Teacher perceptions of empowerment and promotion during reforms

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to describe the relationship between teachers' professional role, their sense of empowerment, and their attitudes toward managerial promotion (career development) following the implementation of educational forms.

Design/methodology/approach – The study was conducted in Israel in 2015 and included 663 teachers, 250 elementary school teachers and 413 middle or high school teachers. A questionnaire and statistical analyses (ANOVA, multivariate analysis, and correlations) examined the attitudes of teachers in one of four professional roles toward managerial promotion (their desire for future promotion and sense of organizational fairness). This was compared with their sense of empowerment (comprising feeling respected, professional growth, influence, autonomy, self-efficacy, and decision making), while controlling for their demographic and professional backgrounds.

Findings – Four-fifths of teachers were interested in pursuing managerial promotion and they perceived the promotion process as moderately fair. The greater teachers' sense of empowerment, the greater their desire for future promotion and their belief in the fairness of the promotional process. Teachers currently holding a leadership position expressed the strongest sense of empowerment.

Practical implications – The study presents a multivariate model to predict teachers' attitudes to managerial promotion on the basis of their professional role and sense of empowerment. The findings have implications for educational policy-making, particularly where there is a national focus on increasing school autonomy.

Originality/value – The findings will contribute to local and international research on teacher empowerment and career development.

Keywords Career development, Leadership, Israel, Professional development, Education management, Teacher development, School autonomy

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

In 2011, the Israeli Ministry of Education (2011) developed a new policy entailing two educational reforms: one for elementary and middle schools (called "*Ofek Chadash* (New Horizon)"), and one for high schools (called "*Oz Letmura* (Courage to Change)"). These reforms aimed to improve pupils' educational achievements, strengthen the social status of the teaching profession, improve teachers' working conditions, and create career progression opportunities for teachers (Avidov-Ungar, 2016). In line with the ministry's understanding (subsequently confirmed by research; Avidov-Ungar, 2016) that the leadership provided by teachers and their active involvement in educational reform are vital for achieving a comprehensive systematic change toward educational improvement, the reforms sought to increase teachers' and principals' stakes in the reformed environment. To achieve this goal, the reforms endeavored to increase school autonomy by encouraging self-management, enabling schools to create in-school procedures for teachers' professional development, and widening the leadership pyramid by creating entirely new middle-level leadership positions, such as assessment coordinator, mentor, and group leader.

The current international effort to investigate how the nature of school leadership and its effect on school improvement interact with the influence of school autonomy on curricular or pedagogic innovation (Cheng and Greany, 2016) first requires that researchers and policymakers better understand teachers' perceptions of their empowerment and their aspirations for hierarchical advancement in reformed education systems. Therefore, three years after the Israeli reforms, this study sought to examine the factors that affect teachers' aspirations for future promotion to school leadership positions. Knowledge of these factors is important for educational policy-making not only in Israel, but also in countries, such as Australia, Canada, England, Finland, Hong Kong, and Singapore, in which there is a national focus on increasing school autonomy (Cheng and Greany, 2016).

Teacher's career progression
Administrative positions enable teachers to demonstrate authority and responsibility, and empower them with a sense of capability (Blase and Blase, 1994, 1997; Avidov-Ungar *et al.*, 2014). Leadership roles broaden teachers' authority, strengthen their sense of responsibility, and increase their willingness to exert intense effort at work (Avidov-Ungar *et al.*, 2014, pp. 709-713). As noted in Muchanje (2015), career progression defines workers' behavior in an organization. Leadership roles enhance teachers' desire to cooperate with management and colleagues, and increase their feelings of satisfaction, motivation, and loyalty toward the school, while affording them personal and professional growth (Fang, 2013; Irwin, 1996; Shor, 1992). Stevenson (2016) argues that, in the case of teachers' career progression, the missing element is that of leadership. In a study conducted in the USA, the lack of options for individual career growth caused teacher drop-out among 7 percent of the participants (Susan *et al.*, 2005). In many countries, high turnover rates and unsuitable applicants (Béteille *et al.*, 2012) mean that the future of local educational leadership is at risk (Davis *et al.*, 2005).

Many intrinsic and extrinsic factors were found to play a role in the promotional progression of teachers. Extrinsic factors include the school context (e.g. hierarchical or collaborative culture; Ash and Persall, 2000; Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 1995; Moller *et al.*, 2001). They also include the principal's willingness to share power (Angelle and DeHart, 2011); the availability of some form of public recognition and appreciation (Muchanje, 2015); the social perception of administrative positions; the existence (or lack of) an objectively defined selection procedure; and the suitability of training processes and salaries (Kanape-Willingshofer, 2014). In Israel, the salary structure for teachers is based on their seniority and the positions they hold. More than 25 percent of teachers hold an additional assigned position in school, with many more striving to attain an administrative position (Avidov-Ungar *et al.*, 2014) and, with it, a rise in salary.

