The Relationship between Teachers' Political Skills and Work Engagement

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The purpose of the present study is to ascertain the relationship between teachers' political skills and work engagement. Correlational design is employed to complete the process of this research. The population of this study is composed of 4494 teachers working in Usak Province of Turkey. Convenience sampling was used in this study. The sample size of the study was made up 297 teachers. The data were collected through 'Political Skill Inventory' and 'Work Engagement Scale.' The data analysis was conducted via arithmetic mean, standard deviation, Pearson Moment Correlation Analysis and path analysis. According to the results, the levels of teachers' political skills and work engagement were high. Another finding of the study revealed that there was a moderate, positive and significant relationship between the dimensions of social astuteness, interpersonal influence skill, networking ability and sincerity and the level of work engagement. The research has also showed that the fact that teachers' political skills had the dimensions of interpersonal influence skill and sincerity had a positive, high level and significant effect on their work engagement. In addition, it was concluded that teachers' level of social astuteness and networking ability did not predict their levels of work engagement. In light of those results, it is recommended that certain activities to improve teachers' political skills must be organized in schools. **Key words:** Positive Feelings at Workplace, Interpersonal Influence Skill, Social Astuteness, Influence Others

INTRODUCTION

The process of education would achieve its goals thanks to teachers' work engagement. The success of educational reforms depends on learning output that is the result of the events in the class. Therefore, educational reforms are expected to be effective through teacher achievement. The educational success is based on the competencies, leadership skills, implementations and work engagement of the teachers, in other words the cornerstones of change (Schleicher, 2011).Teachers are expected to enhance the quality of education with the rapidly changing conditions and to educate students. This significant duty requires teachers' active, physical, emotional and cognitive commitment to their job. Teacher' work engagement is defined as a positive and satisfactory state of mind towards the job (Choochom, 2016).The study carried out by TEDMEM (2014) in Turkey posited that the regulations regarding teachers principally aimed to define teacher competencies, train teachers and focused on appointment and employment; however, educational goals to be achieved were considered to be depend on teachers' commitment. Furthermore, it was revealed that teachers experiences problems about developing positive feelings about their jobs. It was recommended in the study that certain

regulations which would allow teachers to psychologically commit to their job, thereby creating positive feelings, must be regarded as primary policy.

The researchers and educational policymakers are more interested in teachers' work engagement due to three factors. The first of these factors is work engagement is associated with teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The second is the belief that the teachers who have work engagement less likely tend to have burnout health problems. The third is the expectation that teachers with work engagement is more likely inclined to be productive, to contribute to school and to take additional responsibilities outside the class (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Hakanen, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2006; Parker & Martin, 2009; Minghui, Lei, Xiaomeng & Potmešilc, 2018; Klassen, Aldhafri, Mansfield, Purwanto, Siu, Wong & Woods-McConney, 2012).

Teachers are responsible for providing students with information literacy skills which would ensure success and adaptation both in further periods of education life and professional life (Kurbanoğlu & Akkoyunlu, 2009). Individuals with information literacy skills have a set of abilities to think critically, analyse, synthesise and collaborate. Consequently, information literacy is regarded as the cornerstone of being a prosperous individual in information society (Polat, 2006).

With this aim, teachers are required to dedicate themselves to their work and to be aware of their responsibilities. Work engagement is defined as teachers' actively commit themselves physically, emotionally and cognitively to their work (Choochom, 2016). It has been reported that teachers' work engagement plays a major role in students' being individuals with information literacy skills and being creative in addition to gaining success. Teachers with work engagement become inspiration to their students (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Bae, Song, Park & Kim, 2013). Bostancı and Kahraman (2019) articulated that, according to teachers, school principals' competencies, communication and collaboration among colleagues and the characteristics of student and school influenced their work engagement. Again, senior management practices outside the school, relationship with the parents, the social status of teaching profession and personal characteristics are considered as other factors affecting teachers' work engagement. Another study in the literature posited that the teachers who had strong personal resources and a better control of school environment in addition to utilizing certain job resources as their relationships with colleagues, principals and students were able to reduce the effect of difficulties they faced in the workplace on their work engagement (Choochom, 2016). Moreover, Clercq, Haq Azeem and Ahmad (2019) found that political skill is necessary to deal with certain difficulties and unpleasant situations resulting in job dissatisfaction about the work environment. Therefore, teachers are required to struggle and manage certain situations in order to form their work processes in the school. In doing so, having political skills is of high importance (Reid, McCallum & Dobbins, 2006). Ahern et al. (2004) defined political skill as understanding and influencing others in order to achieve personal and organizational goals (Brosky, 2011). Political skill is regarded as a social competency ensuring personal and organizational goals to be achieved. The individuals having political skills are capable of effectively managing other members and working conditions. Political skill refers to social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability and sincerity (Basit, 2020; Ferris, Davidson & Perrewe, 2005).

