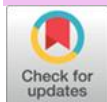# Leadership for Care as a trust builder among Chilean teaching profession

Andrea Carrasco[i] (iD)
University of Chile, Santiago, Chile

Claudio Montoya[ii] (iD)
University of Chile, Santiago, Chile

Gonzalo Ruz[iii] (iD)
University of Santiago of Chile, Santiago, Chile

Abstract
Leadership for care refers to a set of practices that promote comprehensive well-being (emotional, social and academic) within the school community. In this context, this article seeks to recognize the extent to which teachers perceive and value practices (or actions) of care and trust on the part of their principals. A quantitative approach was used, by applying a questionnaire to 333 teachers from the Metropolitan Region of Chile. The results indicate that teachers positively value the competence and integrity of their school principals; however, the dimensions of esteem and respect, although positively valued, show lower scores.

Keywords
leadership; trust; care; teachers; principals.

Liderança pelo cuidado como geradora de confiança em professores chilenos

Resumo
Liderança atenciosa refere-se a um conjunto de práticas que promovem o bem-estar integral (emocional, social e acadêmico) na comunidade escolar. Nesse contexto, este artigo busca reconhecer até que ponto os professores percebem y valorizam práticas (ou ações) de cuidado e confiança por parte de seus dirigentes. Foi utilizada uma abordagem quantitativa, aplicando um questionário a 333 professores da Região Metropolitana do Chile. Os resultados indicam que os professores valorizam positivamente a competência e a integridade dos seus diretores escolares, no entanto as dimensões de estima e respeito, embora valorizadas positivamente, apresentam pontuações mais baixas.
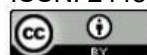
Palavras-chave
liderança; confiança; cuidado; professores; diretores.

El liderazgo para el cuidado como generador de confianza en el profesorado chileno

Resumen
El liderazgo para el cuidado se refiere a un conjunto de prácticas que promueven el bienestar integral (emocional, social y académico) dentro de la comunidad escolar. En este contexto, este artículo busca reconocer en qué medida los docentes perciben y valoran prácticas (o acciones) de cuidado y confianza por parte de sus directores/as. Se

EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO
ORIGINAL ARTICLE
PROGRAMA DE PÓS GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO
Universidade Estadual do Ceará (UECE)

REDUFOR
REVISTA EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO

utilizó un enfoque cuantitativo, mediante la aplicación de un cuestionario a 333 docentes de la Región Metropolitana de Chile. Los resultados indican que los docentes valoran positivamente la competencia e integridad de sus directores/as escolares, sin embargo, las dimensiones de estima y respeto, aunque valoradas positivamente, muestran espacios más descendidos.

Palabras clave
liderazgo; confianza; cuidado; docentes; directores.

1 Introduction

Caring in the educational setting refers to a set of practices that promote integral wellbeing (emotional, social and academic) within the school community. According to the foundational work of Noddings (1984), caring is a bidirectional act that fosters meaningful relationships based on empathy, respect and mutual responsibility. Based on a relational ethic, the concept of caring has been expanded to imply a commitment to the well-being of others, recognizing the interdependence between teachers, students, and leaders while also considering everyday interactions and institutional policies that prioritize humanity and the integral development of individuals (Cleovoulou *et al.*, 2022; Tronto, 2020). The ethic of care in leadership implies a proactive approach to identifying and responding to the needs of teachers, ensuring a safe and stimulating environment for learning that transcends isolated practices and installs an institutional culture of care (Kennedy; Walls, 2022).

In this sense, the cognitive and socioemotional development of students does not depend only on technical elements, but on a series of factors that are found, relate and interact within school communities (Louis; Murphy, 2019). Recent research values the importance of leaders creating a supportive and collaborative culture in which human relationships are valued and foster trust by recognizing individual needs (Roberto, 2023; Ryu; Walls; Louis, 2020).

Regarding the latter, trust, understood as a multidimensional phenomenon based on reciprocity, is of great importance when developing leadership for caring, since teachers respond to caring actions with a greater willingness to collaborate and commit to institutional goals (Bryk; Schneider, 2002; Louis; Murphy, 2017). For Tschannen-Moran (2009), teacher-manager trust is fundamental to developing teacher professionalism and, therefore, it would be very useful for principals to exercise their administrative authority by adopting practices that generate strong trust among school leaders, teachers, students,

and parents. Trust within a school is dynamic and can follow different trajectories (Weinstein; Peña, 2024). Trust is essential for building a culture of care in a school community, since it facilitates relationships based on respect, integrity, competence and benevolence, as stated by Noddings (1984).

