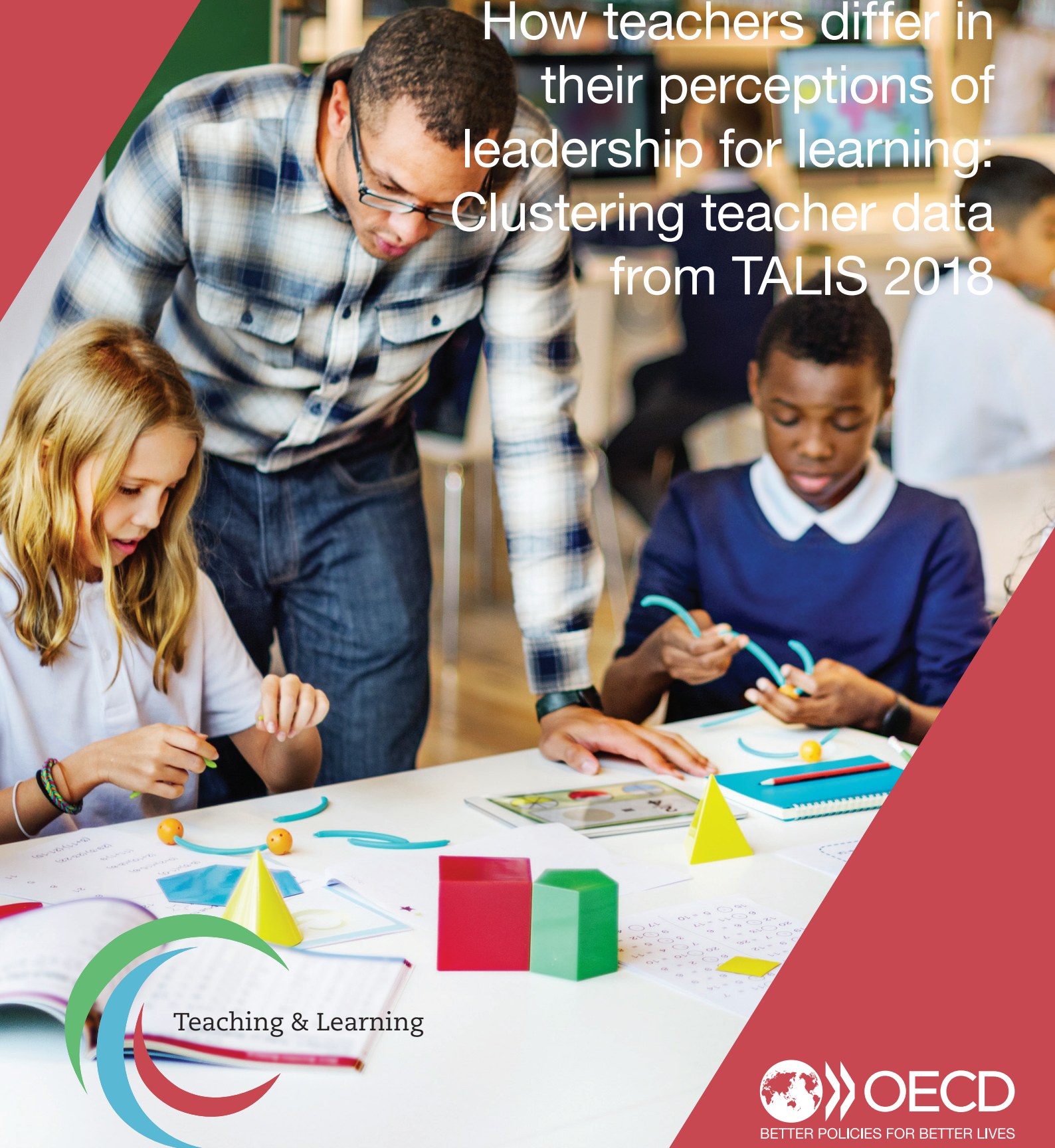



# Teaching in Focus #31

How teachers differ in  
their perceptions of  
leadership for learning:  
Clustering teacher data  
from TALIS 2018



Teaching & Learning

## How teachers differ in their perceptions of leadership for learning: Clustering teacher data from TALIS 2018

- 
- Leadership for learning is defined by five domains of action as measured by TALIS: 1) a focus on learning; 2) monitoring teaching and learning; 3) building nested learning communities; 4) acquiring and allocating resources; and 5) maintaining a safe and effective learning environment.
  - Teachers cluster into three different responder groups when surveyed on these five domains as part of TALIS 2018. On average across the OECD, the majority of teachers (52.4%) have high perceptions of leadership for learning in their schools.
  - Teachers with high perceptions of leadership for learning most often teach in schools where there is agreement in these perceptions across teachers and the principal.
  - On average across the OECD, teachers with the highest perceptions of leadership for learning most often hold a master's degree, are more experienced and have higher job satisfaction in comparison with the other two types of teacher responders.