Intrinsic factors that play a role in promotional progression can include leadership motivation and attitudes regarding workload and salary. Teachers who see themselves as leaders and who experience relatively high rates of job satisfaction are more likely to seek opportunities for career advancement and are often very meticulous, motivated, and committed to their work, and tend to be emotionally grounded (Kanape-Willingshofer, 2014). In addition, Glickman (2009) stressed the connection between teachers' age and stage in life and their motivation for career advancement, with younger teachers more likely to seek more challenging tasks, additional training, and new opportunities.

This state of affairs warrants an examination of teachers' perceptions regarding leadership positions in school (Angelle and DeHart, 2011; Blitz and Modeste, 2015). Promotion of employees poses a challenge to both the employer and the employee (Kilika *et al.*, 2014), which further underscores the need to identify the combination of internal and external factors that serve as key determinants of teachers' desire for career progression toward leadership positions (Muchanje, 2015).

Although career progression is a complex issue that depends on many factors and not everyone seeks change, people tend to prefer jobs in which they are entrusted with important tasks, and which provide professional development that can lead to career progression (Muchanje, 2015; Vardi, 1980). Vardi (1980) and later Baruch and Vardi (2016) present an integrated model of "career movement within an organization" (Organizational Career Model (OCM)). The model compares the career world to port traffic, with departure and entrance gates. In this model, career movement is determined by people's mobility, desires, and aspirations, and whether they already hold formal positions in the organization.

Accordingly, it is important to review teachers' entrance position movements and future desires, in relation to their current professional role. Thus, the current study aims to identify factors that predict teachers' desires for future progress to leadership positions in the school in times of educational reform and how their professional role (as current holders of an administrative or managerial position, or not) affects their desire.

Teacher's sense of empowerment

Education systems all around the world are engaged in systemic reform arising from pressures to improve, innovate, and supply proof of students' high academic achievements (Day and Smethem, 2009; Fullan, 2011; Luttenberg et al., 2013; Priestley, 2011; Thomas and Beauchamp, 2011). However, as Hinde (2004) observed, the problem of educational reforms is a problem of power. Usually, educational reforms are enforced from the top down and are imposed on teachers without first consulting them, despite the fact that the reforms require teachers to change their behavior patterns and even their underlying values and assumptions about the process of education (Avidov-Ungar, 2016; Fullan, 2006; Raz, 2006). This increases the likelihood of lack of ownership of the reforms among teachers and reduced teacher autonomy, which inevitably leads teachers to feel increasingly disempowered and professionally marginalized (Ball, 2008; Fullan, 2011), so decreasing their motivation for self-improvement and increasing their passivity, particularly in their responses to the demands imposed by the reform (Avidov-Ungar, 2016; Luttenberg et al., 2013). By contrast, a sense of empowerment can improve teachers' involvement and motivation to progress to leadership positions (Angelle and DeHart, 2011; Avidov-Ungar et al., 2014). Thus, the Israeli reforms sought to increase teachers' feelings of empowerment.

The desire to assume an administrative leadership role within a school depends strongly on a teacher's sense of empowerment, which is an interactive process that occurs between individuals and their environment (Avidov-Ungar et al., 2014; Hargreaves, 2005). Empowerment manifests in the transition from a position of helplessness to a feeling of personal-psychological capability, during which the person gains the ability to cope with the effects of the environment (Bogler and Somech, 2004; Irwin, 1996; Kieffer, 1983). Empowerment means believing that one has the ability to create and shape values, to consciously and significantly influence events, and enables one to function from a sense of professional confidence and high capability (Bogler, 2005; Collinson et al., 2009). It increases a person's ability to perform a task, affording that person the power to delegate authority and responsibility, to nurture the ability to take decisions, and to perform tasks as an act of personal will (Avidov-Ungar et al., 2014).

A feeling of empowerment is associated with increased job satisfaction (Edwards et al., 2002). It enhances workers' professionalism, and helps them take responsibility for their own involvement in the decision-making process (Bogler, 2005; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). In a school context, empowerment reduces dependency and enables growth and school organizational renewal (Kark et al., 2003). Over the years, there have been attempts to set standards to examine empowerment among teachers (Klecker and Loadman, 1996; Short and Rinehart, 1992). Short and Rinehart (1992) suggested six measures as comprising the construct of teacher's empowerment: decision making, professional growth, professional role, self-efficacy, autonomy, and impact.

The Teacher Status Index was specifically created "to measure the level of respect for teachers in different countries" (Dolton and Marcenaro-Gutierrez, 2013, p. 4). Israel's index score was 2 (on a relative scale of 0-100), which was considerably lower than the scores achieved by China, Egypt, the USA, and the UK (which ranked first, sixth, ninth, and tenth, with scores of 100, 49.3, 38.4, and 36.7, respectively). Indeed, Israel had the lowest Teacher Status Index ranking of the 21 countries examined (Dolton and Marcenaro-Gutierrez, 2013, pp. 12-13, 21). Thus, in the Israeli environment, feelings of (dis)empowerment may be particularly affected by the (low) respect accorded to teachers.

