



The Relationship Between Social Justice Leadership in Education and School Belonging: Canonical Correlation Analysis *

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between the high school students' perceptions of their school principals' social justice leadership and their sense of school belonging. The sample of the research consists of 264 students studying at high schools in Denizli and Manisa, two medium-sized cities in the Aegean Region. "Social Justice Leadership Scale (SJLS)" developed by Özdemir and Kütküt (2015) and "School Belonging Scale (SBS)" developed by Goodenow (1993) and adapted into Turkish by Sarı (2013) were used for data collection. As a result of the research, which employs the correlational survey model, it was determined that high school students felt a moderate level of school belonging and had a moderate perception of school principals' social justice leadership. As a result of the canonical correlation analysis, it was determined that the school belonging, and social justice leadership data sets shared a variance of approximately 60%. It has been determined that there is a positive relationship between the variables of support, participation and critical consciousness in the social justice leadership data set and the sense of belonging and sense of rejection variables in the sense of school belonging data set.

Keywords

Social justice leadership
School belonging
High schools
School principal
Student
Canonical correlation analysis

Article Info

Received: 10.04.2021
Accepted: 07.06.2022
Online Published: 07.29.2022

DOI: 10.15390/EB.2022.11280

Introduction

Society consists of individuals whose goals and needs are different and independent from each other. In practically every aspect of life, people might differ in race, language, gender, socioeconomic status, physical and mental skills. However, these innate or acquired differences lead to undesirable situations and inequality, not just giving privileges to individuals and groups, but also making them disadvantaged. At this point, how to manage the existing differences in society becomes a critical issue (Nayır, 2020) and inequalities arising from these differences were the focus of various studies.

* This research was presented as an oral presentation at the "EJERCongress 2021" event.

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In schools, which are a social organization and an inseparable part of society, individuals with many different characteristics coexist (Banks, 1997). Students come together at school with differences such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, physical and mental disabilities (Resnik, 2009). However, Students were exposed to inequity owing to variations in gender, financial background, ethnic origin, and social class, and have difficulty getting qualified education (Bowles & Gintis, 2002; Lewis, 2007; McWhirter, 1997). Along with studies revealing that social inequality and the status quo are reproduced in schools (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Demaine, 2003) and highlighting neoliberal practices such as marketization and ranking culture in education systems around the world (Banks, 2008; Li & Dervin, 2019), awareness of social and social inequality has increased. The idea of creating an education system that does not have inequality and is fair for all has made the issue of social justice leadership a focus as the provider of equality and justice in education since the beginning of the 21st century (Bogotch, Beachum, Blount, Brooks, & English, 2008; Jean-Marie, Normore, & Brooks, 2009; Li & Dervin, 2019; Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Shoho, Merchang, & Lugg, 2005; Wang, 2018).

Social justice is a concept that emphasizes an equal and fair society in all respects but has no "fixed or predictable meaning" (Bogotch, 2002). In some studies, in the field of educational leadership, social justice has been considered as a concept that focuses on problems arising from differences such as race, ethnic diversity, gender, identity, social class, and as a key concept covering many social problems on a large scale (Dantley & Tillman, 2006; Frederking, 2013; Larson & Murtadha, 2002).

The theoretical foundations of social justice were formed by John Rawls' Theory of Justice (Rawls, 1985), Adams' Theory of Equality (Adams & Freedman, 1976), Social Contract Theory (eg. Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau), Marxist socialism (eg. Marx, Gramsci & Lukacs), Feminism (eg. De Beauvoir, Friedan & MacKinnon), and various critical theories of Frankfurt School thinkers such as Adorno, Benjamin, Habermas (Sabbagh & Schmitt, 2016). The concept, which was expressed by classical and medieval philosophers (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001) and has been in the literature since the 19th century, has been used in the field of education as well as in international human rights, anti-imperialist struggles, social movements, state policies and civil society movements (Arnové, 2009; Grant & Gibson, 2010; Sleeter, 2010; Zadjia, 2010).

Social justice leadership is "an activist intervention tool" (Marshall & Ward, 2004) and social justice leaders are seen as the most critical component in achieving equality in education (Marshall, Young, & Moll, 2010). As social justice leaders, school principals raise awareness of the inequality and injustice that arise due to the differences among students, take action to prevent these negative situations, so they take steps to ensure that disadvantaged students can reach qualified and fair education conditions (Bogotch, 2002; Dantley & Tillman, 2006; Jean-Marie et al., 2009; Larson & Murtadha, 2002; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). Social justice leader principals who promote equity in school and provide inclusive opportunities improve educational outcomes and empower disadvantaged and marginalized groups (Bogotch, 2002; Dantley & Tillman, 2006; DeMatthews & Mawhinney, 2014; Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011; Wasonga, 2009).

Studies has revealed that when students feel accepted and included in the school environment, they are more likely to participate in activities inside and outside the classroom, engage in interpersonal relationships, and participate in school communities (McMahon, Parnes, Keys, & Viola, 2008). Also, the social justice approach improves the attitudes of all students towards the school in a positive way and increases their commitment to the school (Özdemir, 2017). In the light of this information, it is possible to say that the improvements made for disadvantaged students, the elimination of disadvantages and the fulfillment of social and academic needs will have a positive effect on students' attitudes towards school. One of these attitudes was the sense of school belonging (OECD, 2017).