In Chile, the implementation of social changes faces important challenges due to the relational nature involved in leading transformations towards Sustainable Human Development. According to UNDP (2024), the success of these changes depends on the collaboration between diverse social actors, as well as factors such as subjectivities and institutions. In this context, concepts such as care and trust must be considered to foster the dialogue and cooperation necessary to face social challenges and promote equitable and sustainable change. Chile has not remained oblivious to this recognition and appreciation of the importance of caring practices and thus, the School Coexistence Policy 2024 establishes as a key element for its development the "principle of collective care", which allows promoting the participation of all the people who make up the educational community, safeguarding good treatment and the common good. From this principle of care derive values of trust, co-responsibility and collaboration. In this sense, it is necessary to know what Chilean educational leaders do or do not do to promote caring communities that develop trust among their peers, since this is important if we want to make progress in improving student learning and the welfare of educational communities as a whole.

Due to the above, it is necessary to know and go deeper into how leadership for care, promoted by school leaders, is recognized and valued by their teachers, specifically how they value the practices of trust and care, in addition to recognizing how it is developed in the educational communities. Specifically, we asked ourselves: To what extent do teachers perceive and value caring and trusting practices (or actions) on the part of their principals?

2 Conceptual framework

2.1 Care and trust building from school leadership

Trust in educational leaders is generated when teachers perceive that their leaders implement concrete caring practices, which shows that they are genuinely concerned about

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO
PROGRAMA DE PÓS GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO
Universidade Estadual do Ceará (UECE)

REDUFOR
REVISTA EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO

their personal and professional well-being. To this end, caring practices, such as active listening, emotional support and recognition, are fundamental to create an environment of predictability and security, key elements for the development of trust in the school (Mayer; Davis; Schoorman, 1995). Bryk and Schneider (2002) emphasize that trust is built on the basis of reciprocity and constant interaction among members of the educational community, where teachers respond to caring actions with a greater willingness to collaborate and commit to institutional goals, which generates a good educational leader. Furthermore, according to Tschannen-Moran (2004), when leaders demonstrate constant care, teachers perceive that their needs are being attended to, which reinforces their sense of belonging and their willingness to actively participate in school processes. These caring practices generate trust, not only fostering stronger relationships, but also improving organizational effectiveness by reducing uncertainty and increasing team cohesion (Handford; Leithwood, 2013; Ryu; Walls; Louis, 2020). In this sense, the generation of trust is based on positive daily relationships within school communities, is where an approach of professional respect, personal care and cooperation among adults in the community is consolidated (Weinstein; Peña, 2024).

The tension between the support teachers expect from their leaders and the constraints imposed by institutional policies is reflected in school leadership practices. Teachers value leadership that demonstrates concern for their personal and professional well-being; however, as Razeto (2009) points out, interpersonal trust between teachers and principals is critical to the effective implementation of educational policies and institutional structures must be conducive to facilitating such leadership. The lack of an adequate environment for the exercise of caring can translate into a decrease in collaboration and commitment, which, in turn, negatively affects the quality of education and the organizational climate (Peña Fredes; Weinstein Cayuela; Raczynski, 2018). Leadership for care and trust-building does not operate in a vacuum, it is influenced by structural tensions in the Chilean educational system, where accountability policies and pressure for results often restrict the possibility of a more human and relational leadership (UNDP, 2024; Razeto, 2009). Thus, effective leadership should be aligned with teachers' expectations of support and institutions should foster a framework that allows and enhances these trusting relationships, since trust is a property that schools should seek to develop in order to consolidate themselves as school organizations and fulfill their educational purposes (Weinstein; Peña, 2024).

4

Caring has a direct influence on the dimensions of trust: respect, competence, integrity and esteem. According to Bryk and Schneider (2002) and Handford and Leithwood (2013), caring actions by educational leaders strengthen trust and consolidate more effective leadership, therefore, when talking about school leadership and for caring, trust emerges as an element of great importance (Louis; Murphy, 2017); each of these subdimensions is nurtured by caring actions that demonstrate the leader's commitment to the school community, creating a virtuous circle where caring fosters trust and, in turn, trust strengthens leadership. Other research suggests that leaders who practice caring leadership, who focus on improving educational conditions and supporting their teachers, put the well-being of the members of the educational community at the center of their concerns, end up generating trust in their teams (Weinstein; Muñoz; Flessa, 2019; Weinstein; Peña, 2024).

The following paragraphs will delve into four key dimensions of trust that influence the relationship between leaders and teachers: respect, professional competencies, integrity and esteem.