Teachers' perceptions of their school and the role of leadership, both formal and informal, is an important way of understanding both the focus on instructional improvement in the school and of highlighting areas of potential improvement where teachers may agree with each other and the principal. Importantly, measuring leadership and instructional improvement in schools is not a single conception of good to bad, and does not focus exclusively on curriculum or instruction, but instead takes a more holistic view of how teachers and principals perceive the multiple components of effective schooling.

### What is TALIS?

The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), established in 2008, is the first major international survey of teachers and school leaders on different aspects affecting student learning. It gives a voice to teachers and school leaders, allowing them to provide input into educational policy analysis and development in key areas.

The international target population for TALIS 2018 is lower secondary teachers and their school leaders in mainstream public and private schools. For the 2018 survey, a representative sample of 4 000 teachers and their school principals from 200 schools were randomly selected in each country. Across all survey components, approximately 260 000 teachers responded to the survey, representing more than 8 million teachers in 48 participating countries and economies.

An OECD average is estimated based on the arithmetic average of lower secondary teacher data across the 31 OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS. The report refers to the average teacher "across the OECD" as equivalent shorthand for the average teacher "across the 31 OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS"

More information is available at [www.oecd.org/education/talis](http://www.oecd.org/education/talis).

A strong set of research supports the idea that effective schools align with the five main domains of the theory of leadership for learning: 1) a focus on learning; 2) monitoring teaching and learning; 3) building nested learning communities; 4) acquiring and allocating resources; and 5) maintaining a safe and effective learning environment. For example, teachers in schools that agree that the practices of leadership for learning happen often in their schools note that teachers signal a high response frequency to:

- self-efficacy in improving their practice and student performance
- sharing a common set of beliefs about teaching and learning
- collaborating on planning lessons

- assessing students in similar ways
- receiving feedback often on their practice from peers and the principal
- participating in common professional development
- trusting their colleagues
- receiving mentoring and induction from colleagues or the principal
- engaging with stakeholders, including parents and other teachers
- sharing a common understanding about the discipline climate of the school.

However, up until now, little has been known about how teachers' perceptions may or may not come together (i.e. cluster) globally across these different domains of leadership for learning, or how they may align with those of the school principal. This *Teaching in Focus* brief details the findings from recent research on this topic using the TALIS 2018 survey.

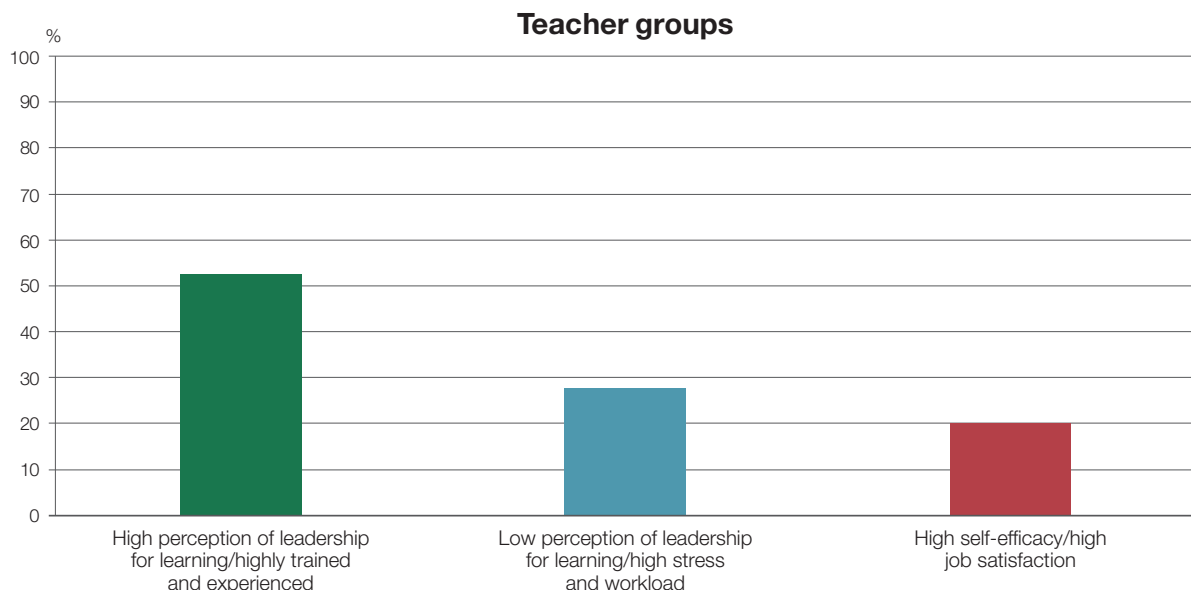
### Three different groups of teacher perception of leadership