School administrators with social justice leadership qualifications promote success, tolerance, transparency, accountability, and social responsibility in their schools (Brown, 2006). It can be considered that an administrator with these characteristics will positively affect students' attitudes towards school by ensuring that disadvantaged students benefit from the school's facilities fairly and are supported academically (Robinson et al., 2008). Therefore, it is considered that school administrators, who are social justice leaders, minimize the various disadvantages of students, support all students academically under fair conditions, and satisfy their academic and social needs, which will increase students' level of school belonging. Based on empirical findings, this study focuses on the relationship between school principals' social justice leadership levels and students' level of school belonging. In this context, first the theoretical framework of the research, then the method and findings will be presented, and the last section will include conclusions, discussions and recommendations.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study was to reveal the relationship between high school students' perceptions about the social justice leadership of their school principals and their sense of school belonging.

Problem Statement

Is there a significant relationship between high school students' perceptions of their school principals' social justice leadership behavior and their sense of school belonging?

Sub-problems

According to the perceptions of high school students,

1. What is the level of social justice leadership of school principals?
2. What is the level of school belonging of high school students?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the school belonging levels of the students and the social justice leadership levels of the school principals?

Theoretical Framework

Social Justice Leadership in Education

The notion of social justice may be found in nearly every conceivable context, from daily life to official policy. Social justice basically covers a very wide field such as race, gender, economic development, environment, humanitarian issues such as human rights, education and health system (Frederking, 2013). Although the concept was born from the political philosophy of John Rawls's (1985) theory of justice, it has found a comprehensive place in many fields of study over time.

Three forms of social justice have been recognized by scholars so far. These are referred to as distributive justice, cultural justice, and relational justice, respectively (Enslin, 2006; Koçak & Bostancı, 2019; Polat, 2007; Wang, 2016). These types collectively cover all the injustices that arise due to the fair distribution of social tools, the relations between the individuals that make up the society, and the social underrepresentation (Wang, 2016).

Distributive justice refers to the principles of fair distribution of the assets of the society to the individuals who make up the society (Furman, 2012; Özdemir, 2017; Özdemir & Kütük, 2015). It is related to injustices related to the distribution of assets, victimization of disadvantaged groups and structural and socioeconomic inequalities (Fraser, Honneth, & Golb, 2003). Therefore, distributive justice is the fair distribution of all the resources of the society to individuals (Cochran-Smith & Boston College Evidence Team, 2009; Özdemir, 2017). Relational justice is considered as the participation of disadvantaged or marginalized groups in the decisions that will affect the society and therefore themselves (Furman, 2012; Gewirtz & Cribb, 2002) and focuses on interpersonal cooperation (Gewirtz, 1998). Cultural justice is concerned with preventing cultural hegemony, preventing the marginalization of subcultures, in short, ensuring equality between all cultures in society (Gewirtz & Cribb, 2002; Özdemir, 2017; Wang, 2016).

In terms of education, it is obvious that society-wide inequities persist within education systems as well, and thus the issue of social justice has a presence in educational research (Bogotch, 2014). The concept has been the subject of several research in the field of education (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997; Berkovich, 2014; Bogotch, 2002; Darling-Hammond, French, & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; DeMatthews, 2015; Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Michelli & Keiser, 2005). In these studies, it was stated that students experience inequalities in the education system due to reasons such as social class, ethnicity and gender (Archer, Hutchings, & Ross, 2003).

Social justice leadership has been strengthened by the thoughts that the leadership role can provide social justice in educational institutions and has started to take place in the literature and education policies as a part of the solution to inequalities in the education system (King & Travers, 2017; Oplatka, 2010; Oplatka & Arar, 2015). Social justice leaders are defined as ones who support individuals and groups who are disadvantaged or marginalized due to race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disabilities, and make this support one of their leadership principles (Theoharis, 2007). These leaders focus on the success of marginalized groups who experience failure in the education system, individuals who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, and all individuals who experience inequality due to their differences and take steps in this regard (Marshall & Oliva, 2006). By offering a democratic school life, they prevent students from being exposed to economic inequalities (Furman & Shields, 2005). According to Jansen (2006), school principals have the most fundamental power to ensure social justice in schools. School principals, who are aware of the inequalities in the school, bring together the stakeholders of the school and take action on this issue (Bozkurt, 2018; DeMatthews, 2014) and implement more egalitarian practices to prevent these inequalities (Furman, 2012).

Social justice leadership has three basic sub-dimensions as support, critical consciousness and participation (Özdemir & Kütüküt, 2015). These sub-dimensions were described by McKenzie et al. (2008) as the basic principles of social justice leadership; supporting disadvantaged students and providing a holistic acquisition to all students, creating critical consciousness and ensuring the participation of all students (in the decision process) as an approach of participatory management.

The support dimension means that the social justice leader supports individuals and groups who are marginalized and disadvantaged due to various social, socioeconomic or political reasons, and provides the opportunity to benefit from qualified education opportunities (Oplatka, 2010; Muradha & Watts, 2005). Social justice leaders aim to increase the success level of all students (Capper & Young, 2014; McKenzie et al., 2008). The belief was if disadvantaged students have access to high-quality educational opportunities, their academic performance improves, and their development will be positively influence (Özdemir, 2017). In this respect, the social justice leader, who is regarded as the architect of an egalitarian social order, where education and social opportunities are provided equally to all individuals and groups (Jean-Marie et al., 2009), will create a fair school environment by taking steps to ensure equality. This fair environment will lead to the development of a sense of community, thus creating a supportive climate in the school (McKenzie et al., 2008).