Political skill has an effect on individuals, groups and organizations. It is a mechanism which activates target-oriented behaviours in order to achieve certain objectives (Atay, 2010). The duty of teachers is to enhance the quality of education and educate the students. The individuals who are able to manage the workplace in accordance with personal and organizational goals thanks to their political skills have positive feelings about their job and become more successful in the work environment (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Basit, 2020; Staw, Sutton & Pelled, 1994; Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez- Roma & Bakker, 2002; Klassen et al., 2012). According to the related literature, teachers' work engagement is highly essential in order to achieve educational goals. However, their work engagement is affected from certain factors as social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability and sincerity that is political skills. The concepts of the research and relationships among them are presented below.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work Engagement

Work engagement is considered as the employees' commitment to the job in cognitive, affective and behavioural ways for the individual and organizational outcomes (Kahn, 2016; Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma & Bakker, 2002). Therefore, work engagement is regarded as vigour, concentration and dedication (Iyer, 2016; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007; Turgut, 2011). Vigor is employee's keeping a high levels of energy, mental resilience while working and the willingness with persistence even facing with difficulties. However, concentration is the act of working proudly with inspiration and enthusiasm. In other words, it means the overall concentration of an employee and work away contentedly. Besides, dedication refers to the significant of one's work. The employee thinks that s/he aims for a certain target and his/her work is significant while working. Since his/her work is inspirational, s/he has enthusiasm towards his/her tasks assigned at a workplace and is proud of his/her job. The employees who commit themselves are of the opinion that their job is interesting and requires struggle. Therefore, they are prepossessed by their work and are not aware of the time as well as having difficult in taking breaks (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Iyer, 2016; Rothmann & Hamukang'andu, 2013; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007; Turgut, 2011). The employees who commit themselves to their job have the ability to impress. Thus, this supports the organization to achieve its targets and has a positive effect on other employees. Therefore, work engagement is a valuable indicator of employees, professional prosperity and organizations' professional health. In other words, work engagement encompasses both job requirements and individuals' attempts. Work engagement also brings about responsibility for high-level of work performance. Accordingly, employees' levels of work engagement, individual and organizational performance outcomes interest human resources and organizations (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Gamero-Burón & Lassibille, 2018; Khan, 2016).

Political Skill

Political skill is the ability to influence others in the workplace and to act in a way that accomplishes the personal and organizational goals. Political skill is the ability to understand others in the workplace and to use this knowledge to achieve their own or organizational targets. Political ability consists of four dimensions: social asuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability and appearent sincerity (Ferris, Davidson & Perrewe, 2005; Atay, 2010; Perrewe & Nelson, 2004). These dimensions can be defined as follows: *Social astuteness* is about observing the employees' behaviours and adapting to different environments successfully. The ones who interprets their own and others behaviours properly are the individuals with high level of social astuteness. *Interpersonal influence* is about the ability to see the details and strong ability to persuade as well as being productive. These people have a strong and positive

effect on other individuals and use this to control certain situations. *Networking ability* is defined different, skilled in using and developing networks. They value the connections they create for personal and organizational purposes. Network ability attach importance to their networks in order to achieve individual and organizational goals. The individual regard it as invest to his/her success. S/he is able to make new friends easily and build partnerships with certain objectives. Finally, people with the dimension of *sincerity* are people with a high level of accuracy, honesty, reliability, sincerity, and fairness. They are trusted as they are seen as sincere and fair by others (Atay, 2010; Ferris, et al., 2005; Gallagher, 2007; Perrewe & Nelson, 2004; Ferris, Treadway, Perrewé, Brouer, Douglas & Lux, 2007; Meurs, 2008; Moss & Barbuto, 2010; Treadway, Breland, Adams, Allison, Duke & Williams, 2010).

