

Relationship Between High School Principals' Transformational Leadership and Psychological Empowerment

Fereshteh Ganjali and Vali Mehdinezhad

Faculty of Education and Psychology, University of Sistan and Baluchestan,
University Boulevard, P.O. Box 8155-987, Zahedan, Iran

Abstract: The main objective of this research is to explain the high school principal's relationship between transformational leadership with psychological empowerment. This is a descriptive and correlational study which was carried out on 103 principals of high school (51 females and 52 males). Sampling method included stratified sampling proportional to the size and simple random sampling. To collect the data, Bass and Avolio's Transformational Leadership and principal's psychological empowerment of Spreitzer were used. Analysis of survey data was done by calculating frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, correlation coefficient test and stepwise regression coefficient test. The results showed that among a series of seven transformational leadership factors except for leadership that is based on non-interference which is used at an average level, the principals use other factors including: inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, contingent reward, personal considerations and management by exception at a high level, respectively. In the case of psychological empowerment variable, the mean scores of principals at all dimensions were placed in the range of high. In this regard, the dimensions of meaning and concept, ability, job satisfaction, the selection and effect obtained the highest mean, respectively. The results also showed that there was a relatively significant positive relationship between idealized influence and inspirational motivation factors of transformational leadership and all aspects of psychological empowerment. In general, there was a significant relationship between the two variables ($r = 0.382$). Regression test showed that the two factors of inspirational motivation and idealized influence together could predict 23.4% of changes in the psychological empowerment of principals.

Key words: Transformational leadership, psychological empowerment, high school, principal, Iran

INTRODUCTION

Today's business environment is formed in organizations' major concern for the survival and development and comprehensive progress. Major sources of each organization is its human resources, financial and technical resources and that human capital determines the direction of other capitals. Because, it is human resource that has employed other sources with its ability and planning. Empowerment is as a known tool that provides the potential capacities to exploit the human ability which is not used completely (Blanchard *et al.*, 1999). The leadership has historically been one of the pillars of human society. When leadership is considered as a function, then it becomes an important component of management and its existence and presence depends on the application of some skills and that these skills can be deemed as ways or leadership style of individuals in order to achieve specific goals (Bennett and Anderson, 2003). Transformational Leadership Theory seek to consider

factors that internally motivate individuals. One of the motivational theories is transformational theory (Kanter, 1983). Static leadership and management can't take a long time, it is either sinks with wave or this management and leadership ship, remains mired in the mud and finally the views of many other theorists such as Toffler, Schwann in 1971 and Brinkman in 1993 also suggests that today's organizations are not able to stop the pace of changes but can only optimally adapt with the doubts, fluctuations and insecurities in opportunities to learn. To deal with this uncertain environment and constant changes, the need for people in leadership roles is sorely felt. Obviously, the traditional leadership in the Third Millennium will not continue and the world needs to have transformational leaders. Transformational leadership is as a paradigm of leadership in organizational psychology (Ansari and Teimouri, 2003).

In fact, transformational leadership is a conscious moral and spiritual process that builds the identical patterns of power relations between leaders and followers

to achieve a collective goal or real transformation. The transformational leadership is a process of creating commitment to organizational goals and empowerment of followers to achieve those goals. Empowerment is a process through which managers help employees to gain the necessary power to decide on matters relating to themselves and their work (Chang and Liu, 2008). Psychological empowerment is defined as a set of psychological states and is concentrated on how do employees feel about their work and gain experience and how much they believe their role and influence in the organization and makes employees to have a sense of confidence and desire to succeed.

Moye and Henkin (2006) believe that there is a close relationship between capability and change management and managers need to develop creative ideas gain the support of the subordinates and finally lead members to the teamwork and common goal. These two researchers believe that empowerment is the missing link of such relationship, in their opinion, empowering is a learning and relationship tool as well as a mediate between learners and also technology-based environment that aims to promote the learner's ability to achieve a full understanding and control of personal, social and environmental power, through which learners may increase their role in individual and group learning opportunities and this approach is completely consistent with the studies of Thomas and Velthouse (1990). Managers should examine empowering from different angles. They should be quite familiar with the concept. Most managers think they are familiar with the concept of empowerment, while only a limited number of them are familiar with the concept and its application (Blanchard *et al.*, 1999).

Akeel and Indra (2013) in a study entitled as the role of transformational leadership style on the motivation of public sector employees in Libya and concluded that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership style and motivation of employees. Chaudhry *et al.*, (2012) in a study entitled as the impact of transformational and interactivity leadership style on the motivation of the employees in Pakistan, concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between interactive and transformational leadership style and motivation of employees. Nezhad (2004) in a study entitled the effect of perceived organizational justice on motivation of employees in Iranian Chinese factory (IRNA) concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between organizational justice and motivation of employees.