2.2 Respect and care

Respect is one of the fundamental dimensions for building trust in school leadership and thus increasing caring conditions. When educational leaders demonstrate respect for teachers' ideas, experiences and needs, teachers not only feel that they and their work are valued, but also perceive that their contributions are important for the functioning and improvement of the school (Bryk; Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Respect is an essential pillar for building trusting interpersonal relationships between principals and teachers, as it is manifested in the attention leaders pay to the opinions and perspectives of the teaching team (Razeto, 2017). This respect not only promotes a positive school climate, but also facilitates collaboration and commitment, creating an environment where teachers feel safe to actively participate in decision making (Kennedy; Walls, 2022).

Along the same lines, Handford and Leithwood (2013) point out that the consideration of teachers' perspectives fosters a culture of reciprocity and recognition between teachers and management teams. The literature mentions caring actions that

reflect respect such as transparency in communication, preventing teacher work stress by paying attention to workloads, and the ability of leaders to show empathy in the face of teachers' personal and professional difficulties (Ryu; Walls; Louis, 2020; Smylie; Murphy; Louis, 2016). In this sense, respect in interpersonal relationships creates an environment of psychological safety where teachers feel comfortable to express their concerns, which further strengthens the bonds of trust (Mayer; Davis; Schoorman, 1995; Noddings, 1984).

2.3 Professional competencies and care

Teachers tend to trust leaders who demonstrate professional competencies in school management and pedagogical decision-making. Therefore, leaders must demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to adequately respond to the demands within the school (Weinstein; Peña, 2024). These competencies go beyond technical skills and extend to the ability to create a caring institutional culture and promote continuous professional learning, which favors both the professional development and personal well-being of teachers (Mayer; Davis; Schoorman, 1995; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). These competencies are fundamental to establishing trusting relationships, as leadership that prioritizes caring strengthens trust and enhances commitment and collaboration (Razeto, 2017)

A leader who practices caring not only demonstrates competence in the technical realm, but also uses this skill to identify teacher concerns. This combination of caring and professional competence reinforces the perception of trust among faculty, as teachers perceive that they are being guided by someone professionally capable and sensitive to their needs (Handford; Leithwood, 2013; Kennedy; Walls, 2022). A leader's ability to manage with competence and empathy ensures a work environment that facilitates a culture of teacher collaboration and ongoing professional learning (Ryu; Walls; Louis, 2020; Smylie; Murphy; Louis, 2016).

2.4 Integrity as a dimension of care

Integrity in school leadership is reflected when leaders act in a manner consistent with the personal and institutional values they promote. Trust is strengthened when

teachers perceive their leaders to be ethical, fair, and transparent in the management of the school, which is based on the words, attitudes, and decisions they observe (Mayer; Davis; Schoorman, 1995; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Integrity is a key component of trust, as teachers need to feel that leaders are consistent in their approach and that their decisions are guided by sound principles, which helps to diminish their sense of insecurity about the leader's actions (Bryk; Schneider, 2002). In this context, Razeto (2017) emphasizes that the integrity of leaders is not only manifested in their ethics and transparency, but also in their ability to build interpersonal relationships based on trust. Weinstein and Peña (2024) indicate that in order to trust it is necessary to consider that the person trusted (leader) is authentic and of integrity

Leadership that is based on care focuses not only on immediate results, but also on the ethical and relational implications of its decisions, prioritizing the long-term well-being of the school community (Handford; Leithwood, 2013). Integrity also implies genuine attention to teachers' challenges and needs, which reinforces the perception of fairness and empathy in the school and generates higher teacher retention (Kennedy; Walls, 2022; Ryu; Walls; Louis, 2020). When leaders consistently practice integrity, i.e., are honest and consistent in what they think, say and do (Weinstein; Peña, 2024), an environment of trust is created in which teachers can feel safe and supported.

2.5 Esteem and its relation to care

Esteem refers to teachers' perception that their work, efforts and contributions are valued by their leaders, which strengthens trust in the school environment. This dimension of trust is reinforced when leaders show genuine appreciation for teachers' actions and projects, fostering an environment of recognition and a sense of belonging within the educational community (Bryk; Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). In this context, Razeto (2017) highlights that recognition by leaders not only validates teaching effort, but also promotes collaboration and commitment. Leaders who practice caring emphasize the importance of recognizing both publicly and privately the achievements of teachers, providing emotional support in difficult times and creating meaningful opportunities for professional growth (Handford; Leithwood, 2013). According to Noddings (2002), this recognition of individuality and effort contributes to building stronger trusting relationships,

as teachers feel that they are respected not only for their work, but also for their personal value. In addition, building esteem through the creation of an environment where teachers can develop and feel supported improves the organizational climate and contributes to more effective leadership (Kennedy; Walls, 2022; Ryu; Walls; Louis, 2020).

3 Methodology

The objective of this research was to identify the different perceptions that teachers have about the trust and care practices exercised by their principals. To address this objective, a quantitative approach was used, with a descriptive, non-experimental design (Hernández Sampieri *et al.*, 2014).