The relationship between Teachers' Work Engagement and their Political Skills

The level of teachers' work engagement is categorized as four dimensions. These are: cognitive, emotional, social (colleagues) and social (students) engagement. Emotional engagement refers to the inspiration, proud and enthusiasm by the teacher while working. Cognitive engagement is explained by the act of wholly and contentedly dedication to the work. Social (colleagues) engagement refers to teachers' relationships with their colleagues at a workplace and social (students) engagement is commitment to the students (Khan, 2016). The high level of work engagement is affected by individual and organizational resources such as justice, teacher- student relations, support from colleagues and from supervisors (Choochom, 2016). One of these individual resources is considered as political skill since the ones having political skill behave remarkably and arouse the feelings of trust and sincerity. The teachers with political skill are able to establish positive relationships with their colleagues, principals and students (Perrewe, Ferris, Frink & Anthony, 2000; Uğurlu & Bostancı, 2017). It has been acknowledged that organizations are inherently political arenas and individuals must have political skills in order to be happy and successful in such places (Mintzberg 1983; Prefer*, 1981 as cited in Atay, 2010). Ferris et al. (2005) defined political skill as 'the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives'. As such, politically skilled teachers are saliently more successful in terms of having their students achieve and influencing other stake holders. These teachers combine their interpersonal influence ability with the capacity to communicate and collaborate with other members and students in order for successful educational operations (Petanil & Krajinovic, 2019). The politically skilled individuals are able to make effective connections in their workplace, Access the resources and they do not experience isolation. Networking ability is a significant characteristic which must not be overlooked in order for teachers to be successful and feel alright (García-Chas, Neira-Fontela1, Varela-Neira & Curto-Rodríguez, 2019; Gatt & Costa,

2009). The level of political skill has an impact on the quick adaption to other members and different situations in the school and the performance to carry out educational operations (Uğurlu & Bostancı, 2017).

Political skill is regarded as an important source in one's motivation, development and concentration. The employees having high level of political skill are able to achieve their individual targets and works with less stress at the workplace (Atay, 2010; Perrewe & Nelson, 2004; Ferris, Davidson, Perrewe & Atay, 2009; Ferris et al., 2007). The positive feelings toward the work by employees facilitate the relationships with other colleagues, have a positive influence on them and promote collaboration (Staw, Sutton & Pelled, 1994). It is clear that teachers with political skill are good at developing positive feelings towards their job. Furthermore, it is not considered possible for a teacher not having high level of political skill to collaborate with his/her colleagues and bring stakeholders together with the context of a goal. The fact that the teachers who play a major role in achieving educational targets have political skill would make them satisfied with their jobs, facilitate their adaptation to new conditions. The teachers would be able to influence others with their sincere behaviours, thereby enhancing work performance. When teachers are successful within the dimensions of political skill, they are able to achieve both their individual and organizational goals (Uğurlu & Bostancı, 2017).

In the light of the information above, teachers' political skills are considered to influence their work engagement. The present study aims to highlight the importance of political skills in terms of work engagement of teachers who are the cornerstones of educational objectives to be achieved. In this regard, it has been anticipated that the findings of this study would contribute to enhance teachers' political skills, to determine teacher training and development program-makers and to teachers and school principals. Again, the current study is considered to raise awareness among teachers to enhance their self- efficacy. In the literature, the number of studies focusing on teachers' political skills and their work engagement is highly limited. With this regard, this study is expected to be a reminder and guide for researchers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to ascertain the relationship between teachers' political skills and work engagement. With this aim, answers to the following questions have been sought:

1. What are the level of teachers' political skill and work engagement?
2. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' political skill and work engagement?
3. Do the levels of teachers' political skill predict their levels of work engagement?

METHOD

Research Design

The present study is a quantitative research. In a quantitative research, the researcher develops a theory in order to examine or verify instead of improving a theory. S/he attempts to gather quantifiable data and verify which of the hypotheses

s/he has developed are true. Deductive reasoning was used in quantitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The current study aiming to determine the relationship between teachers' political skills and their work engagement employed correlational model. The correlational research was used to measure two variables (Robson, 2002), understands and assesses the statistical relationship between them with no influence (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Creswell (2012) defined correlational research as a research design which measures and identifies the score or relationship between two or more variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The correlational design was also used to make predictions between variables on the condition that the relationship is adequately strong (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012).