Cheung *et al.* (2011) in their study entitled as psychological capital as a mediator variable of the relationship between emotional labor and job burnout and satisfaction of teachers in Chinese schools found that

Table 1: Characteristics of the population sample

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	52	50.5
Female	51	49.5
Age		
-35	21	20.4
36-40	29	28.2
41-45	36	35.0
+45	17	16.5
Degrees		
Associate degree	21	20.4
Bachelor	70	68.0
Masters	12	11.7
Experience		
1-5	31	30.1
5-10	35	34.0
11-15	23	22.3
16-20	14	13.6

psychological capital can be considered as a moderator of the relationship of emotional labor, job burnout and satisfaction to Shapira and Tsemach (2014) in their article entitled as psychological empowerment as a mediator of the relationship between teachers' perceptions of authentic leadership and citizenship behaviors found that psychological empowerment and each of its components have a mediating role between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior and can communicate between authentic leadership and citizenship behaviors of teachers. The main objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership with psychological empowerment of principals. In this regard, the following questions were examined:

- How is the principals' status in terms of making use of transformational leadership and psychological empowerment
- What is the relationship between the seven factors of transformational leadership of five dimensions of psychological empowerment of principals
- Which of the factors of transformational leadership better predict the psychological empowerment of principals

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this study, the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment is examined. Research methods is descriptive and correlational. The study population consisted of 141 high school principals in Zahedan (Iran). In the meantime, 103 people were selected randomly as the sample using Morgan table. Characteristics of the sample population are shown in Table 1. To gather the data, the transformational leadership of Bass and Avolio (1990) which contains 21 items and seven components of idealism, inspiration, intellectual capital, personal considerations, contingent rewards and free management

were measured. To get answers in this questionnaire 5-item Likert measuring scale-Never to always is used. Range of points for each of these variables include: high = 11-15, average = 6-10 and low = 1-5.

To assess the psychological empowerment of principals, the psychological empowerment scale of Spreitzer was used. The questionnaire consisted of four components (measuring ability, choice, effect and job satisfaction) and has 15 items with 5-Likert scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The range of points for each dimensions of this variable were as follows: 11-15 = high, medium = 6-10 and low = 1-5. Items of this questionnaire will determine that how far each principal does accept the organizational aims and values and how much is he willing for extra effort for the success of the organization and how much is he interested to continue membership in the organization.

Results of the studies on transformational leadership questionnaire indicate high validity and reliability of the questionnaire. The results showed that the questionnaire has the necessary validity. In addition, the results of using the statistical criterion of item analysis also indicate the validity of the questionnaire. Test-retest method was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The correlation between the first order and the second order of each person was calculated using Pearson correlation coefficient and regression which shows the acceptable reliability of the questionnaire. In addition, calculation of Cronbach's alpha for questions related to transformational leadership obtained 0.78. Results related to validity and reliability of the psychological empowerment was studied by many researchers. Spreitzer using Cronbach's alpha and test-retest determined the reliability of the questionnaire and that the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient in a case of an industrial organization was reported 0.72 and in another case of an insurance office 0.62 and the test-retest reliability coefficient in the organizational case 0.92 and in insurance office is reported 0.80. In this study, using Cronbach's alpha, reliability coefficient obtained 0.81. So, all these cases indicate the appropriate and acceptable reliability and validity of the questionnaire. To analyze research data, calculation of the frequencies, percentages, correlation coefficient and stepwise regression coefficient is used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Question 1: How is the status of principals in terms of making use of transformational leadership and psychological empowerment? (Table 2). The results of Table 2 shows that among a series of seven

transformational leadership except for leadership that is based on non-interference which is used at an average level ($M = 8.18$), the principals use other factors including: inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, contingent reward, personal considerations and management by exception at a high level. In the case of psychological empowerment variable, the mean scores of principals at all dimensions were placed in the range of high. In this regard, the dimensions of meaning and concept, ability, job satisfaction, the selection and effect obtained the highest mean, respectively.

Question 2: What is the relationship between the seven factors of transformational leadership of five dimensions of psychological empowerment of principals? (Table 3). In explaining the relationship between seven factors of transformational leadership and five dimensions of psychological empowerment of principals, the results indicated that there is a relatively significant positive relationship between the factors of idealized influence and inspirational motivation of transformational leadership and all aspects of psychological empowerment ($r = 0.224 - 0.326$). In explaining the relationship between other factors of transformational leadership and dimensions of psychological empowerment, we observed a significant positive relationship between intellectual stimulation with the dimensions of effect and job satisfaction; contingent reward with selection and effect and leadership based on non-interference with the selection dimension. No significant relationship was observed between individual considerations and management by exception and empowerment psychological dimensions.