The method used was the survey, through the application of a previously validated international questionnaire called *The Caring School Leadership Questionnaire* (CSLQ), developed by van Der Vyver (2014). This questionnaire not only focuses on trust practices, but also examines teachers' perceived levels of caring, assessed using a four-point Likert scale: 1 = Not at all, 2 = To a small extent, 3 = To some extent, and 4 = To a great extent. Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt their principals exhibited behaviors related to trust and caring, according to this scale.

3.1 Validity of the questionnaire

To adapt the CSLQ from English to Spanish in the Chilean context, a five-stage process was implemented: initial translation by two professionals (one general and one specialized in education); comparison and resolution of discrepancies; 3) back translation to verify conceptual fidelity; review by three experts in school leadership and educational psychology; and a pilot study with teachers in the Metropolitan Region, which confirmed, through statistical analysis, the suitability of the instrument for the Spanish-speaking context.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire, evaluated by statistical analysis, confirmed the accuracy of the translated instrument. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated, all of which were greater than 0.8 (Oviedo; Campo-Arias, 2005).

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO
PROGRAMA DE PÓS GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO
Universidade Estadual do Ceará (UECE)

REDUFOR
REVISTA EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO

3.2 Sample

The study population included teachers from schools located in the Metropolitan Region, which is composed of 52 municipalities and has a total of 2,893 schools. Within the framework of a larger study, which considered the opinion of both a principal and a teacher per school through the application of an online questionnaire, a representative sample was constructed at the school level. From this sample and using simple random sampling, 333 teachers were selected for this analysis, ensuring the representativeness of the schools in the Metropolitan Region, with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. The selection of teachers was based on the "Teaching Positions" database of the Chilean Ministry of Education, which contains updated information on the functions and location of education professionals.

As for the type of school administration, the sample is distributed in three main categories: in public schools, 34.8% of the teachers participated; in subsidized private schools, 49.2%; in private schools 15.9%.

3.3 Data analysis

Once the survey was completed, the data were downloaded and stored in a matrix. The statistical *software* R, version 4.3.2, was used for analysis. Univariate descriptive statistics were mainly applied, using measures of central tendency. In addition, a *ranking* type evaluation item was constructed, which ordered, from highest (1) to lowest (56), the items of the questionnaire according to the highest average responses, making it possible to identify the indicators with the highest positive evaluation by the teachers.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Comparative analysis of dimensions

Table 1 - Average rating of school leadership dimensions as perceived by teachers

Dimension	Valuation	Media
Competition	1	3,2
Integrity	2	3,17
Estimate	3	2,96
Respect	4	2,93

Source: Prepared with own data.

The analysis of the survey results reveals diverse perceptions regarding the different areas of relational trust. As mentioned above, trust is a relevant factor in the educational environment and in caregiving relationships.

The data show that the competence dimension receives the highest rating, with a mean of 3.2. This result suggests that teachers believe that principals are capable of executing their responsibilities effectively, demonstrating the skills necessary to achieve the objectives of the educational institution. According to the evidence, the perception of competence is associated with teachers feeling confident in the principal's professional capacity (Razeto, 2017).

In second place, the integrity dimension, with a mean of 3.17, shows the importance that teachers attach to the consistency between what is said and what is done by their principals. According to Razeto (2017), integrity not only implies complying with promises and commitments, but also acting in accordance with ethical-moral principles that guide the educational task. In this sense, the assessment of integrity reflects an expectation of ethical and consistent behavior.

Third, the esteem dimension, with a mean of 2.96, refers to the feeling of care and consideration that teachers perceive from their principals. Esteem is related to the reduction of the feeling of vulnerability and the perception of support (Razeto, 2017). Although the valuation is relatively high, compared to the previous dimensions, it indicates that there is a moderate perception of care and support in daily interactions and lower than in the previous items.

Finally, the respect dimension, with a mean of 2.93, receives the lowest rating. Respect implies the recognition of the importance of the role that each person plays in the education of students and the interdependence between the different actors in the educational system (Razeto, 2017). The perception of mutual respect is fundamental for the construction of healthy and effective relationships. The lower valuation of this dimension and the previous one could indicate areas for improvement in terms of recognizing and valuing the work of each teacher, as well as in promoting a culture of respect and appreciation for individual contributions.

4.2 Analysis by dimension

For each dimension, a table will be presented with a "*Ranking* Rating" column, which shows the position of each question according to the average rating, from highest to lowest. A column "Average Teacher Rating", which represents the numerical average of the answers, where a higher value indicates a higher perception of the practice mentioned. The percentages in the columns "Not at all", "To a small extent", "To some extent" and "To a large extent" reflect the number of teachers who perceive that such caring practices are implemented in the school to that extent.