Critical consciousness, on the other hand, is among the most fundamental attributes required of a social justice leader (Radd & Grosland, 2018; Macey, 2014; Theoharis, 2009). According to Freire (2004), being aware of the inequalities and oppressions arising from differences and preventing these oppressions were the conditions that define critical consciousness. In this context, the social justice leader has the ability to identify the factors that prevent disadvantaged individuals and groups from benefiting from their freedom and equal opportunities (Freire, 1970) and to approach processes with negative consequences such as inequality, oppression, and exclusion with a critical perspective (Brooks & Miles, 2006). A critically conscious social justice leader places conditions that create inequality such as race, social class, gender, physical or mental disabilities at the center of her/his defense mechanism, leadership orientation and vision (Theoharis, 2007). In this context, the school principal emphasizes the importance of being a community, a sense of belonging to the community, understanding differences, and seeing it as a wealth in leadership practices (Theoharis, 2009), strives to bring this mentality to students (McKenzie et al., 2008; Shields, 2004).

The participation dimension is related to a perspective that values the active participation of each individual with or without a disadvantage in the education process, removing the barriers to participation, and the participation of individuals in the process with equal opportunities as a full member of their family, their own culture and society (Curcic, 2009; Theodorou & Nind, 2010; Vakil, Welton, O'Connor, & Kline, 2009). In this sense, social justice leader principals believe that all students have the right to participate in education together with their peers in the same class (McKenzie et al., 2008). They aim to create heterogeneous classrooms that include all students with differences such as race, gender, language, social class, disability or ability (Capper & Young, 2014). Thanks to the inclusive and democratic practices and policies implemented by the principal, a community consisting of individuals with different characteristics, with a spirit of cooperation and solidarity, and the belief that each individual is important, is formed (DeMatthews, 2014; Furman, 2012; Theoharis, 2007).

Adopting and encouraging the achievement, tolerance, solidarity, social duties, openness, and accountability of its students and school, are the tenets of social justice leadership (Brown, 2006). With their practices and perspectives, school principals strengthens both teachers' and students' beliefs and expectations for success, and students' self-belief and confidence (Feng & Chen, 2019). These principals intend to establish a healthy school climate by promoting collaboration, dialogue, and democratic practices such as involvement in decision making (Brooks, Jean-Marie, Normore, & Hodgins, 2007). They try to establish a bond between marginalized families and the school, strengthen their central role in their children's education (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2016), and strive for the participation of disadvantaged students in education on a fair ground (Theoharis, 2007). As a result, it is thought that school principals, as social justice leaders, will resist inequalities and pressures arising from differences, build a positive school culture and a strong social structure through supportive and inclusive policies and practices, contribute to the success of students, and develop a positive attitude towards the school.

School Belonging

The sense of belonging, the feeling of being a part of a group or community is one of the most basic needs and motivation sources that people have felt since their existence (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Fiske, 2004; Maslow, 1954). Individuals' intimate relationships with other people, groups, or social structures such as schools (Hagerty, Lynch-Sauer, Patusk, Bouwsema, & Collier, 1992) and the feeling that drives them to be a part of these social systems are defined as belonging.

The sense of school belonging is related to the students' feeling of being accepted individually in the school social environment, being respected, and loved, being included in the relationships and activities, and feeling supported (Goodenow & Grady, 1993). In summary, it can be defined as students' participation in school activities and their adoption of the school and their identification with the school (Finn & Voelkl, 1993). The sense of belonging has a wide place in research in the field of education due to its positive effect on students' cognitive outputs and attitudes towards school, as it is associated with many variables specifically about education and school.

According to the self-determination theory, the sense of belonging has a critical importance for motivation and success in schools (Eccles et al., 1993; Ryan & Deci, 2000). In this sense, if the social structure of the school is organized in a way that gives a sense of belonging, students adopt the values of the school's environment, develop positive thoughts about the environment and display behaviors compatible with these values (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to Eccles et al. (1993), a high level of student's sense of belonging will lead to higher commitment, motivation, and academic success.

In other studies, on the sense of school belonging, it was found that students with a high sense of belonging have more positive academic, social, and psychological outcomes and attitudes than students with low levels of belonging (Anderman & Freeman, 2004; Juvonen, 2006). In this context, students' high academic achievement and academic motivation (Adelabu, 2007; Anderman, 2003; Arslan, 2016; Booker, 2004; Osterman, 2000), high life satisfaction and well-being level (Gillen-O'Neel & Fuligni, 2013; Haslam, Jetten, Postmes, & Haslam, 2009; Moffa, Dowdy, & Furlong, 2016), high self-confidence and self-efficacy (Daley & Buchanan, 1999), low sense of loneliness levels and psycho-social disorders (Chipuer, 2001) and low level of depression (Anderman, 2002; Woodgate, 2006) were positive outcomes associated with a sense of belonging to the school.