The Population and Sample of the Study

The population of this study is composed of 4494 teachers working in Uşak Province of Turkey (usak.meb.gov.tr, 2019). The present study was conducted in 2019- 2020 academic yea. The sample size of this study was determined based on theoretical sampling table. According to this table recommended sample size for a population of 4494 is 354 for %95 confidence interval, α=.05 significance level and %5 tolerance level (Balcı, 2011). Convenience sampling was used in this study. The scales to obtain research data was applied through face-to-face interviews with teachers. In doing so, proximity, economy and easy- accessibility are taken into consideration during data gathering process. After, 318 scales returned from the applied 360 scales. 21 scales were eliminated because the scales were not filled properly. The sample size of this study was made up 297 teachers. The demographic information of participants was given in Table 1.

When the data presented in Table 1 was examined, it was seen that the number of female and male participants

Table 1. The demographic information of the participants

Variables		f	%
Gender	Female	167	56.2
	Male	130	43.8
Graduaiton's degree	Associate degree	5	1.7
	Bachelor's degree	253	85.2
	Master's degree	39	13.1
Seniority	1-10 years	80	26.9
	11-20 years	131	44.1
	21-30 years	70	23.6
	31 years and +	16	5.4
Duration of working at the same school	1-5 years	298	62.6
	6-10 years	111	23.3
	11 years and +	67	14.1
Number of teachers in the school	1-10 teacher	11	3.7
	11-20 teacher	55	18.5
	21-30 teacher	48	16.2
	31 teacher and +	183	61.6

were close to one another. The majority of participants were teachers with bachelor's degree. As for year of service, the majority of teachers had 11- 20 years of service. According to the duration of working at the same school, the majority of the participants were made up the teachers who worked at the same school for 1-5 years. Based on the number of teachers, the teachers who worked at a school having 31 or more teachers were more than half of the participants in the study.

Data Collection Tools

In the current study, the data were collected through 'Political Skill Inventory' and 'Work Engagement Scale.' The information concerning above- mentioned scales were given below.

Political Skill Inventory: The inventory was developed by Ferris et al. (2005) and adapted into Turkish by Atay (2009). The inventory consists of a total of 18 questions and 4 dimensions: social astuteness (5 items), interpersonal influence (4 items), networking ability (6 items) and sincerity (3 items). The inventory was a Likert- type scale ranging between '(1) Strongly Disagree' and '(6) Strongly Agree.' Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the dimensions of the scale vary between .66 and .79. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.86. In addition, the social astuteness dimension of the inventory explained %30.75 of the variance; the interpersonal influence dimension explained %8.75; the networking ability dimension of the scale explained %11.65 and the sincerity dimension of the scale explained %12.58 of the variance. The total explained variance of the inventory was, however, %63.73. In the current study, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient regarding the dimensions of the inventory was between 0.77 and 0.82. In addition, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the inventory was 0.92. The fit values obtained (x^2/df= 1.568; RMSEA= 0.054; CFI= 0.93; IFI=0.94; GFI=90; AGFI=0.86; AIC=281.77; CAIC=466.26) revealed that factor structure of the inventory was verified.

Work Engagement Scale: The scale was developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002) and adapted to Turkish Turgut (2011). The scale consists of 3 dimensions and 17 questions: vigour (6 items), Concentration (6 items) and dedication (5 items). The scale was a Likert- type ranging between '(1) Never' and '(6) Always'. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the dimensions of the scale vary between .81 and .87. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.89. Moreover, the dimension of vigor explained %22.32 of the variance; the concentration dimension explained %21.69 and the dedication dimension explained %18.20 of the variance. The total explained variance of the scale was %62.21.

However, in the current study, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient regarding the dimensions of the scale was between 0.83 and 0.89. In addition, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the scale was 0.93. Factor analysis was conducted in order to verify the conformity of the factor structure of the scale. According to the results of factor analysis, the fit values (x^2/df= 1.478; RMSEA=0.053; CFI=0.97; IFI=0.97; GFI=0.90; AGFI=0.86; AIC =249.47; CAIC=412.99) revealed that the factor structure of the scale was verified since the values were at desired level. The reference Cronbach's Alpha coefficient in the related literature for both scales

was above .70 (Büyüköztürk, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Seçer, 2013). Again, the optimum value of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient must be between 0.7 and 0.9 (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Data Analysis

In the present study, whether the data showed normal distribution was examined in order to conduct analyses to ascertain the relationship between teachers' political skill and work engagement. With this aim, the skewness and kurtosis coefficients were investigated. Table 2 displays skewness and kurtosis coefficients.