Competence

Table 2 - Assessment of care practices associated with the Competence dimension

(continued)

Teacher question	*Ranking* Valuation	Media	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a large extent
Ensures that vandalism in the school is curtailed	3	3,39	4,8%	9,0%	28,5%	57,7%
Ensures that school areas (playgrounds) are well maintained.	7	3,33	4,5%	12,9%	27,9%	54,7%
Demonstrates self-confidence to lead us	8	3,32	3,9%	13,2%	29,7%	53,2%
Ensures that school infrastructure is maintained in good condition	11	3,25	6,9%	11,7%	30,6%	50,8%
Ensures that I experience safe working conditions	21	3,12	8,4%	15,6%	31,8%	44,1%
Deals with conflict in a considered manner	26	3,06	6,0%	19,5%	36,9%	37,5%
Creates a positive environment for change in the school.	44	2,90	12,9%	20,4%	30,0%	36,6%

Source: Prepared with own data.

As mentioned above, the analysis reveals a positive perception in the Competence dimension. Within this dimension, the most highly rated statement is "Takes care that vandalism is limited in the school", with a mean of 3.39. This suggests that teachers perceive effective management in the prevention and control of vandalism, with 57.7% of teachers perceiving, to a large extent, effective management, while only 4.8% consider that this management is not carried out at all. The second most highly rated statement, "Takes care that school areas (playgrounds) are well maintained", with a mean of 3.33, reflects a positive assessment of the care of physical spaces, with 54.7% of

teachers considering that this work is carried out to a great extent, compared to 4.5% who perceive the opposite.

On the other hand, the statements that received the lowest ratings in this domain were "Deals with conflict in a thoughtful way" (3.06) and "Creates a positive environment for change in the school" (2.90). The ability to manage conflict effectively and foster an environment that supports innovation and change are critical elements for continuous development and improvement of educational quality.

Integrity

Table 3 - Assessment of the care practices associated with the Integrity dimension

Teacher question	*Ranking* Valuation	Media	Not at all	To a small extent	To a certain extent	To a large extent
Commits to the school's vision and mission.	1	3,46	3,3%	10,2%	24,0%	62,5%
Is committed to promoting collective values in the school	12	3,25	6,6%	14,4%	26,7%	52,3%
Works for the benefit of the entire school community	14	3,24	5,4%	15,0%	30,0%	49,5%
Is honest	19	3,15	7,8%	13,2%	35,4%	43,5%
Are you prepared to make personal sacrifices	25	3,07	10,5%	15,9%	29,7%	43,8%
Is sincere	29	3,03	11,1%	15,3%	32,7%	40,8%
My relationship with him/her is based on shared values.	33	3,02	12,3%	16,5%	28,2%	42,9%

Source: Prepared with own data.

The analysis of the integrity dimension shows that the most highly valued statement within this dimension is "Commits to the vision and mission of the school", with a mean of 3.46. This reflects that teachers perceive a strong commitment on the part of the leaders to the objectives and strategic direction of the institutions. Other statements, such as "Is committed to promoting collective values in the school" (mean of 3.25) and "Works for the benefit of the entire school community" (mean of 3.24), also obtain high ratings. The ratings on honesty (3.15) also indicate a positive perception.

On the other hand, the willingness of leaders to make personal sacrifices, valued at 3.07, the sincerity (3.03) of leaders and the perception of relationships based on shared values, with an average of 3.02, present somewhat lower scores and highlight the

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO
PROGRAMA DE PÓS GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO
Universidade Estadual do Ceará (UECE)

REDUFOR
REVISTA EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO

importance of deepening an ethical alignment and personal commitment that goes beyond individual interests.

Esteem

Table 4 - Assessment of the care practices associated with the Esteem dimension

Teacher question	*Ranking* Valuation	Media	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a large extent
Accept me as I am	16	3,21	6,9%	14,1%	30,3%	48,6%
Show empathy with my circumstances	20	3,13	7,2%	16,2%	33,0%	43,5%
Understand my feelings	43	2,95	12,3%	15,0%	38,1%	34,5%
Shows interest in me as a person (human being)	49	2,87	17,4%	19,2%	22,5%	40,8%
Supports me personally	53	2,83	16,5%	20,4%	26,4%	36,6%
He makes an effort to defend me	55	2,79	18,3%	16,8%	32,1%	32,4%

Source: Prepared with own data.