The Relationship Between Social Justice Leadership and Sense of School Belonging

The focus of social justice, as a system that stands against inequalities caused by differences such as race, ethnic diversity, gender, identity, and social class, aims to increase the opportunities of individuals and to ensure that they can access equal opportunities (Chiu & Walker, 2007; Frederking, 2013). These inequalities also occur in educational environment. In the face of inequalities arising from students' differences, school principals should provide equal educational opportunities for all students, provide fair conditions, create a positive atmosphere with inclusive and democratic policies, in short, assume the role of social justice leadership (Dantley & Tillman, 2006; Furman, 2012; Robinson et al., 2008). As a social justice leader, it is thought that these practices of principals will positively affect students' attitudes towards school and increase their sense of belonging to the school. As a matter of fact, the sense of belonging is the feeling that individuals belong to a community where they are not marginalized for various reasons such as race, ethnicity, language, gender, or socioeconomic class, and are accepted with all their characteristics (Gardiner, Tenuto, & Yamamoto, 2015). In addition, creating a school environment based on social belonging is necessary for ensuring and maintaining social justice in schools (Theoharis, 2009). As a result, it is assumed that there is a relationship between social justice leadership and a sense of belonging to the school, which is anticipated to be disclosed in this research through the presentation of empirical data.

Method

Research Model

Correlational survey model was used in this study, which aims to reveal the relationship between school principals' social justice leadership orientations and students' school belonging. Relational screening model is carried out to examine the relationships between two or more variables and to describe the current situation (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Sample Group

The study group of the research consists of 264 students studying at high schools in the provinces of Denizli and Manisa, two medium-sized cities in the Aegean Region, in the 2020-2021 academic year. According to Stevens (2009), the required sample size should be at least 10 or 20 times the total number of variables in the data sets to apply the canonical correlation analysis (Salkind, 2010). Accordingly, since there were five variables in total in the data set of this study, at least 100 participants were found to be sufficient for the sample. Of the students participating in the study, 124 (47%) were girls and 140 (53%) were boys. Of the students, 74 (28%) were ninth graders, 58 (22%) were tenth graders, 48 (18.2%) were eleventh grade students, and 84 (31.8%) were twelfth grade students. 220 (83.3%) of the students are studying at Anatolian High School and 44 (16.7%) at Vocational High School.

Data Collection Tools

Social Justice Leadership Scale (SJLS)

The Social Justice Leadership Scale (SJLS), developed by Özdemir and Kütküt (2015), consists of three sub-dimensions as "support", "critical consciousness" and "participation" and a total of 24 items. There are 12 items in the "support" sub-dimension of the scale, 9 items in the "critical consciousness" sub-dimension, and 3 items in the "participation" sub-dimension. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated as .88 for the support sub-dimension, .89 for the critical consciousness sub-dimension, .72 for the participation sub-dimension, and .94 for the whole scale. According to the results of the confirmatory factor analysis performed to confirm the structure of the social justice leadership scale, the fit indices were found as CFI=.91, TLI=.91, SRMR=.04, RMSEA=.05. In addition, the value obtained by dividing the chi-square value by the degrees of freedom (χ^2/sd) was calculated as 1.87.

The School Belonging Scale (SBS)

The Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale, developed by Goodenow (1993) and adapted into Turkish by Sarı (2013) as "School Belonging Scale", consists of two sub-dimensions and a total of 18 items. There are 13 items in the "sense of belonging" sub-dimension and 5 items in the "sense of rejection" sub-dimension of the scale. The variance explained by each factor in the scale is 28.90% for

the "sense of belonging to the school", 9.59% for the "sense of rejection", and the total variance explained is 38.49%. When the Cronbach's alpha coefficients of each factor of the scale were examined, it was calculated as .84 for the "sense of belonging", .78 for the "sense of rejection" and .84 for the whole scale. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated as .86 for sense of belonging sub-dimension, .59 for sense of rejection sub-dimension, and .86 for the whole scale. According to the results of the confirmatory factor analysis performed to confirm the structure of the sense of school belonging scale, the fit indices were CFI=.88, TLI=.86, SRMR=.05, RMSEA=.06, AIC=13261, BIC=13458. Besides, the value obtained by dividing the chi-square value by the degrees of freedom (χ^2/sd) was calculated as 2.06.

Data Analysis

The data of this research were collected and analyzed with the research permission of Pamukkale University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee with the number 68282350/2018/G08.

Descriptive statistics and canonical correlation are used for data analysis. Canonical correlation analysis is a technique which investigates the linear relationships and the correlation between two multidimensional sets of variables. The aim of this technique is to raise the level of relationship between two data sets (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In the analysis, first, linear components were obtained that will maximize the relationship between the two variable sets (Everitt & Hothor, 2011). New variables, which consist of linear components of the analyzed variables, are called "canonical variables" (Afifi & Clark, 1996). The canonical variables on both sides of the canonical correlation equation are called the canonical variable pair (Tabachnick, Fidell, & Ullman, 2007). The relationship between pairs of canonical variables is expressed as "canonical function" or "canonical root". The first canonical variable pair that emerges because of the canonical correlation analysis is calculated in a way that maximizes the relationship between the variables (Härdle & Simar, 2012). The second pair of canonical variables indicates the maximum level of relationship between two canonical variables, which is not considered in the calculation of the correlation between the first pair of canonical variables (Stevens, 2009). The value of the canonical correlation decreases with each new root obtained between two canonical variables (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

In this study, it was aimed to determine the relationship between the social justice leadership dataset, which is composed of weighted combinations of variables consisting of support, critical consciousness and participation dimensions, and the sense of school belonging dataset, which is composed of weighted combinations of sense of belonging and sense of rejection, with canonical correlation analysis. One of the data sets used in the research consists of three variables and the other two variables. In this context, the maximum number of canonical variable pairs is two. The analytical scheme of the canonical correlation analysis of the data sets is presented in Figure 1.

