school's goals. In addition, teacher empowerment may depend on the specific school situation as well as on the characteristics of teachers; Among these, teachers' sense of competence and the establishment of a trust relationship in the school can be suggested as essential prerequisites for teacher empowerment (Dee, Henkin, & Duemer, 2003; Edwards, Green, & Lyons, 2002; Newcombe & McCormick, 2001; Wan, 2005). Considering these explanations, teacher empowerment, which is based on benefiting from teachers' knowledge, skills and experiences, aims to increase the success of students and the school by creating healthy collaborations between school administrators and teachers, establishing an effective communication system, providing fast and various solutions to problems and it can be concluded that it has become a necessity today to increase teachers' commitment to the school by making them feel a sense of belonging (Acaray, 2010).

Empowerment in the context of teachers is defined differently in the literature. Bolin (1989) defines it as empowering, investing power or authority legally or officially, and transferring power for





a purpose. Short (1994) argues that empowered employees have the knowledge and expertise to deal with a situation and make changes and sees schools as institutions that provide opportunities for teachers to develop and demonstrate their competencies. It is claimed by Bogler and Nir (2012), Nir (2002), Rosenholtz (1989) and Rosenholtz and Simpson (1990) that when teachers have self-determination in terms of managing their work, they increase their obligations towards their work.

It is stated that teacher empowerment, one of the main factors in the transformation of schools (Sağnak, 2012), is necessary at both individual and institutional levels to respond to the changing demands in the globalizing world (Terry, 1995). In many schools, teacher empowerment has enhanced the role and participation of teachers in planning and decision-making regarding school goals and policies (Blase & Blase, 2001; Blase et al., 1995; Glickman, 1993; Sprague, 1992). In this regard, it is envisaged that the activities carried out to empower physical education and sports teachers, which are very important in the school's goals and policies, will have meaningful and positive effects on the planning and decision stages. This form of empowerment is called relational power by Conger and Kanungo (1988). In this context, power includes formal authority or control over organizational resources; empowerment is expressed as the process of sharing this power (Davis & Wilson, 2000). It suggests that sharing this power over organizational resources with physical education and sports teachers will create many favourable products individually and organizationally. When these empowered teachers are evaluated on an individual axis, it is predicted that the leadership skills of the teachers will improve, their professionalism, motivation, productivity and job performance will be positively affected, and their beliefs about their activities will increase; When evaluated on the organizational axis, it is predicted that their quality of work life will increase, it will positively affect student performance, motivation and success, and they will contribute to the effective implementation of innovations in the school (Dee et al., 2003; Kıral, 2015; Koçak, 2016). In this context, with the empowerment approach, physical education and sports teachers are expected to increase their pedagogy and expertise knowledge, their ability to work in collaboration, and their confidence levels (Acaray, 2010). It is thought that if physical education and sports teachers believe that their ideas will be accepted by their managers (principals), included in decisions, and their ideas will be valued, these teachers' intrinsic motivation levels will increase, and they will actively seek opportunities for improvement (Lieberman & Friedrich, 2010).

It suggests that empowered physical education and sports teachers can allow students to learn and embody a healthy, active lifestyle (Mandigo, 2010). In this regard, it is understood that the foundations of lifelong participation in physical activity and sports can be laid by applying quality physical education lessons (UNESCO, 2015). Also, unlike other school subjects, physical education is based on the unity of body and mind (Stoddart & Selanders, 2022). Students in physical education classes try to develop three learning areas: psychomotor, affective and cognitive (Graham, Holt-Hale, & Parker, 2013). In this context, it is envisaged that students will be able to learn effectively and efficiently in cognitive, affective and psychomotor areas through these empowered branch teachers. In this context, it is thought that all students will be offered the opportunity to acquire tools to be active (Whitehead, 2010). In a world where sedentary lifestyles are increasing, it is crucial for children to develop literacy in physical education, and it is understood that these empowered teachers provide an effective way to increase literacy in physical education (Stoddart & Selanders, 2022).