It has been claimed that empowerment works for the benefit of all involved parties (Angelle and DeHart, 2011). However, a very recent review of the Israeli educational system (Nir *et al.*, 2016) indicates that centralization continues to inhibit the degrees of freedom granted to (and therefore, presumably, the empowerment of) school-level educators, despite repeated policy efforts to increase school autonomy through school-based management. The review also finds that most suggested pedagogical innovations whose successful implementation also requires teacher empowerment, at least in the form of teacher leadership of their implementation (Angelle and DeHart, 2011; Bond and Sterrett, 2014) have not resulted in sustainable, system-wide change.

Recent research from the USA (Fang, 2013) suggests that the key to the professional empowerment of teachers lies in developing their content knowledge, professional wisdom, and psychological strengths. In the entirely different teaching environment represented by China, Wang *et al.* (2013) found that self-esteem and certain dimensions of the organizational climate (specifically, professional communication, decision making, appraisal and recognition, supportive leadership, and professional growth) positively predicted teachers' psychological empowerment. In Israel and the USA, teacher empowerment was found to be an important resource for teachers holding the leadership positions tasked with spearheading the changes associated with educational reform (Avidov-Ungar and Shamir-Inbal, 2013; Kaniuka, 2012). However, the factors underlying teacher feelings of (dis)empowerment in such environments have been insufficiently examined (Wang, 2013; Higgins *et al.*, 2012).

Aims and hypotheses
The aim of the current research is to analyze the relationship between teachers' current professional role, their sense of empowerment, and their attitudes toward future in-school leadership promotion, in both the personal and the organizational dimensions. The study assumes that empowerment acts as an independent variable affecting attitudes to promotion. However, other assumptions are possible, for example that a sense of empowerment mediates between professional role and teachers' attitude toward promotion. It should be noted that the current research focusses on future leadership aspirations in the context of seeking administrative, managerial, and/or team-leadership positions (i.e. in the context of a vertical hierarchy), rather than *vis-à-vis* pupils and their learning and development (which can also be referred to as lateral development) (Avidov-Ungar, 2016).

In the context of the International Study of School Autonomy and Learning, and utilizing a historical perspective based on a literature review and analysis of policy documents, Nir *et al.* (2016) found significant disparities between declarations about increasing school and teacher autonomy and actual implementation. By contrast, the current study focuses not on declared autonomy, but on teachers' perceptions, and asks: how do teachers perceive the in-school promotion system and what factors predict their desire (or otherwise) for future in-school promotion in times of reform? The answers should shed light on how teachers perceive the latest national policy efforts to increase school autonomy as having affected their own autonomy, as measured by their feelings of empowerment (of which autonomy is one aspect), while controlling for demographic factors and job satisfaction.

In light of the preceding discussion, the research hypotheses were as follows:

H1. Teachers currently holding a leadership position who seek further advancement along the managerial track will demonstrate a more positive attitude toward future promotion to a (higher) leadership position than will teachers who neither hold such a position nor seek future promotion.

H2. Teachers currently holding a leadership position and seeking further advancement along the managerial track will experience a stronger sense of empowerment than teachers who neither currently hold such a position nor seek future promotion.

H3. A strong sense of empowerment will predict positive attitudes toward in-school promotion to leadership positions in both the personal and organizational dimensions.

Methodology

Participants and setting

The study included 663 teachers: 276 men and 387 women. The participants were teachers studying for an MEd in one of two teacher training colleges located in Central and Northern Israel, who then took the questionnaires back to the schools in which they were teaching and asked their colleagues to complete them. The participants filled out printed questionnaires either after lectures in the college or in the staff room of their schools. Questionnaires were completed anonymously between January and March 2015.

The average age of the participating teachers was 41.61 years (SD = 8.87; range, 21-67 years old). All teachers had an academic education (40 percent, graduate degree; 60 percent, post-graduate degree). A total of 250 participants were elementary school teachers and the other 413 were middle or high school teachers. Their average number of years working in the field of education was 14.97 years (SD = 9.15; range 1-42 years). In terms of professional experience, 63 percent of the teachers in this study had been working in the education system for more than ten years, 23 percent were new teachers (with one to five years of experience), and the remaining 14 percent had six to ten years of experience.

Data collection

The research hypotheses were examined using a self-report questionnaire completed in writing by the teachers. The questionnaire required about 15-20 minutes for each teacher to complete and consisted of three main parts.

The first part of the questionnaire referred to teachers' attitudes toward hierarchical promotion to a leadership position in their schools. This part was based on a pre-existing questionnaire, developed to examine concepts surrounding promotion to leadership positions among academic staff in teacher training colleges (Teichman-Weinberg and Schwabsky, 2012). The items of that questionnaire were considered suitable for use with school teachers. To further examine the relevance of the those items to teachers' work characteristics, the new questionnaire was first reviewed by five school principals and, after some improvements were made, it was completed by 20 experienced teachers participating in an master's level research seminar. Next, it was discussed in a focus group that included teachers, principals, and academic experts in the field of education. After more changes and improvements were made, the questionnaire was completed by 25 experienced teachers enrolled in another MA research seminar. The final version of the questionnaire included 33 items. Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed with the statements on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 6 (very strongly).