The analysis of the esteem dimension shows that the highest rated statement is "He accepts me as I am", with a mean of 3.21, indicating that teachers feel, for the most part, accepted by their leaders for who they are. In second place, "Demonstrates empathy for my circumstances" receives a rating of 3.13, suggesting that teachers perceive a high level of understanding on the part of their leaders for their personal situations. However, statements related to deeper understanding and personal support, such as "Understands my feelings" (2.95), "Shows interest in me as a person" (2.87), "Supports me personally" (2.83), and "Makes an effort to advocate for me" (2.79), receive lower ratings.

Respect

Table 5 - Assessment of care practices associated with the Respect dimension

(continued)

Teacher question	*Ranking* Valuation	Media	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a large extent
He makes sure that others treat me as a professional.	24	3,08	10,8%	20,4%	31,2%	37,5%
Demonstrates appreciation for the work I do as an educator	32	3,02	13,5%	15,6%	26,1%	44,7%
Supports me in my professional development as an educator.	46	2,89	13,8%	21,9%	25,8%	38,4%

13

Table 5 - Assessment of care practices associated with the Respect dimension

(conclusion)

Teacher question	*Ranking* Valuation	Media	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a large extent
Share leadership responsibilities with us	48	2,89	12,6%	23,4%	26,7%	37,2%
Share leadership responsibilities with us	48	2,89	12,6%	23,4%	26,7%	37,2%
Gives me recognition	56	2,75	18,3%	18,9%	31,8%	30,9%

Source: Prepared with own data.

The analysis of the respect dimension shows that the most valued statement is "He makes sure that other people treat me as a professional", with a mean of 3.08. This suggests that teachers generally feel that they are treated professionally and that their role as educators is respected by principals. This suggests that teachers feel, in general, that they are accorded professional treatment and that their role as educators is respected by principals. "Shows appreciation for the work I do as an educator" follows with a rating of 3.02, indicating that teachers perceive some degree of recognition for their efforts and dedication in their daily work. Finally, "Gives me recognition" receives the lowest rating, with a mean of 2.75, indicating that teachers feel that formal recognition for their achievements and contributions may be insufficient.

In summary, of all the results presented, the dimension of Competence is the one that receives the highest valuation by teachers, highlighting the statements "He ensures that vandalism is limited in the school" and "He ensures that the school areas (playgrounds) are well maintained". In second place, the dimension that has a high valuation is Integrity, highlighting the statement "Is committed to the vision and mission of the school". In third place is the Esteem dimension and the statement "He accepts me as I am" stands out. Finally, there is the Respect dimension, which receives the lowest rating, with the statement "He sees to it that other people treat me as a professional" standing out.

5 Final considerations

According to the results, the caring practices of leaders that generate a greater perception of trust are associated with the dimension of competencies and integrity that each leader possesses. The general pattern that emerges is that, while the technical and

14

ethical aspects (Competence and Integrity) are perceived as positive, the relational and personal recognition aspects (Esteem and Respect) are not as strong. This indicates that, although teachers value professionalism and ethics, there is a need for improvement in the areas of empathy, personal support, inclusion and recognition of teachers.

In this sense, the competencies or capacities of the managers to manage the educational institution are the most highly valued. However, as evidenced by the results, they are not limited to technical skills, such as, for example, "Ensures that school areas (playgrounds) are well maintained" or "Ensures that school infrastructure is kept in good condition", since their ability to generate an institutional culture of care is also relevant (Mayer; Davis; Schoorman, 1995; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Therefore, in order to advance in an institutional culture of care, leaders need to be able to anticipate the needs of their teams and provide the necessary resources to face pedagogical challenges (Bryk; Schneider, 2002), however, this capacity is not fully manifested in our educational system, as evidenced by the indicator "Creates a positive environment for change in the school", which presents one of the lowest results within this dimension.

On the other hand, the Integrity dimension emerges as one of the most highly valued by teachers, highlighting the coherence of Chilean school leaders. This dimension is distinguished by having all its indicators with scores over three, which shows the high valuation by teachers of the role of their principals. Teachers recognize them as sincere, honest, committed to the vision and mission of their schools, working for the whole community and promoting shared values. All key aspects of what a person's integrity implies and that strengthens trust (Mayer; Davis; Schoorman, 1995; Tschannen-Moran, 2004), however, areas for improvement are also identified in terms of sincerity and deepening relationships based on shared values. In this sense, we can affirm that the Chilean teachers in this study recognize the integrity of their leaders, a key component for trust.