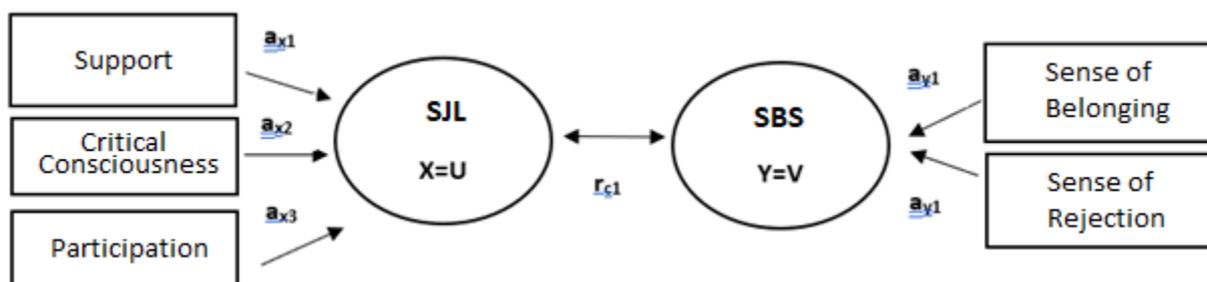


Figure 1. Analytical schema of social justice leadership and sense of school belonging datasets.

According to Figure 1, a_{x1} , a_{x2} and a_{x3} represent the canonical loads of the X independent variable, a_{y1} and a_{y2} represent the canonical loads of the Y dependent variable, and r_{c1} represents the relationship between the X and Y canonical variables.

It is necessary for the data set to fulfil certain assumptions before doing canonical correlation analysis, including linearity, multiple normal distributions, and multiple linearity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The fact that the correlation value between the variables in the data set was lower than 0.9 indicates that it meets the assumption that there is no multicollinearity problem. In addition to the correlation value, other assumptions of the multicollinearity problem are that the VIF value is lower than 10 (Webster, 1992, as cited in Albayrak, 2005), the CI value is less than 30 (Gujarati, 1995 as cited in Albayrak, 2005), and the tolerance value is higher than .10 (Field, 2005, as cited in Çokluk, Güçlü, & Büyüköztürk, 2012). As a result of the analyzes, it was concluded that the tolerance value was between .31 and .59, the VIF value was between 1.68 and 3.16, and the CI value was between 8.09 and 22.20, and it was seen that there was no multicollinearity problem between the variables in the data set. In order to test the normal distribution of the data set, the skewness and kurtosis values were examined, and it was seen that the skewness values were between -.34 and -1.10, and the kurtosis values were between .51 and 2.36 and were acceptable (George & Mallery, 2016). In order to test the linearity assumption, the scatter plots of the scales were examined and as a result of all these tests, it was seen that the data set met the assumptions required for canonical correlation analysis.

Results

The first sub-problem of the research is "What is the level of social justice leadership of school principals?". The mean and standard deviation values obtained from the responses of the participant students to the Social Justice Leadership Scale are given in Table 1.

Table 1. The Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation Values of Students' School Principals' Perceptions on Social Justice Leadership

	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>Ss</i>
Social Justice Leadership	264	3.44	.69
Support	264	3.48	.70
Critical Consciousness	264	3.64	.78
Participation	264	2.71	.95

When Table 1. is examined, it has been determined that the arithmetic mean of participants' views on the whole scale (SJLS) is 3.44, at the level of "Mostly Agree", the arithmetic mean of participants' views on the "support" sub-dimension is 3.48, at the level of "Mostly Agree", the arithmetic mean of participants' views on the "critical consciousness" sub-dimension is 3.64, at the level of "Mostly Agree" and the arithmetic mean of participants' views on the "participation" sub-dimension is at the level of 2.71, at the level of "Moderately Agree".

The second sub-problem of the research is "What is the level of school belonging of high school students?". The mean and standard deviation values obtained from the responses of the participant students to the School Belonging Scale are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation Values of Students' Perceptions of School Belonging

	N	\bar{X}	Ss
School Belonging	264	3.53	.58
Sense of Belonging	264	3.58	.66
Sense of Rejection	264	3.41	.68

When Table 2 is examined, it has been determined that the arithmetic mean of participants' views on the whole scale (SBS) is 3.53, at the level of "Mostly Agree", the arithmetic mean of participant's views on the "Sense of Belonging" sub-dimension is 3.58, at the level of "Mostly Agree", the arithmetic mean of participant's views on the "Sense of Rejection" sub-dimension is 3.41, at the level of "Mostly Agree".

The third sub-problem of the research is "Is there a significant relationship between the school belonging levels of the students and the social justice leadership levels of the school principals?". In order to determine whether there is a significant relationship between school belonging and the social justice leadership of school principals, the Pearson correlation test was performed, and the results were given in Table 3.