The second part of the questionnaire aimed to assess teachers' sense of empowerment. This part was based on a questionnaire developed by Short and Rinehart (1992) and

subsequently adapted to Israel by the authors. Participants ranked their agreement with the statements provided using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very strongly). This questionnaire has been used in earlier studies among teachers in the same language and context as those of the current study (e.g. Magen-Nagar and Avidov-Ungar, 2014; Avidov-Ungar and Magen-Nagar, 2015).

The third part of the questionnaire examined teachers' personal and professional background, gender, year of birth, level of education, years of teaching experience, type of school, position at school, career-related ambitions, and satisfaction with teaching and with their school.

Variables
Dependent variable – teachers' attitudes toward promotion. The dependent variable is teachers' attitudes toward future promotion to a leadership position within their schools. It was investigated using the first part of the questionnaire and examined two dimensions:

(1) Desire for future promotion: based on 12 questionnaire items regarding teachers' ambition to be promoted in future to a leadership position within their schools (i.e. to a managerial/administrative/team leader position). For example: "I am interested in having more influence on school management and routines" and "I am confident that the range of opportunities available to me will enable me to attain a position commensurate with my skills" ($\alpha = 0.88$).

(2) Sense of organizational fairness: based on 11 questionnaire items regarding teachers' conceptions of the degree to which the promotional process in their school is fair, just, and objective. For example: "In our school most of the leadership positions are not assigned by the school's leadership team" and "In our school, all teachers are eligible and may apply for a leadership position" ($\alpha = 0.86$).

Independent variables – professional role and empowerment
(1) Professional role: this variable was obtained from the third part of the questionnaire and reflects the teachers' current role in their present career. Analysis of participants' answers to the questionnaire revealed the existence of four professional role groups. Group A – teachers who currently hold a leadership position in school and seek further promotion as part of their professional career. Group B – teachers who currently hold a leadership position in school but do not seek further promotion. Group C – teachers who do not hold a leadership position but seek promotion into such a position as part of their professional career. Group D – teachers who do not hold a leadership position and do not seek promotion into one. Seeking promotion is conceived of as an active endeavor, which differentiates it from the general desire for further promotion captured by the dependent variable.

(2) Sense of empowerment: this measure was obtained from the second part of the questionnaire. This measure consists of 33 items ($\alpha = 0.91$) that combine into one single variable. Following Short and Rinehart (1992), we also analyzed empowerment according to six components. Four of these components (namely, decision making, professional growth, self-efficacy, and autonomy) are the same as Short and Rinehart's, while the remaining two (feeling respected and collaboration) were chosen for their relevance to Israel. These components were defined as follows:

- Feeling respected: the extent to which the participant feels appreciated and respected in the professional environment, as examined through his/her level of agreement with: "I believe that I have earned respect," "I am treated as a professional," "I have the respect of my colleagues," and "I have the respect of my supervisor" (four questionnaire items, $\alpha = 0.76$).

- Professional growth: involvement in school curricula and participation in staff development processes, via his/her level of agreement with: "I participate in staff development," "I have the opportunity for professional growth," "I am involved in developing important school programs," "I participate in staff professional development," "I believe that I have the opportunity to grow by working daily with children," "I have the opportunity to continue to develop professionally," and "I function in a professional environment" (seven items, $\alpha = 0.77$).

- Decision making: refers to participating in decision-making processes within the school and influencing school activities, as expressed by the level of support for: "I am a decision maker," "I make decisions about the selection of other teachers for my school," "I make decisions about curriculum," "I believe that I am having an impact," "I am involved in school budget decisions," "I participate in decision making concerning new programs," "I perceive that I have an impact on other teachers and students," "I believe I am leading changes at school," and "I believe I have an impact on school programs" (nine items, $\alpha = 0.82$).

- Autonomy: relates to having control over issues of agenda and schedule, assessed through his/her level of agreement with: "I can determine my own schedule," "I can plan my schedule," "I have control over how I teach," "I can make my own decisions" (four items, $\alpha = 0.76$).

- Self-efficacy: refers to the belief in one's ability to lead pupils and interactions toward growth, change, and empowerment, as captured by level of agreement with: "I believe I am very effective," "I believe I am able to teach well," "I believe that I am good at what I do," "I believe I have the ability to get things done" (four items, $\alpha = 0.76$).

- Collaboration: refers to the opportunity to collaborate in a team, to teach and contribute to peers, and to have an impact on teachers and principals, assessed via his/her level of agreement with: "I have the opportunity to collaborate with other teachers," "I have the opportunity to teach other teachers about innovative ideas," "Colleagues at school tend to listen to my advice," "My advice is solicited by others," "I have the opportunity to assist and guide other teachers" (five items, $\alpha = 0.62$).