According to Dilekçi and Sezgin Nartgün (2020), it can be said that teacher empowerment, whose importance is stated in the individual and organizational context, is indirectly and directly included in the legal texts regarding the education system in our country. The legal legislation of the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of National Education contains provisions for teacher empowerment in order to protect the functionality of the teacher, who is a critical element of the education system, to ensure the continuity of his work and to increase the quality of educational results through the teacher. Legal regulations regarding teacher empowerment are ensured to be implemented in line with the knowledge, skills, and leadership qualities of school administrators, considering their professional and ethical behaviour. In this regard, the current goals of the school are achieved by empowering teachers (p. 304). In this context, it is thought that increasing the motivation and commitment levels of physical education and sports teachers towards the school is based on the empowerment practices carried out by school administrators (Kıral, 2019). In this context, it is understood that administrators of educational institutions will provide the necessary support to physical education and sports teachers in all processes related to educational activities and empower them by motivating them to take responsibility in the light of their wishes, which will make meaningful contributions to the effective, efficient and successful continuation of education and training activities (Dilekçi & Sezgin Nartgün, 2020). It is thought that empowering physical education and sports teachers will play positive roles in educational environments, and it can be argued that this empowerment is a crucial factor in school effectiveness (Yin et al., 2013).

A growing interest in adopting teacher empowerment as a school management strategy aimed at effective teacher participation in all school decisions has led researchers to look closer at how school leaders can more effectively empower teachers (Lee & Nie, 2017). In this regard, it is stated that there is a need to provide support, facilitation and opportunities (Reitzug, 1994). It is also stated that the proper training, environment and support should be provided similarly (Goyne et al., 1999). In this context, providing motivation and participation, communicating, rewarding and supporting are considered strategies that can be used while empowering physical education and sports teachers (Kıral, 2019). In addition, it can be said that providing rewards and support for physical education and sports teachers, encouraging individual input, encouraging autonomy, innovation, risk-taking and productivity, sharing management structures and providing trust is essential in teacher empowerment (Blase & Blase, 1997). Additionally, it has been determined that teachers' innovative behaviours are significantly and positively affected by individual factors (e.g., teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes, and beliefs) and supportive organizational practices (e.g., supportive leadership) (Thurlings, Evers, & Vermeulen, 2015); It can also be considered an essential factor that positively affects the innovative behaviour of education and sports teachers (Zhu, Yao, & Zhang, 2019). In this context, empowering leadership can be expressed as a process that creates a supportive environment in which physical education and sports teachers are given authority and self-control in their work and decision-making, the importance of their work is accepted, their competencies are trusted, and obstacles to their work are eliminated (Ahearne et al., 2005; Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

It can be argued that physical education and sports teachers, who are empowered and involved in the decision-making process in the decisions taken both partially freely and collaboratively by their principals and school communities, will try to find common ground for school organization at both macro and micro levels (Bauman, 2015). Accordingly, empowering leadership behaviours of school administrators is an essential indicator of the innovative behaviours of teachers and the innovative



climate in the school (Sağnak, 2012), and it can be argued that school principals have essential responsibilities as empowering leaders in the context of empowering physical education and sports teachers (Konan & Çelik, 2017). In addition, it is understood that principals who empower and motivate these teachers by establishing mutual relationships and valuing the voice of physical education and sports teachers in decision-making will enable them to develop their capacity to sustain and sustain school improvement processes (Andrews, 2008). In this context, it is predicted that when physical education and sports teachers experience empowerment, they may be more inclined to improve their teaching and knowledge (Dee et al., 2003; Harpell & Andrews, 2010; Klecker & Loadman, 1998), be involved in school management, make professional judgments, realize their potential and self-evaluate, determine the school's mission and policies, and make professional decisions about the curriculum (Balyer, Ozcan, & Yildiz, 2017; Bogler & Nir, 2012; Bolin, 1989; Bredeson, 1991; Short, Miller-Wood, & Johnson, 1991; Short & Rinehart, 1992). In this regard, it is concluded that teacher empowerment can be fully achieved by participating in the decisions taken by physical education and sports teachers, transferring some authority to these teachers, creating awareness, ensuring healthy communication, establishing unity in every department and time of the school, and by offering incentives to these teachers for personal and professional development (Kıral, 2019).