Table 3. The Relationship between School Belonging and Its Sub-Dimensions and School Principals' Social Justice Leadership and Its Sub-Dimensions (Pearson Correlation Test Results)

	Social Justice Leadership	Support	Critical Consciousness	Participation
School Belonging	.70***	.67***	.70***	.46***
Sense of Belonging	.74***	.70***	.74***	.51***
Sense of Rejection	.33***	.34***	.31***	.16*

*p<.05, ** p <.01, *** p <.001

As can be seen in Table 3, it has been determined that there is a positive and highly significant relationship ($r=.70$, $p<.001$) between students' perceptions of school belonging and students' perceptions about their school principals' social justice leadership, a positive and moderately significant relationship between the perception levels of the support sub-dimension of social justice leadership ($r=.67$, $p<.001$), a positive and highly significant relationship between the perception levels of the critical consciousness sub-dimension of social justice leadership ($r=.70$, $p<.001$), a positive and moderately significant relationship between the perception levels of the participation sub-dimension of social justice leadership ($r=.46$, $p<.001$).

As can be seen in Table 3, it has been determined that there is a positive and highly significant relationship between students' perception levels of the sense of belonging sub-dimension of school belonging and perceptions about their school principals' social justice leadership ($r=.74$, $p<.001$), a positive and highly significant relationship between the perception levels of the support sub-dimension of social justice leadership ($r=.70$, $p<.001$), a positive and highly significant relationship between the perception levels of the critical consciousness sub-dimension of social justice leadership ($r=.74$, $p<.001$), a positive and moderately significant relationship between the perception levels of the participation sub-dimension of social justice leadership ($r=.51$, $p<.001$).

As shown in Table 3, it has been determined that there is a positive, moderately significant relationship between students' perception levels of the sense of rejection sub-dimension of school belonging and perceptions about their school principals' social justice leadership ($r=.33$, $p<.001$), a positive and moderately significant relationship between the perception levels of the support sub-

dimension of social justice leadership ($r=.34, p<.001$), a positive and moderately significant relationship between the perception levels of the critical consciousness sub-dimension of social justice leadership ($r=.31, p<.001$), a positive and low-level significant relationship between the perception levels of social justice leadership's participation sub-dimension ($r=.16, p<.001$).

As a result of the canonical correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between students' perceptions about their school principals' social justice leadership orientations and their school belonging, the statistically significant canonical correlation coefficients calculated between the social justice leadership and school sense of belonging variable sets were presented in Table 4. These values indicate the optimal linear relations between the two variable sets.

Table 4. Canonical Correlation Analysis Results

Roots	Canonical Correlation (r_c)	Square of Canonical Correlation (r_c^2)	Eigenvalue	Wilks' Lambda	F	Sd	P
1	.776	.60	1.417	.412	48.175	6	.000
2	.066	.004	.004	.996			

Although both linear functions were found to be statistically significant according to Table 4. ($p < .05$), Wilks' Lambda value, which indicates the test statistical value of the canonical correlation, shows that only the first linear function is statistically significant (Wilk's $\lambda = .412, F_{(6)} = 48.175, p<.01$). Accordingly, the canonical correlation value of the first canonical function was determined as .78 and the shared variance between the social justice leadership and school belonging datasets was determined as .60.

The standardized canonical coefficients, which include the correlations between the canonical variables showing the weight of each variable in forming linear combinations and the real variables, were examined. The standardized canonical coefficients also specify the part that canonical variables explain in their set. These coefficients indicate the standard deviation of a one-unit change in the independent variable in the canonical variable. In this sense, the standardized correlation coefficients of the variables in the first and second sets were given in Table 5.

Table 5. Standardized Correlation Coefficients and Load Values of the Variables in the First and Second Sets

Variable	r_c	
	Correlation Coefficient	Load Value
First Set (Social Justice Leadership)		
Support	-.30	-.90
Participation	-.05	-.65
Critical Consciousness	-.69	-.97
Second Set (School Belonging)		
Sense of Belonging	-1.01	-.99
Sense of Rejection	.03	-.41

According to Table 5, equations for canonical variables U and V obtained from standardized coefficients can be formulated as follows.

$$U = -.30 * \text{Support} - .05 * \text{Participation} - .69 * \text{Critical Consciousness}$$

$$V = -1.01 * \text{Sense of Belonging} + .03 * \text{Sense of Rejection}$$

According to this formulation, it is seen that the highest level of contribution to the formation of the U canonical variable is provided by the critical consciousness (-.69) variable and the lowest level of contribution is provided by the participation (-.05) variable. When the coefficients in the second set are examined, it is seen that the variable that contributes the highest level to the formation of the V canonical variable is the sense of belonging (-1.01).

The canonical load of each set in the canonical correlation analysis indicates the variance explained by the variable. The value represents the mean of the squares of the canonical loads belonging to the variable in the set. In order for the variable to be interpreted as part of the relevant set, the value must be greater than .30 (Tabachnick et al., 2007). In this context, critical consciousness (-.97), support (-.90), participation (-.65) variables as canonical load values can be interpreted as part of the first set. At the point of canonical load values of the variables in the second set, the sense of belonging (-.99) and the sense of rejection (-.41) variables can be considered as a part of the second set.