The two most descended dimensions, linked to relational aspects and personal recognition (Esteem and Respect), are interesting to reflect on, as they reveal a school environment that is little studied and of high relevance to develop caring practices that generate trust. In this context, the question arises: To what extent do principals care about or get involved with the interests of teachers, an interest linked to both the professional and personal dimensions. This question is crucial, since the results of this study reveal a low

level of involvement in these aspects, which underlines the need to strengthen this dimension. This is highly important, since the orientations that the leaders of Chilean educational institutions have mostly received have focused on the management of results and their effectiveness, relegating interest in the personal dimension and the interests of their teachers. Today, we know that school leadership must develop and strengthen practices that allow recognizing the personal needs of their teachers and their community as a whole, in order to generate better conditions and spaces for professional performance and, by the way, generate more confidence (Noddings, 2002). Studies show that teachers who feel recognized and perceive that their needs are attended to by their managers strengthen their sense of belonging and their willingness to actively participate in school processes (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

Bearing in mind the importance of these relational dimensions of Esteem and Respect and, at the same time, considering that they are the least developed by principals, according to the perception of their teachers, it is worth asking: Why do teachers perceive the aspects of concern and recognition of their work as less developed?

The answers can be varied: from the changes that teaching and school management experienced after the pandemic (virtualization), to the transition to a less competitive, more inclusive system, with a focus on the process and not only on the result, or simply a lack of skills/capacities in teaching managers on these issues, since they are areas of knowledge that are not explicitly present in initial and continuous training.

Therefore, in this scenario, the training of principals, school managers and in-service teachers becomes especially relevant, where learning can be generated on topics associated with caring practices that generate trust and well-being. It is important to give adequate recognition to these issues and that they play an important role in public policies on teacher training.

The question then arises: How can we provide conditions so that leaders can generate an institutional culture of caring practices that generate trust? The answer, undoubtedly, is not simple, as it implies not only generating adequate material conditions, but also the development of in-service training to provide, on the one hand, comprehensive frameworks on the importance of care and, on the other hand, concrete tools to face the challenges of caring practices for trust. This training should equip leaders with the necessary skills to promote a school environment that values both well-being and

16

performance, recognizing the importance of trust as a fundamental pillar for building an institutional culture of care and institutional success.

6 Conclusion

By way of conclusion, this study shows that although teachers in the Metropolitan Region feel that they are treated professionally, that their leaders have integrity and that they show them a certain degree of appreciation, there are clear areas for improvement in terms of the leadership exercised by principals. There is a need to strengthen both professional practices and training, so that principals can learn to value and recognize the role of their teachers, support their professional development and provide recognition as individuals and education professionals. Recognizing social changes is crucial to understand how schools are adapting their internal dynamics to better meet the emotional, professional and relational needs of their teachers and educational communities.

Finally, it should be noted that this study is exploratory in nature, does not intend to generalize and represents a first step to further explore the need to strengthen leadership practices, with the care that allows to generate trust in their community. We also hope that the results presented in this article can serve as a basis for further study of this topic and contribute to the discussion on public policies, particularly those related to the ethical dimension of care, which are found in the School Coexistence Policy. This would make it possible to move towards a leadership that not only focuses on results, but also prioritizes the integral care and well-being of all educational actors.

7 Acknowledgments

References

BRYK, A. S.; SCHNEIDER, B. *Trust in schools*: a core resource for improvement. New York: Russell Sage, 2002.

CLEOVOULOU, Y.; IZNARDO, M.; KAMANI, F. An examination of equity pedagogy during program coherence building in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, v. 120, e103866, 2022. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103866.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO
PROGRAMA DE PÓS GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO
Universidade Estadual do Ceará (UECE)

REDUFOR
REVISTA EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO

HANDFORD, V.; LEITHWOOD, K. Why teachers trust school leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration*, [*S.l.*], v. 51, n. 2, p. 194-212, 2013.

HERNÁNDEZ SAMPIERI, R.; FERNÁNDEZ COLLADO, C.; BAPTISTA LUCIO, P. *Metodología de la investigación*. 6. ed. Mexico: McGraw-Hill Interamericana, 2014.

KENNEDY, K.; WALLS, J. How district leaders create caring organizations. *Phi Delta Kappan*, [*S.l.*], v. 103, n. 5, p. 13-17, 2022. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/00317217221079973.

LOUIS, K.; MURPHY, J. Trust, caring and organizational learning: the leader's role. *Journal of Educational Administration*, [*S. l.*], v. 55, n. 1, p. 103-126, 2017. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-07-2016-0077.

LOUIS, K.; MURPHY, J. The positive leadership approach and its relevance to school relationships. *In*: WEINSTEIN, J.; MUÑOZ, G. (org.). *Leadership in schools of high sociocultural complexity*: ten views. Santiago: Universidad Diego Portales, 2019. p. 153-191.

MAYER, R. C.; DAVIS, J. H.; SCHOORMAN, F. D. An integrative model of organizational trust. *Academy of Management Review*, [*S. l.*], v. 20, n. 3, p. 709-734, 1995.

NODDINGS, N. *Caring*: a feminine approach to ethics and moral education. Berkeley: University of California, 1984.