As seen in Table 2, since the skewness and kurtosis coefficients were between +2 and -2 (Karagöz, 2016), it was concluded that the research data showed normal distribution. Therefore, descriptive statistics regarding teachers' political skill and work engagement were presented as arithmetic mean and standard deviation. In order to Pearson Product Moment Correlation was examined to determine whether there was a significant relationship between teachers' political skills and their level of work engagement. The correlation coefficient shows the correlation between two variables, a value measured between -1 and +1. When the correlation coefficient is close to +1, there is a positive correlation between the two variables; however, if the value is close to -1, there is a negative correlation between the two variables (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Besides, VIF and tolerance were used to diagnose multicollinearity between variables. It was found in the study that VIF values were between 1.571 and 2.266; however, tolerance values between .441 and .636. It was revealed that there was no multicollinearity since tolerance values were higher than .02 and VIF values were lower than 10. (Field, 2009) The research model was then tested in the study. Testing the measurement model is a fundamental assumption of path analysis (Dursun & Kocagöz, 2010; Çokluk, Şekercioğlu & Büyüköztürk, 2012). With this aim, the measurement model concerning the variables was tested. The fit indices values (x^2/df= 2.147; RMSEA=0.061; CFI= 0.91; IFI=0.91; GFI=90; AGFI=0.86; AIC=480.29; CAIC=33.75) representing the validity of measurement model showed that the model was acceptable. Moreover, the significant relationship between teachers' political skill and work engagement was examined through Path analysis. Path analysis is a rational form of regression model. It is superior to regression model since it evaluates the causal models. Besides, by using this method, it is possible to reveal the relationships among variables through suitable schemes. In this regard, it is considered as theoretical relations test

as causal relations models. Thus, it facilitates recognizing targeted relation systems as well as revealing the rational flow to make the coefficient more interpretable. The partial effects of independent variables on dependent variable are expressed by standardized regression coefficients. The standardized path coefficients was used as beta (β) coefficients (Çokluk, Şekeroğlu & Büyüköztürk, 2012; Kaşıkçı, 2002; Stage, Carter & Nora, 2004).

FINDINGS

The findings and interpretations within the context of sub-questions of the study were included in this section. The descriptive findings on determining the relationship between teachers' political skill and work engagement were presented in Table 3.

According to Table 3, the levels of teachers' social astuteness (M= 5.14), interpersonal influence (M = 5.25), networking ability (M = 5.14) and sincerity (M = 5.61) were high. It was found that teachers' work engagement level (M = 4.91) was high as well. The levels of teachers' vigour (M = 4.88), concentration (M = 5.15) and dedication (M = 4.68) were observed to be high. The results of correlation analysis concerning the relationship between teachers' political skill and work engagement levels were given in Table 4.

As displayed in Table 4, there was a positive, moderate and significant relationship between the dimensions of social astuteness (r=.319), interpersonal influence (r=.421), networking ability (r=.310) and sincerity (r=.429) and work engagement levels. Figure 1 reveals the findings of Path analysis regarding the relationship between teachers' political skill and work engagement.

Figure 1, the dimensions of political skills are expressed as: Social Astuteness=SocialAs, Interpersonal Influence=Interper, Networking Ability=Network and Sincerity=Sincerit. In addition, Work Engagement is expressed as 'WorkEnga'.

As seen in Figure 1, when standardized path coefficients were examined, the fact that teachers had the dimension of interpersonal influence had a positive, high level and significant effect (β=.83, p<.05) on their work engagement levels. Besides, the fact that teachers had the dimension of sincerity had a positive, high-level and significant effect (β= .64

Table 2. The skewness and kurtosis coefficients

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis
Social Astuteness	-.911	.882
Interpersonal Influence	-1.088	.807
Networking Ability	.097	1.349
Sincerity	-1.225	.882
Work Engagement	-.471	.208

Table 3. The descriptive statistics on teachers' political skill and level of work engagement analysis

Variables	N	*M*	SS
Social Astuteness	297	5.141	.659
Interpersonal Influence	297	5.255	.715
Networking Ability	297	5.142	.735
Sincerity	297	5.607	.505
Political Skill (Total)	297	5.244	.557
Vigour	297	4.883	.767
Concentration	297	5.148	.786
Dedication	297	4.683	.860
Work Engagement (Total)	297	4.905	.642