Demographic and professional background variables were used to control for: gender, age, education (undergraduate or graduate degree), years of experience in education, school level (elementary vs middle or secondary school), and satisfaction with the school (on a six-point scale, ranging from a very low to very high level of satisfaction).

Data analysis
Teachers' attitudes toward future in-school promotion to a leadership position were examined in three stages. The first stage presents descriptive statistics reflecting teachers' attitudes toward future promotion to in-school leadership positions (in terms of both the personal and organizational dimensions) and the relationship between their professional role and sense of empowerment.

The second stage focuses on the sense of empowerment variable. First, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine whether the desire for future promotion and sense of organizational fairness (i.e. the personal and organizational dimensions) differed between the four professional role groups. *Post hoc* Scheffe analysis was used as it is able to correct α for complex comparisons of means such as those examined here. Next, Pearson's correlations were calculated to examine whether teachers' attitudes toward in-school promotion are linearly associated with their sense of empowerment.

The third stage presents a multivariate model to predict teachers' attitudes toward future promotion to in-school leadership positions while considering their current professional role and sense of empowerment and controlling for demographics. Specifically, multivariate analysis was used to estimate the effect of the explanatory (independent variables) on teachers' attitudes toward future in-school promotion (dependent variable), using Group C teachers (who do not hold a leadership position but are interested in future promotion into such a position) as the reference group. The analysis was performed in three steps separately, for each of the personal (i.e. desire for future promotion) and organizational (i.e. sense of organizational fairness) dimensions. The first step examined the effect of their current professional role on teachers' attitudes toward future promotion. To avoid multicollinearity, all six components of teachers' sense of empowerment were combined into a single key variable named "empowerment" ($\alpha = 0.89$). In the third step, the demographic and professional background variables were added to the equation as controls.

Results

Desire for future promotion and current professional role

Nearly 60 percent of the respondents desired future promotion to a leadership position in school. Of these, 70 percent currently held a leadership position (Group A) and the other 30 percent did not, but wanted to be nominated for one in future (Group C). Group C – teachers who do not hold a leadership position but desire future promotion into such a position.

The strength of the desire for future promotion to a leadership position is moderately strong ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 1.01$). Of those professing such a desire, 64 percent agreed to a great extent that in-school promotion would enable them to use their proficiencies and skills while growing professionally. In the organizational dimension, teachers perceived the promotional process as moderately fair, objective, and open-minded ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.04$), with 50 percent of teachers according the fairness of the promotional process a score greater than 3.5. These findings imply that, while more than two-thirds of teachers seek promotion, half of them doubt the extent to which the process is governed by rational and just measures, and this may be the reason that their desire to achieve the promotion they seek is only moderately strong.

It is important to note that teachers' attitudes toward in-school promotion (i.e. to the two facets of the dependent variable) were not significantly associated with the school level in which they taught (desire for future promotion: $t = 1.42$, $p = 0.15$; organizational fairness: $t = 0.40$, $p = 0.68$), or their years of teaching experience (desire for future promotion: $r = 0.1$, $p = 0.09$; organizational fairness: $r = 0.07$, $p = 0.15$). However, they were significantly associated with their satisfaction with their school (desire for future promotion: $r = 0.44$, $p = 0.00$; organizational fairness: $r = 0.39$, $p = 0.00$).

The study then used one-way ANOVA to examine whether differences in teachers' attitudes toward future promotion to a leadership position within their schools correlated with their current professional role. Interestingly, the findings (Table I) suggest that both Group A teachers, who currently hold a leadership position and seek further promotion, and Group B teachers, who currently hold a leadership position but do not seek further promotion, express a strong desire for future promotion, with this desire significantly stronger among Group A teachers compared with their Group B colleagues (and the other two groups). Groups A and B also had a strongly positive view of the fairness of the in-school promotion process. One may speculate that Group B teachers, who express a strong desire for future promotion and yet do not seek further promotion, desire future promotion "in principle," but do not seek imminent promotion. It may be that this moderates the strength of their expressed desire for future promotion. However, this study did not examine such possible interactions.

In contrast, Group C teachers, who do not hold a leadership position but seek promotion into such a position, and Group D teachers, who do not hold a leadership position and do not seek

promotion into one, indicated a moderate desire to be promoted and a moderately positive sense of organizational fairness, with no significant difference found between these two groups.

Sense of empowerment and professional role

As shown in Table II, the teachers generally expressed having a moderate sense of empowerment, nevertheless Groups A and B teachers reported higher levels of empowerment than Groups C and D teachers. In order to deepen the understanding of the concept of empowerment, we analyzed it according to six components: feeling respected, professional growth, decision making, autonomy, self-efficacy, and collaboration, following Short and Rinehart (1992).