#### 4. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study was carried out to examine the concept of empowering leadership in the context of physical education and sports teachers, who have a unique role in ensuring the cognitive, affective and physical development of students (holistic development) (Lumpkin, 2011), many local and foreign literature was scanned. According to Konan and Çelik (2017), the most critical factors for schools to achieve organizational goals within the scope of educational organizations are thought to be strong school leaders and teachers. In this regard, it is thought that adopting a management approach aimed at empowering school principals and teachers, depending on complex environmental and organizational situations, can produce positive outcomes (p. 331). In this context, empowerment is thought to be an excellent way to create strong and effective teams at school (Goyne et al., 1999).

Teacher empowerment is often used to describe how teachers are given a say in decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning in their schools (Lin, 2014; Rice & Schneider, 1994). Teacher empowerment involves providing teachers with opportunities to become involved in power structures, develop autonomy, and develop a sense of responsibility in their schools (Lightfoot, 1986). The concept of teacher empowerment emerged from reform and school improvement efforts (Pounder, 1998) and has since been shown to be positively associated with teachers' job satisfaction (Bogler & Nir, 2012; Rice & Schneider, 1994; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990), school and student achievement (Lyons et al., 2013; Marks & Louis, 1997) and professionalization (Maeroff, 1988). Additionally, teacher leaders reported feeling more powerful than non-leader teachers, which is thought to be related to increased opportunities to participate in the decision-making process in their schools (Rinehart & Short, 1991).

It suggests that empowered physical education and sports teachers can allow students to learn and embody a healthy, active lifestyle (Mandigo, 2010). In this regard, it is understood that the foundations of lifelong participation in physical activity and sports can be laid by applying quality physical education lessons (UNESCO, 2015). In addition, unlike other school courses, physical education courses are based on the unity of body and mind (Stoddart & Selanders, 2022). Students in



physical education classes try to develop three learning areas: psychomotor, affective and cognitive (Graham et al., 2013). In this context, it is envisaged that students will be able to learn effectively and efficiently in cognitive, affective and psychomotor areas through these empowered branch teachers. In this context, it is thought that all students will be offered the opportunity to acquire tools to be active (Whitehead, 2010). In a world where a sedentary lifestyle is increasingly increasing, it is vital for children to develop literacy in physical education, and it is understood that these empowered teachers provide an effective way to increase literacy in physical education (Stoddart & Selanders, 2022).

Increasing interest in adopting teacher empowerment as a school management strategy that aims for effective teacher participation in all school decisions has led researchers to look closer at how school leaders can more effectively empower teachers (Lee & Nie, 2017). In this regard, it is stated that there is a need to provide support, facilitation and opportunities (Reitzug, 1994). It is also stated that the proper education, environment and support should be provided (Goyne et al., 1999). In this context, providing motivation and participation, communicating, rewarding and supporting are considered strategies that can be used when empowering physical education and sports teachers (Kıral, 2019). In addition, it can be said that providing rewards and support for physical education and sports teachers, encouraging individual input, encouraging autonomy, innovation, risk-taking and productivity, sharing management structures and giving trust is essential in teacher empowerment (Blase & Blase, 1997). Additionally, it has been determined that teachers' innovative behaviours are significantly and positively affected by individual factors (e.g., teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes, and beliefs) and supportive organizational practices (e.g., supportive leadership) (Thurlings et al., 2015); It can also be considered an essential factor that positively affects the innovative behaviour of education and sports teachers (Zhu et al., 2019). In this context, empowering leadership can be expressed as a process that creates a supportive environment in which physical education and sports teachers are given authority and selfcontrol in their work and decision-making, the importance of their work is accepted, their competencies are trusted, and obstacles to their work are eliminated (Ahearne et al., 2005; Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

When the explanations are evaluated holistically, physical education and sports teachers empowered by the school administration mean achieving many positive individual and organizational outcomes effectively and efficiently. Therefore, it is thought that it is crucial for the school administration to exhibit behaviours that will empower physical education and sports teachers and to create an environment that will enable these behaviours to emerge. However, the study results were carried out by reviewing the literature and using observation and/or interview approaches in future research will add depth to the results. It is also thought that the issue can be addressed with a different approach through quantitative research to be carried out in this context.

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