The TALIS 2018 survey provides a unique opportunity to explore the similarities and differences in teacher response patterns regarding various issues. Surveys such as TALIS 2018 measure the different levels of how teachers perceive the practices around effective instruction, leadership, and school management, and where teachers differ in their perceptions in comparison with other teachers in their school or with their principal. It highlights specific areas where educators may wish to focus the school's professional development.

On average across responders to the TALIS 2018 survey, teachers cluster into three different groups in terms of their perceptions of leadership for learning:

1. The majority of teachers (52.4%) have high perceptions of leadership for learning in their schools. They are mostly more experienced teachers, hold a master's degree, and have higher job satisfaction. These teachers also more often purposefully chose teaching as their first career choice.
2. The second largest group of teachers (27.7%) report a low perception of a common set of beliefs about teaching and learning, higher assessment and evaluation school climates, and low shared responsibility and opinions of safe and effective schooling environments. These teachers have the highest workload stress and low job satisfaction.
3. The smallest group of teachers (19.9%) report low levels of feedback, high self-efficacy for teaching, a shared academic and discipline climate among teachers in their school, and high professional development and trust. These teachers have the lowest stress, high job satisfaction, are the least experienced, and are more often employed part-time.

Figure 1. Proportion of teacher groups identified by their different perceptions of leadership for learning in TALIS 2018  
Percentage of teacher responders to TALIS 2018



Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, <http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/talis-2018-data.htm>

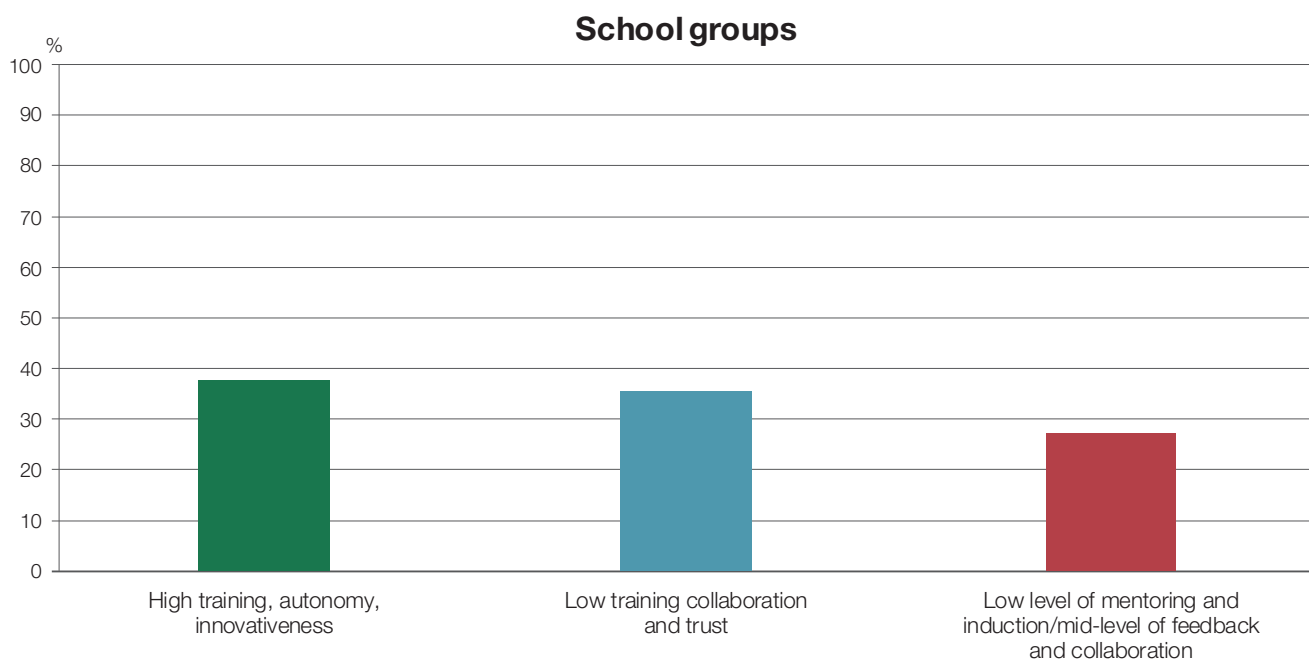
## How the three clusters align in schools and with their principals

Schools can also be organised into three groups based on responses from teachers and principals.