The empowerment components that consistently achieved the highest mean scores across groups were feeling respected, autonomy, and self-efficacy. Most teachers experienced feelings of gratitude and respect from their professional colleagues had the autonomy to plan their own schedule and decide how they would teach, and believed in their own capability and proficiency.

Significant differences were found between the professional role categories. The mean scores of Groups A and B teachers for feeling respected were higher than those of Groups C

	Professional role: Mean (SE)					
Teachers' attitudes toward promotion	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	F	η
Desire for future promotion[a]	4.62 (0.94)	4.34 (0.94)	3.79 (1.03)	3.86 (0.85)	30.65***	0.12
Sense of organizational fairness[b]	4.01 (1.01)	4.01 (1.13)	3.47 (1.02)	3.71 (0.92)	9.10***	0.04
n	283	137	106	136		

Notes: *Post hoc* Scheffe results: [a]No significant differences were found with respect to the desire for future promotion variable between Group C teachers (who do not hold a leadership position but seek promotion into such a position) and Group D teachers (who do not hold a leadership position and do not seek promotion into one); [b]no significant differences were found with respect to the sense of organizational fairness variable between Group A teachers (who currently hold a leadership position and seek further promotion) and Group B teachers (who currently hold a leadership position but do not seek further promotion), between Group B and Group D teachers, and between Group C and Group D teachers. ***$p < 0.001$

Table I.
One-way ANOVA between teachers' attitudes toward promotion (dependent variable) and their professional role (an independent variable)

	Professional role: Mean (SE)					
Teachers' sense of empowerment	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	F	η
Empowerment[a]	4.11 (0.46)	4.13 (0.47)	3.76 (0.51)	3.75 (0.43)	32.03***	0.13
Empowerment components						
Respect[b]	4.54 (0.51)	4.62 (0.46)	4.16 (0.75)	4.28 (0.61)	19.54***	0.08
Professional growth[c]	4.18 (0.62)	4.23 (0.63)	3.64 (0.64)	3.69 (0.61)	36.53***	0.14
Decision making[d]	4.05 (0.62)	4.06 (0.65)	3.61 (0.75)	3.63 (0.65)	21.73***	0.18
Autonomy	4.29 (0.61)	4.35 (0.63)	4.21 (0.63)	4.18 (0.59)	2.14	0.01
Self-efficacy[e]	4.45 (0.47)	4.51 (0.48)	4.46 (0.58)	4.27 (0.47)	4.99**	0.02
Collaboration[f]	3.81 (0.61)	3.77 (0.67)	3.23 (0.62)	3.18 (0.55)	47.22***	0.09
n	283	137	106	136		

Notes: *Post hoc* Scheffe results: [a,b,c,e]No significant differences were found between Group A teachers (who currently hold a leadership position and seek further promotion) and Group B teachers (who currently hold a leadership position but do not seek further promotion). No significant differences were found between Group C teachers (who do not hold a leadership position but seek promotion into such a position) and Group D teachers (who do not hold a leadership position and do not seek promotion into one); [e]no significant differences were found between Groups A and B teachers, between Groups A and C teachers, between Groups B and C teachers, and between Groups C and D teachers. **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$

Table II.
One-way ANOVA of the relationship between teachers' sense of empowerment and their professional role

and D teachers. Significant differences were also found in the self-efficacy component of empowerment when examined by professional role. Groups A, B, and C teachers exhibited higher self-reported self-efficacy than Group D teachers. Groups A and B teachers also evinced higher levels of professional growth and collaboration than Group C and D teachers. Teachers' perceptions of their ability to participate in decision making at school was weakest for all groups, but the same trend remained stable, with Groups A and B teachers perceiving themselves as more empowered with respect to decision making than Groups C and D teachers.

Future leadership promotion and sense of empowerment
Table III shows the results of Pearson's correlations to examine whether teachers' attitudes toward in-school promotion to a future leadership position were associated with their sense of empowerment.

As shown in Table III, both dimensions of teachers' attitudes to in-school promotion were positively associate with teachers' sense of empowerment and all six of its components. Thus, teachers' sense of empowerment tends to be positively associated with their desire for future promotion and with their sense that the promotion process is fair.

Table IV presents the results of a three-step multivariate analysis. The results of the first step, which examined the effect of teacher's professional role on their attitudes toward promotion, indicate significant differences between Groups A and B teachers in comparison with Group C teachers. In both attitudinal dimensions, Groups A and B teachers held significantly more positive attitudes to in-school promotion than their Group C counterparts (Table IV). No difference was found between Groups D and C teachers.

After adding teachers' sense of empowerment into the equation in the second step, the coefficient of the Group A teachers in the personal dimension lost 45 percent of its value, but it remained positively significant. In contrast, the coefficient for Group B teachers became non-significant. In the organizational dimension, the coefficients of both Groups A and B teachers became non-significant, while the coefficient of Group D teachers became significant, indicating that Group D teachers, who neither hold nor seek a leadership position, perceive grater fairness in the organizational routes to a such a position than the comparator Group C teachers, who do not currently hold a leadership position but seek promotion.