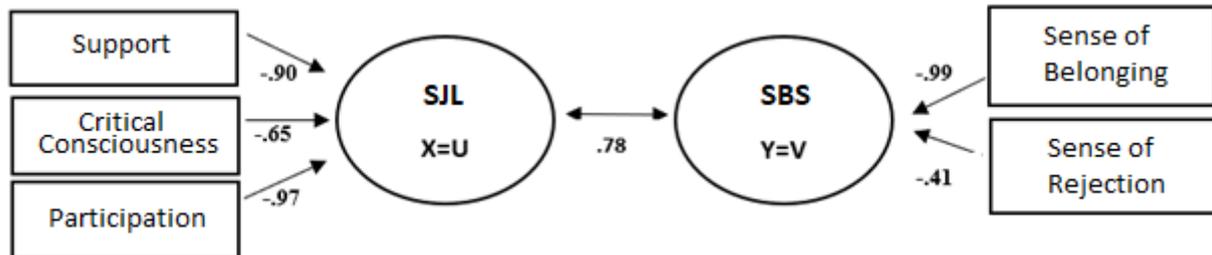


Figure 2. Structural coefficients and correlation value of the first canonical pair between SJL and SBS

When Figure 2 is examined, it is seen that the canonical correlation value between the social justice leadership and sense of school belonging datasets is .78. When the signs of the variables that make a significant contribution to the data set they belong to are examined in order to determine the direction of the relationship between the variables in the canonical functions obtained as a result of the canonical correlation analysis, it can be said that the signs of the variables are negative and there is a relationship in the same direction between these variables.

The cross-load values of the social justice leadership variable set on the school belonging variable set and the cross-load values of the school belonging variable set on the social justice leadership variable set are given in Table 6.

Table 6. Cross Load Values of Social Justice Leadership Variable Set on School Affiliation Variable Set and Cross Load Values of School Affiliation Variable Set on Social Justice Leadership Variable Set

Variable	Load value
School Belonging Variable Set (V Canonical Variable)	
First Set (Social Justice Leadership)	
Support	-.69
Participation	-.50
Critical Consciousness	-.75
Social Justice Leadership Variable Set (U Canonical Variable)	
Second Set (Sense of School Belonging)	
Sense of Belonging	-.76
Sense of Rejection	-.31

According to Table 6, when the role of perceptions about school principals' social justice leadership in explaining students' levels of school belonging is examined; it is seen that the dimensions of critical consciousness (.75), support (-.69) and participation (-.50) stand out. Also, when the role of students' perceived school belonging is examined in explaining the levels of perceptions about their school principals' social justice leadership; it is seen that the dimensions of sense of belonging (-.76) and sense of rejection (-.31) stand out.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, which was conducted on students studying at high schools in Denizli and Manisa provinces, it was aimed to examine the relationship between school principals' social justice leadership behavior and their sense of school belonging in line with students' perceptions. For this purpose, the data obtained from the participants were analyzed with descriptive statistics and canonical correlation analysis.

In the research findings, it was determined that the students' perception of the social justice leadership behavior exhibited by the school principals was at the "Mostly Agree" level. In accordance with this conclusion, it is feasible to assert that school administrators demonstrate average social justice leadership behavior. While this finding differs from the findings of Büyükgöze, Şayır, Gülcemal, and Kubilay (2018), Canlı (2020) and Özdemir (2017), it is similar to the findings of Turhan and Çelik (2011). This difference may be attributable to the condition of difference/diversity in the schools where the students included in the study. In this context, despite the obstacles such as legal regulations and bureaucratic practices, lack of sufficient knowledge about disadvantaged students, insufficient physical conditions and limited resources of schools (Tomul, 2009), privileged and narrow-minded expectations of parents, and obstructive attitudes and beliefs of staff, it is possible to say that school principals can show almost adequate social justice leadership behavior.

The critical consciousness dimension of social justice leadership was evaluated by the students as the highest and the participation dimension as the lowest. The high level of perception of the critical consciousness behavior of school principals by students indicates that school principals are aware of the inequalities arising from differences and the conditions that create inequalities in their schools and take an attitude to prevent them (Freire, 2004; Theoharis, 2007), they have the ability to identify the barriers for marginalized, excluded and oppressed students to benefit equally from all the opportunities of the education system, to take the necessary steps against these obstacles (Freire, 1970) and to approach all these processes with a critical perspective (Brooks & Miles, 2006). The low level of perception of the participation behavior of school principals by students indicates that school principals are insufficient to ensure the active participation of all students with or without a disadvantage in the education and training process and to remove the obstacles in front of this (Theodorou & Nind, 2010; Curcic, 2009; Vakil et al., 2009), cannot support the participation of students with various differences in this process with equal opportunities as a full member of the society with their families and the cultures they represent, cannot build a community based on cooperation and solidarity formed by students with different characteristics and on the basis that each individual is important (DeMatthews, 2014; Furman, 2012; Theoharis, 2007).

In the research findings, it was determined that the students' perception of school belonging was at the "Mostly Agree" level. According to this, it is possible to say that the students participating in the research evaluate the sense of school belonging at a medium/above average level. While this result of the research differs from the results of Arastaman (2009), Büyükgöze et al. (2018), Canlı (2020), Kalaycı and Özdemir (2013) and Özdemir's (2017) research, it is similar to the research results of Aşlamacı and Eker (2016), Altınsoy and Karakaya-Özyer (2018), who determined the high school belonging of high school students to be high, and Sarı (2013), who determined it to be above the average. Considering that social relations in schools are effective on students' sense of school belonging (Cemalcılar, 2010), it is thought that this difference in the literature may be related to the quality of social relations in the schools of the students included in the research.