- Teachers in the largest group who have the highest perceptions of leadership for learning most often work in schools with teachers and a principal who share their high perceptions, with 37.6% of schools showing a high alignment between teachers and principals. Principals in these highly aligned schools most often have received training in school leadership, have high levels of autonomy in staffing, budgeting, and instructional policies, and have higher diversity of beliefs about instruction and organisational innovativeness.
- In the second group of schools (35.4% of schools), principals report lower levels of teacher professional collaboration, less feedback to teachers, and lower levels of trust and less emphasis on common focused professional development in the school. More often, these principals have had no training in school administration, but have received training in teacher education and instructional leadership.
- In the third group of schools (27% of schools), principals report moderate levels of feedback to teachers and teacher professional collaboration, but the lowest levels of principal-led mentoring and induction. These principals have received the least amount of training in teacher education and instructional leadership; report the lowest levels of autonomy in staffing, budgeting, and instructional policies; and are most likely to report that a lack of resources is a problem for the school.

Figure 2. Proportion of school groups identified by different perceptions of leadership for learning by teachers and leaders in TALIS 2018

Percent of schools surveyed in TALIS 2018



Source: OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, <http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/talis-2018-data.htm>

At the country/economy level, these three groups of schools are distributed across national contexts in a variety of ways, with different configurations across countries/economies.

Figure 3. Proportion of school groups identified by different perceptions of leadership for learning, TALIS 2018 country and economy



**Note:** The first column represent the proportion of “High training, autonomy and innovativeness” schools. The middle column shows the “Low training and collaboration” schools. The third column shows the “Low levels of mentoring and induction/mid-level of feedback and collaboration”.

**Country/economy abbreviations:** ABA Argentina; ARE United Arab Emirates; AUS Australia; AUT Austria; BEL Belgium; BFL Flemish Belgium; BGR Bulgaria; BRA Brazil; CAB Alberta Canada; CHL Chile; COL Colombia; CSH Shanghai China; CZE Czech Republic; DNK Denmark; ENG England; ESP Spain; EST Estonia; FIN Finland; FRA France; GEO Georgia; HRV Croatia; HUN Hungary; ISL Iceland; ISR Israel; ITA Italy; JPN Japan; KAZ Kazakhstan; KOR Korea; LTU Lithuania; LVA Latvia; MEX Mexico; MLT Malta; NLD Netherlands; NOR Norway; NZL New Zealand; PRT Portugal; ROU Romania; RUS Russia; SAU Saudi Arabia; SGP Singapore; SVK Slovak Republic; SVN Slovenia; SWE Sweden; TUR Turkey; USA United States of America; VNM Viet Nam; ZAF South Africa.

**Source:** OECD, TALIS 2018 Database, <http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/talis-2018-data.htm>

## The bottom line

When surveying teachers on the multiple domains of leadership for learning, teachers cluster into three different patterns of responses correlated with teaching experience, job satisfaction, and workload stress. Examining these clusters of teacher response patterns, and how they relate to the other teachers in the school and the principal, provides a unique way of viewing the school climate around instructional improvement, and allows possible different options for policy or professional development to be considered. Responses across the five domains of leadership for learning are not high to low, but vary in important ways, with the clusters of response patterns highlighting that different teachers, principals, and schools may need different support or policies. Teachers from one cluster may respond quite differently to policy or professional development in comparison to teachers from a different cluster. Considering these differences may be helpful for creating informative and tailored policy and professional development within specific national and economic contexts. This study demonstrates interesting patterns across nations and, thus, individual education systems can use these results to reflect on the design of national level teacher continuing professional development approaches by looking at the distribution of teachers across the different cluster groups identified in relation to other national contexts of interest.

[www.oecd.org/education/talis/](http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/)

### Contact

Alex Bowers ([Bowers@exchange.tc.columbia.edu](mailto:Bowers@exchange.tc.columbia.edu)) and [talis@oecd.org](mailto:talis@oecd.org)

### For more information

Bowers, A. (2020), "Examining a congruency-typology model of leadership for learning using two-level latent class analysis with TALIS 2018" *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 219, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://doi.org/10.1787/c963073b-en>. This whitepaper report describes the patterns of responses in-depth across the different groups of teachers and schools.

Halverson, R. and C. Kelley, (2017), *Mapping Leadership: The Tasks that Matter for Improving Teaching and Learning in Schools*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA. This book reviews the research on leadership for learning as it applies for teachers and principals.

This paper is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and the arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to [rights@oecd.org](mailto:rights@oecd.org).