Overall, a sense of empowerment explains approximately 30 percent of the variance in both the personal and organizational dimensions of teachers' attitudes to promotion. Specifically, a high sense of empowerment positively correlated with both an increase in teachers' desire for future promotion and an increase in their sense of organizational fairness.

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Desire for future promotion	0.66***	0.67***	0.54***	0.67***	0.67***	0.26***	0.28***	0.54***
2. Sense of organizational fairness	–	0.55***	0.45***	0.60***	0.54***	0.27***	0.23***	0.36***
3. Empowerment		–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Empowerment components								
4. Feeling respected			–	0.69***	0.65***	0.42***	0.56***	0.65***
5. Professional growth				–	0.80***	0.37***	0.39***	0.62***
6. Decision making					–	0.38***	0.40***	0.67***
7. Autonomy						–	0.50***	0.40***
8. Self-efficacy							–	0.42***
9. Collaboration								–

Table III.
Pearson's correlations between teachers' attitudes toward promotion[a] and their sense of empowerment

Notes: [a]Measured along the dimensions of "desire for promotion" and "sense of organizational fairness"; [b]measured along the dimensions of their sense of empowerment and its components: feeling respected, professional growth, decision making, autonomy, self-efficacy, and collaboration. Pearson's correlations were not measured between empowerment and its components. ***$p < 0.001$

| Predictor variables | Teachers' attitudes to promotion: regression coefficient (β) | | | | | |
| | Personal dimension (desire for promotion) | | | Organizational dimension (sense of organizational fairness) | | |
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Group A[b]	0.83***	0.37*	0.43**	0.52***	0.10	0.13
Group B[b]	0.57***	−0.08	0.12	0.53***	0.09	0.09
Group D[b]	0.05	−0.07	0.11	0.23	0.26***	0.28***
Sense of empowerment		1.29***	1.12***		1.17***	1.01***
Gender (female = 1)			−0.10			−0.06
Age			0.01			0.01
Education (undergraduate degree, 0; graduate degree, 1)			0.08			0.09
Years of experience in education			−0.01			0.001
School level (elementary, 0; secondary, 1)			−0.13***			−0.07
Satisfaction			0.22***			0.22***
Constant	3.79***	−1.07**	−1.66***	3.47***	−0.92***	−1.45***
R^2	0.13	0.49	0.52	0.04	0.31	0.34

Notes: [a]The analysis was performed in three steps (1-3) for each of the personal and organizational dimensions: (1) the effect of professional role (cf. Group C teachers, who do not hold a leadership position but seek promotion into such a position); (2) the additional effect of empowerment; (3) while controlling for demographics and professional background; [b]Group A, teachers who currently hold a leadership position and seek further promotion; Group B, teachers who currently hold a leadership position but do not seek further promotion; Group D, teachers who do not hold a leadership position and do not seek promotion into one. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$

Table IV.
Linear regression[a] to predict teachers' attitudes toward leadership promotion

In the third step, adding demographic and professional background variables to the statistical model did not affect the magnitude or the direction of the professional role and sense of empowerment coefficients. Elementary school teachers were found to express a lower desire for future promotion than secondary school teachers. The effect of all other variables was found to be insignificant.

Discussion and summary
The current study was conducted during a period characterized by international educational reform to improve students' academic achievements and teachers' working conditions, while enhancing the respect accorded to the teaching profession (Collinson *et al.*, 2009). In Israel, these reforms created new roles and new avenues for promotion and advancement, and introduced structured processes for professional development throughout the teacher's career (Avidov-Ungar, 2016).

The current study sought to identify factors that can predict teachers' attitudes toward in-school promotion following the implementation of educational reforms. Teachers' attitudes were analyzed along two dimensions: the personal dimension, which referred to teachers' desire for promotion to a leadership position; and the organizational dimension, which referred to teachers' views regarding the fairness of the promotion process.

The study found that four-fifths of teachers desire promotion to a leadership position and that, overall, they perceive the promotion process as fair. On the basis of Vardi's (1980) OCM and his subsequent research (Baruch and Vardi, 2016), the rest of the study then distinguished between four groups of teachers in terms of their current role and whether they regarded themselves as seeking a leadership position within the school. The resulting concept of professional role adopts a role-related lens to view teachers as those who currently hold a leadership position and either do (Group A) or do not (Group B) seek further promotion, or as teachers who do not hold a leadership position and either do (Group C) or do not (Group D) seek promotion into one.

In the personal dimension, the study findings suggest that the teachers who most desire promotion are Group A teachers (i.e. those who have already been promoted and seek further promotion), whereas the teachers who least desired promotion are Group C teachers (i.e. those who do not hold a leadership position but seek promotion into such a position), so confirming *H2* and also possibly suggests that the desires of Group C teachers relate solely to the long term.