In the study, it was concluded that the social justice leadership and the school belonging datasets shared a variance of approximately 60%. In addition, it has been determined that there is a positive relationship between the variables of support, participation and critical consciousness in the social justice leadership data set, and the sense of belonging and sense of rejection in the school belonging data set. In other words, as school principals' social justice leadership behavior tendency increases, students' school belonging is expected to increase as well. This result can be interpreted, as

social justice leaders, school principals' being aware of inequalities and injustices arising from differences such as race, ethnicity, language, gender or socioeconomic class in their schools, developing supportive and inclusive policies and practices, building a positive school culture and a strong social structure will enable students to develop a positive attitude towards the school and increase their school belonging. As a matter of fact, the sense of belonging has been expressed as the feeling of belonging to a community where individuals are not marginalized for various reasons such as race, ethnicity, language, gender or socioeconomic class, but are accepted with all their characteristics (Gardiner et al., 2015). In the literature, it is stated that providing a school climate where students are treated fairly, socially and academically supportive, and students feel accepted and a member of the community increases the sense of school belonging (Cunningham, 2007; Ma, 2003; Rowe & Stewart, 2011; Sarı, 2013; Whitlock, 2006). Considering that school principals, as social justice leaders, create a warm, safe and happy environment by integrating students despite their race, ethnicity, culture, neighborhood or mother tongue differences, it can be claimed that school principals' social justice leadership behaviors are an important element in strengthening students' school belonging (Scheurich & Skrla, 2003; Theoharis, 2007). In addition, by supporting social inclusion and participation (DeMatthews & Mawhinney, 2014; McKenzie et al., 2008), social justice leaders prevent alienation, marginalization and exclusion and thus contribute to the development of a sense of belonging (Özdemir, 2017).

In the literature, it has been revealed by various studies that students' sense of school belonging is related to the social justice leadership behaviors of school principals (Büyükgöze et al., 2018; Canlı, 2020; Koçak, 2021; Özdemir, 2017). On the other hand, it has been found that disadvantaged students' school engagement and their desire to continue their education are lower in schools where social justice is not provided (Komba, 2013; McLaren, 2011). For this reason, the social justice leadership approach of school principals is important in strengthening students' school belonging.

Suggestions

Various suggestions can be made within the scope of the findings and results obtained as a result of the research. In terms of implementation, a school principal who wants to strengthen his students' sense of school belonging needs to address any harmful effects caused by social differences in the school and improve the quality of school life regardless of social differences, in order to ensure that every student benefits equally from the educational opportunities. School principals should also be aware of the obstacles to the equal and democratic participation of all students in the education and training processes, and try to remove these obstacles, and ensure that their students develop a critical consciousness so that they can criticize and stand against oppressive, discriminatory, marginalizing and excluding practices. School principals should respect all students regardless of their race, language, religion, gender, sexual or ideological orientation and should ensure the development of awareness of respecting differences in their schools. These practices will strengthen the students' school belonging, and the stronger school belonging will provide positive outcomes both individually for the student and for the school she/he is in.

In the research, it was concluded that the social justice leadership behaviors of the school principals increased the school belonging of the students. In the literature, it has been seen that the sense of high school membership is associated with positive outcomes such as high academic achievement and academic motivation (Adelabu, 2007; Anderman, 2003; Arslan, 2016; Booker, 2004; Osterman, 2000), high life satisfaction and well-being (Gillen-O'Neel & Fuligni, 2013; Haslam et al., 2009; Moffa et al., 2016), high self-confidence and self-efficacy (Daley & Buchanan, 1999). In addition, a high level of school belonging seems to be effective in students' adopting school values, having positive thoughts about them, and displaying behaviors compatible with these values (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Considering the positive outcomes that school principals' social justice leadership behaviors have an indirect or direct effect on student and school levels, further research can be conducted to determine the level of school principals' social justice leadership behavior and the variables that affect it.

This study, which aims to examine the relationship between school principals' social justice leadership levels and students' school belonging levels, has some limitations. The research aims to reveal students' perceptions of school principals' social justice leadership behaviors. For this reason, the fact that the regions or schools where the disadvantaged students are in the majority are not taken into account in the selection of the sample constitutes a limitation. Similar research can be conducted in schools located in provinces and districts with disadvantaged students. In this study, students' opinions were used to determine the perception of school principals' social justice leadership behaviors. Consulting the opinions of other school stakeholders as well as students' opinions may provide a clearer perspective on the social justice leadership behaviors of school principals. However, the scope of the research was limited to high schools and other school levels were not included. Evaluation of other school levels together can give information about whether there is a differentiation between levels regarding the relevant variables. It is thought that a new quantitative study to be carried out by including mediating variables such as students' attitudes towards school, commitment, and socio-economic status, or a hierarchical linear modeling study to be carried out by adding variables at the student level may reveal a different perspective. In addition to these, it is among the suggestions to conduct a qualitative study focusing on the participation dimension of social justice leadership, which is perceived to be relatively low.

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