Table 4. The correlation analysis concerning the relationship between teachers' political skill and work engagement levels

Political Skill	Work Engagement			
	Vigour	**Concentration**	**Dedication**	**Work Engagement (Total)**
Social Astuteness	.232**	.252**	.278**	.319**
Interpersonal Influence	.269**	.380**	.357**	.421**
Networking Ability	.166**	.302**	.270**	.310**
Sincerity	.429**	.429**	.429**	.429**
Political Skill (Total)	.264**	.388**	.365**	.427**

**p<.01
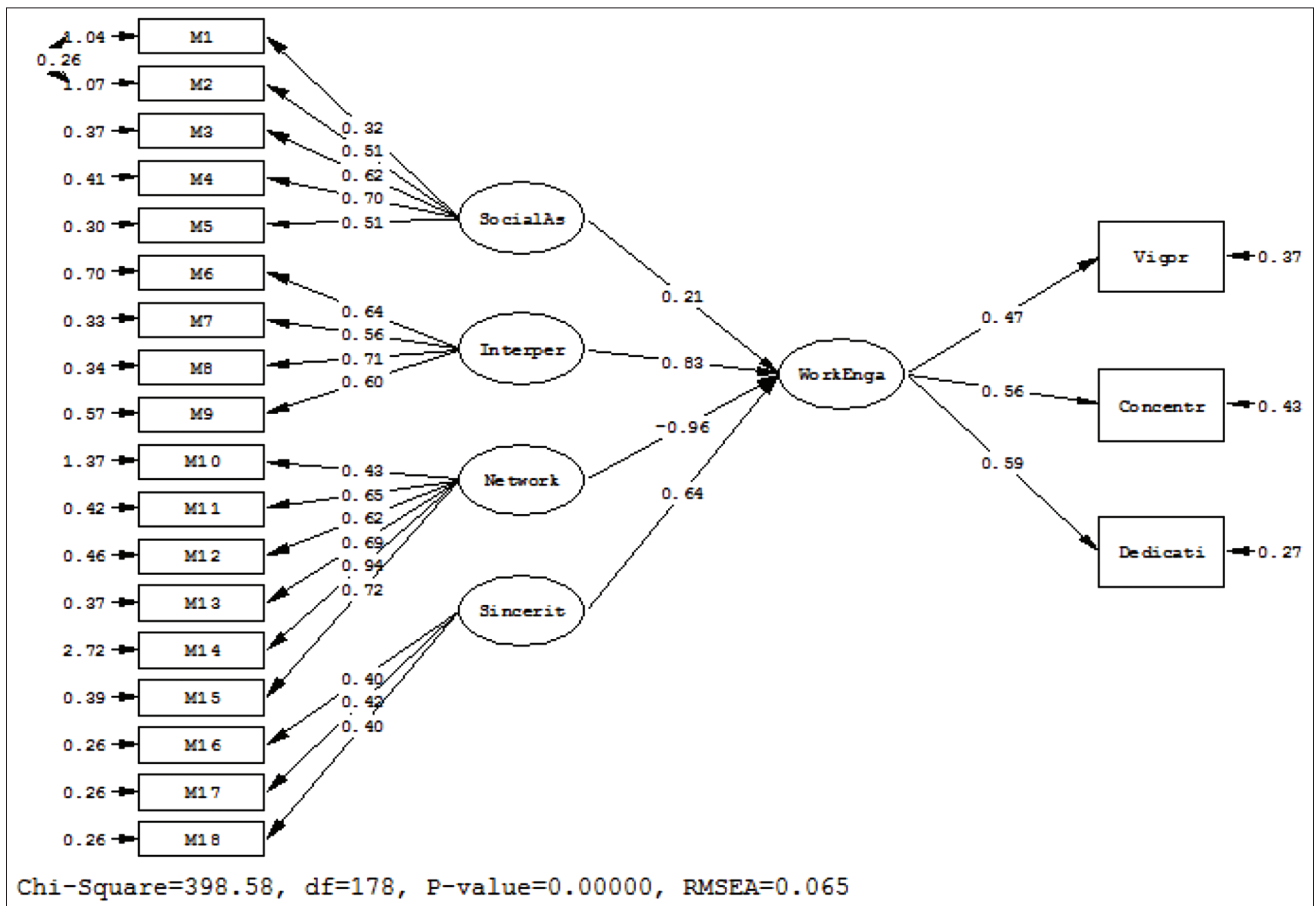
Figure 1. The results of path analysis regarding the relationship between variables