In contrast, in the organizational dimension, teachers who already hold a leadership position (Groups A and B) considered the promotion process fairer than those who did not (Groups C and D), irrespective of whether they seek promotion. Indeed Groups A and B teachers held strongly positive views of the fairness of the promotion process compared with the moderately positive views of other teacher groups. These results imply that holding a leadership position is key to having a strong desire for promotion and for having a strong sense of justice concerning promotion along the managerial track in schools. These findings remained stable even after controlling for teachers' sense of empowerment, backgrounds, and employment variables. Hence, *H1* was confirmed by these findings.

The use of the four professional role categories made it possible to view all of the teachers from this perspective, which served as a point of departure for examining teachers' attitudes toward in-school promotion to leadership positions. This new perspective is interesting in terms of its theoretical implications, as it highlights the significant role played by school principals and policymakers as position creators during times of reform (Hargreaves and Goodson, 2006). The theoretical literature has typically examined teachers' attitudes to promotion in relation to their degree of motivation (Blitz and Modeste, 2015). The current study adds a new perspective in relating not only to the issue of teachers' motivation, but also to their current professional role, which, according to the findings, is a significant factor in the equation.

Another important finding is that teachers' sense of empowerment can explain their attitudes toward future in-school promotion to leadership positions. The findings indicate that the greater teachers' sense of empowerment, the greater their personal desire for promotion and the greater their sense that the promotional process is fair and just. Thus, *H3* was also confirmed. Indeed, sense of empowerment explained approximately 30 percent of the variance in attitudes toward promotion, in both the personal and organizational dimensions. More specifically, Groups A and B teachers (who already hold a leadership position) demonstrated a stronger sense of empowerment than did Groups C and D teachers (who do not), in five of the six empowerment dimensions.

This study shows that, in times of educational reform toward increased school autonomy, when teachers are encountering change and upheaval, along with new opportunities for roles and for taking on new challenges, they are interested in pursuing leadership positions and in using their new role to become a significant part of the change. Simultaneously, a key factor contributing to this attitude toward new opportunities and change is the organizational dimension, which determines whether teachers' feel a sense of empowerment. The current study finds that a sense of empowerment plays an important part in teachers' perceptions of promotion opportunities. Specifically, teachers with a strong sense of personal empowerment generally perceive the organizational dimension, and particularly the extent to which the promotion process is fair and open, in a more positive manner, and therefore seek promotion (Groups A and C) or prefer to maintain their current leadership position while still desiring future promotion (Group B).

Previous studies have demonstrated that a sense of empowerment contributes to high rates of self-confidence, motivation, and willingness to take action (Johnson and Short, 1988; Avidov-Ungar *et al.*, 2014). The current study sheds light on another aspect that is positively affected by empowerment, namely, teachers' attitudes toward in-school promotion. Avidov-Ungar (2016) distinguished between teachers' aspirations for lateral development (i.e. expansion of knowledge, skill repertoire, and responsibility range), and their aspirations for vertical development (i.e. climbing up the hierarchical ladder, whether within the school

framework or beyond). The current study provides further insight into teachers' perceptions of in-school vertical (i.e. managerial) development, in both the personal and the organizational dimensions, and reveals the effects of teachers' current professional role on these perceptions.

The historical analysis conducted by Nir *et al.* (2016) suggested that despite drives to increase school-based management, school-level educators continue to experience limits on their degrees of freedom, which the authors equate with autonomy, and which is one of the six aspects of empowerment examined in this study. Summarizing earlier research, Nir *et al.* state that concerted efforts since the 1990s to increase school autonomy by widening school-based management have had positive effects on teachers' commitment to the profession (albeit negative effects on their commitment to the school and to students' social integration in the classroom, and no effect on their involvement in schools' decision making, which is another aspect of empowerment). More concerted efforts to implement school-based management have been mounted since 2011. Nir (2012) found teachers' increased financial autonomy to be the only positive effect from the introduction of school-based management, and that teachers perceive themselves as having less influence over schooling processes than previously. Three years later, with the educational reforms more deeply established, the current findings suggest that teachers feel empowered, in general, and feel respected, self-efficacious, and autonomous, in particular. Those who already have a managerial stake in the profession have a greater sense of empowerment than colleagues who do not, and sense of empowerment increases together with a desire for managerial promotion, as provided by the increased school autonomy and self-management and widened leadership pyramid enabled and created through the implementation the *Ofek Chadash* and *Oz Letmura* educational reforms.

The findings suggest that policymakers and school principals should seek to create an empowering environment and to develop models to enhance teachers' sense of empowerment, as a resource that motivates, challenges, and encourages vertical professional development. The outcomes of these efforts are expected to help teachers implement educational reforms by giving them a larger stake in them and by increasing their sense of empowerment. The findings have implications for educational policy-making internationally, and particularly in other countries, such as Australia, Canada, England, Finland, Hong Kong, and Singapore, in which there is a national focus on increasing school autonomy (Cheng and Greany, 2016). This study suggests us to further examine the characteristics of the four groups in other contents such as organizational commitments, excellence in teaching, etc.

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