NODDINGS, N. *Educating moral people*: a caring alternative to character education. New York: Teachers College, 2002.

OVIEDO, H. C.; CAMPO-ARIAS, A. Approach to the use of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. *Revista Colombiana de Psiquiatría*, Bogotá, v. 34, n. 4, p. 572-580, 2005. Available at: http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0034-74502005000400009&lng=en&tlng=es. Accessed on: 20 Dec. 2024.

PEÑA FREDES, J.; WEINSTEIN CAYUELA, J.; RACZYNSKI, D. Construction and loss of teacher confidence: a critical incident analysis. *Estudios Pedagógicos*, Valdivia, v. 44, n. 1, p. 329-345, 2018. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4067/S0718-07052018000100329.

UNDP. *Report on Human Development in Chile 2024*. Why is it hard for us to change: driving changes for a Sustainable Human Development. Santiago de Chile: UNDP, 2024.

RAZETO, A. Interpersonal trust between teachers and school principals: a fundamental pillar for the implementation of educational policies and programs. *Foro Educacional*, Rio de Janeiro, n. 15, p. 57-81, 2009.

RAZETO, A. More trust for a better school: the value of interpersonal relationships between teachers and principal. *Cuadernos de Investigación Educativa*, Montevideo, v. 8, n. 1, p. 61-76, 2017. DOI: https://doi.org/10.18861/cied.2017.8.1.2639.

ROBERTO, A. M. Pedagogical leadership of school managers and teacher's professional development: a systematic review. *Educação & Formação*, Fortaleza, v. 8, e10818, 2023.

18

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO
PROGRAMA DE PÓS GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO
Universidade Estadual do Ceará (UECE)

REDUFOR
REVISTA EDUCAÇÃO & FORMAÇÃO

Available at: https://revistas.uece.br/index.php/redufor/article/view/e10818. Accessed on: 10 Dec. 2024.

RYU, J.; WALLS, J.; LOUIS, K. Caring leadership: the role of principals in producing caring school cultures. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, [*S. l.*], v. 21, n. 3, p. 585-602, 2020. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2020.1811877.

SMYLIE, M.; MURPHY, J.; LOUIS, K. Caring school leadership: A multi-disciplinary cross-occupational model. *American Journal of Education*, [*S. l.*], v. 123, n. 1, p. 1-35, 2016. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1086/688166.

TRONTO, J. *Risk or care?* Buenos Aires: Fundación Medifé, 2020.

TSCHANNEN-MORAN, M. Fostering teacher professionalism in schools: The role of leadership orientation and trust. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, [*S. l.*], v. 45, n. 2, p. 217-247, 2009. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X08330501.

TSCHANNEN-MORAN, M. *Trust matters*: Leadership for successful schools. 2. ed. California: Jossey-Bass, 2004.

WEINSTEIN, J.; MUÑOZ, G.; FLESSA, J. Managerial leadership for the quality of education: Learnings from an emerging field of research. Calidad en la Educación, Santiago de Chile, v .51, p. 10-14, 2019.

WEINSTEIN, J.; PEÑA, J. (ed.). *Relational trust within schools and high schools*: results of studies in Chile (2017-2023). Santiago: Universidad Diego Portales, 2024.

Andrea Carrasco Sáez, University of Chile
[i] https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3044-5639
Professor of History and Social Sciences at the University of Valparaíso, Master in Education from the University of Chile and PhD in Education from the University of Granada, Spain. She is an academic at the Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities of the University of Chile and director of the Centro Estudios Saberes Docentes of the same University. She is a researcher and part of the management team of C-Líder.
Authoring contribution: Project management, formal analysis, conceptualization, data curation, writing - first draft, drafting -, reviewing and editing, researching and securing funding.
E-mail: ancarrasco@uchile.cl

Claudio Montoya, University of Chile
[ii] https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0921-5713
Sociologist and researcher at the Centro Estudios Saberes Docentes - Universidad de Chile.
Authorship contribution: Formal analysis, conceptualization, research, methodology, validation and visualization.
E-mail: claudio.montoya@uchile.cl

Gonzalo Ruz, University of Santiago of Chile
[iii] https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7905-4647
Collaborating Professor, Department of Education, Universidad de Santiago de Chile.
Authorship contribution: Conceptualization, writing - revision and editing.
E-mail: gonzalo.ruz.w@usach.cl

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

DATA AVAILABILITY

The entire dataset supporting the results of this study has been published in the article itself.

Responsible Editor: Lia Machado Fiuza Fialho

***Ad hoc* reviewers:** Daniel Rios Muñoz and Hugo Heredia Ponce

Translated by: Thiago Alves Moreira