p<0.05) on their work engagement levels. That means that teachers' political skills concerning these dimensions predict their work engagement. The fit values of the model were (x²/df=2.248; RMSEA=0.065; CFI=0.90; IFI=0.90; GFI=90; AGFI=0.85; AIC=504.58; CAIC=753.35). According to Kline (2011), the values lower than .10 represents minor effects, about .30 represent typical or moderate effect and .50 and above represent high effects. In addition (Appendix A), the investigation of 't-values' showed that the dimensions of social astuteness (β= .21, p>.05) and networking ability (β= -.96, p>.05) did not have an effect on work engagement.

DISCUSSION

In the present study, it was aimed to ascertain the relationship between teachers' political skills and work engagement. According to the results of the study, teachers' levels

of political skill were high. This finding of the study is consistent with other studies concerning teachers' political skill (Aslan, Çalık & Er, 2019; Bostancı, Tosun, Gidiş & Karaca, 2016; Bostancı, Yurdakul & Akbaş, 2013; Bozbayındır & Alev, 2019; Konay, 2019; Özdemir & Gören, 2016; Özgenel & Bozkurt, 2020; Kurt & Bostancı, 2018; Uğurlu & Bostancı, 2017). In a study conducted by Brosky (2011), it was determined that teachers were high in all four dimensions of political skills. The fact that teachers have political skills is of importance for their professional competencies. Besides, teachers should have political skills in order to deal with difficulties encountered within the educational system and to interact with other stakeholders in the school (Salisu & Awang, 2019). The individuals with high level of political skill are able to influence others easily and control themselves; in addition, they are strong and relaxed.

These individuals build relationships more easily since their communication skills are improved with their sincere behaviours (Çıtak, 2011; Perrewe, Zellars, Ferris, Rossi, Kacmar & Ralston, 2004). The dimensions of political skills, social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability and sincerity may be regarded as the characteristics of teachers. These skills are required to achieve goals in teachers' interaction with their colleagues, students and parents. In other words, teachers with high- level of political skill would be more successfull at influencing stakeholders in order to gain of students' information literacy skills. In addition to high- level of political skill, teachers whose duties are to enhane the quality of education and educatie the students must be dedicated to their job physically, emotioanlly and cognitively. Successful and inspirational teachers are work- engaged ones.That is to say, it is clear that teachers having high level of political skills would impress stakeholders in order to prepare students for life by improving the level of students' information literacy skills, thereby enhancing teachers' work engagement (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Choochom, 2016; Khan, 2016).

According to the study, teachers' vigour, concentration and dedication levels and work engagement were found high. In the previous studies (Bülbül, 2019; Klassen et al., 2012; Öztürk 2019) concerning teachers' work engagement, the level of teachers' work engagement were found high. This finding of the study is consistent with other studies. Work engagement is related to positive organizational outcomes. In the previous studies, the relationship between work engagement and self- efficacy, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and teachers' turnover intention were included (Iyer, 2016). These positive results were valid for teachers as well. Teachers' work engagement affects their prosperity, effectiveness and performance. Teachers' work engagement play a major role in improving a school and enhancing student achievement (Khan, 2016; Klassen et al., 2012; Minghui, Lei, Xiaomeng & Potmešilc, 2018).

Another result of the study has indicated that there was a positive, moderate and significant relationship between teachers' level of social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability and sincerity in terms of political skill and their work engagement. Choochom (2016) reported that positive personal resources that teachers had affected their work engagement. In addition, Wang and McChamp (2018) found that the psychological and physiological satisfaction and work engagement of political skilled employers were high. Political skill is the ability to understand and influence others at a workplace in order to achieve individual and organizational goals. The employees having political skill are capable of influencing others, stronger than other employees and experience less anxiety and stress. The individuals with political skill have been shown to have self- trust and to control their social environments both in their interpersonal relations and at their workplaces (Perrewe, Zellars, Ferris, Rossi, Kacmar & Ralston, 2004; Ferris et al., 2007). Bostancı and Kahraman (2019) found that teachers' relations with principals, colleagues, students and parents had an effect on work engagement. In above- mentioned study, it was indicated as well that teachers' personal characteristics influenced their

work engagement. Bostancı, Tosun, Gidiş and Karaca (2016) concluded that teachers' political skills predicted the level of academic optimism. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2014) revealed that the planning, organizing and conducting abilities of teachers with political skills were associated with work engagement level.

According to standardized coefficients as a result of path analysis conducted to determine the relationship between teachers' political skill and work engagement, the fact that teachers had the dimension of interpersonal influence had a positive, high- level and significant effect on work engagement. In addition, the fact that they had the dimension of sincerity was observed to have positive, high- level and significant effect on work engagement. In other words, teachers' level of having interpersonal influence and sincerity predict their work engagement levels. According to Schleicher (2011), the success of educational reforms depends on learning output that is the result of the events in the class. Since teachers exhibit the behaviours of dedication, vigor and concentration that are also the indicators of work engagement, the interpersonal influence and sincerity dimensions of political skill are expected to predict work engagement. The interpersonal influence dimension of political skill refers to a convincing personal style that exerts powerful influence on those around them. Furthermore, politically skilled individuals with apparent sincerity are honest, open and sincere. The two dimensions are regarded to be directly associated with the profession of teaching. Work engagement is defined as the individual's thinking that s/he serve to achieve a certain goal, being proud of his/ her job and working enthusiastically. The fact that teachers think that they are able to influence and convince their students, colleagues and other stakeholders based on educational objectives may affect their work engagement since the interpersonal influence and sincerity dimensions of political skill strikes at the very heart of teaching profession. It is clear that both dimensions have an effect on teachers' happiness in their relationships with students and other colleagues and at the workplace. Similarly, another study posited that teachers were high in interpersonal influence and sincerity dimensions of political skills; however, the least- used dimensions of political skills were determined to be networking ability (Brosky, 2011). The results of the study are correlated with certain studies in the literature. Basit (2020) revealed that political skill was a strong drive for work engagement. Political skill was found to have an effect on employees' work engagement affectively and physically. Likewise, the present study shows that the interpersonal influence and sincerity dimensions of political skills affect teachers' work engagement. Choochom (2016) reported that teachers' having personal resources and their ability to manage the resources and other members at the school had a positive effect on their work engagement. In addition, a significant, moderate and positive correlation was recorded between the fact that teachers were able to have control over their work and workplace, to attend decision-making process at the school and their work engagement (Gokhale, 2015). Besides, it was concluded the fact that individuals had certain political skills as interpersonal influence and networking ability enhanced their psychological and physical

satisfaction and engagement (Wang & McChamp, 2018). Bapygulova (2019) reported that interpersonal influence dimension of political skill declined work stress. Another study found that there was a relationship between teachers' political skills and school happiness and teachers' political skills predicted school happiness (Bozkurt, 2019). Dirik (2019) indicated a high- level of relationship between political skill and job satisfaction. It is clear that both dimensions are effective in terms that teachers are satisfied with their job and relations with colleagues. In the study, however, it was revealed that social astuteness and networking ability dimensions of political skill did not affect significantly teachers' work engagement. The individuals with social astuteness dimension of political skill are talented observers and easily adapt to new conditions. They are able to easily establish social interactions, successfully interpret others' behaviours as well as having strong reasoning skill. Furthermore, the individuals with networking ability are capable of using and developing their networks with other people. They consider their networks important for their individual and organizational objectives (Atay, 2010). Brosky (2011) revealed that teachers had greater degree of interpersonal influence and sincerity dimensions; in contrast, they were not high in networking ability. Therefore, social astuteness and networking ability dimensions of political skill are regarded to be associated with out- class activities. It may be argued that such skills are not as effective as interpersonal influence and sincerity on teachers' work engagement since they can be used outside the class in order to make direct contribution to teaching profession.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study is to ascertain the relationship between teachers' political skills and work engagement. The results indicated that there was a positive, moderate and significant relationship between teachers' political skills and work engagement levels. Besides, the fact that teachers had interpersonal influence and sincerity dimensions of political skill predicts work engagement. Teachers' work engagement is considered to be significant to improve student achievement on the basis of educational reforms. The results of the study evidenced that political skill was a strong drive for teachers' work engagement. Therefore, it is recommended that activities to enhance teachers' political skill must be developed.

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APPENDIX A. Path Analysis results

Chi-Square=398.58, df=178, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.065

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