Question 3: Which of the factors of transformational leadership better predict the psychological empowerment of principals? (Table 4). As the results of the show, in the first step the inspirational motivation factor had the most prediction of psychological empowerment of principals. This variable alone has predicted more than 19% changes in psychological empowerment of principals. In the second step, the idealized influence is entered into the prediction model and these two variables together have been able to predict the 23.4 percent of changes in psychological empowerment of principals. In fact, idealized influence factor alone predicted 3.4% of changes. Standard beta coefficient indicates that in the regression equation, the inspirational motivation factor has beta coefficient 0.437 and idealized influence factor has a beta coefficient 0.251 which are both significant at 0.99 ($p < 0.01$).

Table 2: Status of principals in terms of making use of transformational leadership and psychological empowerment (N=103)

Variables	Psychological empowerment		Variables	Transformational leadership	
	Mean	SD		Mean	SD
Idealized influence	11.2524	2.09911	Meaning	12.5437	2.16377
Inspirational motivation	11.3883	2.04955	Competence	11.9515	2.21571
Intellectual stimulation	11.1553	1.93906	Choice	11.0971	2.33689
Individualized consideration	10.5825	2.07942	Impact	10.8155	2.35874
Contingent reward	10.7573	2.05066	Job satisfaction	11.1650	2.71559
Management-by-exception	10.1748	2.41899	P.E (Total)	57.5728	8.02399
Laissez-faire leadership	8.1845	2.74308			
T.L (Total)	73.4951	9.78081			

Table 3: The relationship between the seven factors of transformational leadership of five dimensions of psychological empowerment of principals (N = 103)

Transformational leadership	Psychological empowerment					
	Meaning	Competence	Choice	Impact	Job satisfaction	P.E. (Total)
Idealized influence (r)	0.246*	0.224*	0.371**	0.263**	0.309**	0.418**
Inspirational motivation (r)	0.326**	0.300**	0.262**	0.323**	0.281**	0.437**
Intellectual stimulation (r)	0.066	0.130	0.126	0.261**	0.200*	0.235*
Individualized consideration (r)	0.088	0.147	0.109	0.164	0.052	0.162
Contingent reward (r)	0.118	0.116	0.310**	0.364**	0.199*	0.328**
Management-by-exception (r)	0.083	0.210*	0.167	0-.053	0-1.70	0.056
Laissez-faire leadership (r)	0.087	0.150	0.323**	0-.027	0.055	0.132
T.L (Total) (r)	0.222*	0.286**	0.380**	0.267**	0.160	0.382**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 4: Prediction of the psychological empowerment of principals through factors of transformational leadership

Model	R	R ²	Adj.R ²	F-value	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	t-value	Sig.
1	0.437 ^a	0.191	0.183	23.844	0.000	1.711	0.350	0.437	4.883	0.000
2	0.484 ^b	0.234	0.219	5.613	0.020	1.155	0.415	0.295	2.782	0.006
						0.961	0.405	0.251	2.369	0.020

^aPredictors: Inspirational motivation; ^bPredictors: Inspirational motivation+Idealized influence

CONCLUSION

Psychological empowerment is a popular and desirable issue in every organization and institution so that each individual as a member of an organization, in favorable conditions and facilities is looking to increase their capabilities. Also, Education Office officials are looking for psychological empowerment of principals and in case of its realization they get very happy because it will be followed by the growth of the organization and followers satisfaction. The organization also will have better performance in case of having capable principals and will be able to better adapt to changes and compete. Obviously the characteristics and factors that can lead to the empowerment of principals have always been considered. The results of the present study showed that there is a significant positive relationship between the transformational leadership and its components with psychological empowerment of principals in Zahedan. The findings of this study is consistent with the results of other researchers including Zaeimipour (2004), Luthans *et al.* (2007) and Thomas and Velthouse (1990). Zaeimipour (2004) in his study showed that we can increase employees' empowerment through changing the behavior of principals. The results of the present

study are consistent with those of Spreitzer, Spreitzer in his review of psychological empowerment of employees concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between self-confidence (self-efficacy), access to information about the organization's goals, job performance and innovative behaviors of employees with psychological empowerment. Also, Luthans *et al.* (2007) showed in their theory that there is a direct relationship between the effect of hope in employees and the individual performance and organization's profitability.

Thomas and Velthouse (1990) during their studies found that empowered employees who have higher levels of focus, creativity and flexibility play an essential role in empowerment and smoothing its path. Principals' employment of the psychological asset is a crucial factor affecting important working outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, citizenship behaviors and tendency to leave work. By help of mental capabilities, the principals can have a better treatment with their colleagues. These relationships with a higher quality, create emotional attachment, a sense of commitment and responsibility, so they improve performance and lead to an increase in job motivation and in other words psychological empowerment.

Transformational leaders emphasize on the tasks that principals are involved in their jobs. It appears that based on these results and through empowerment of principals, transformational leaders can show their confidence in the ability of their followers and then provide opportunities for them to significantly affect their work which can lead to higher levels of commitment to the organization.

REFERENCES

- Akeel, A. and D. Indra, 2013. The role of transformation leadership style in motivating public sector employees in Libya. *Aust. J. Basic Appl. Sci.*, 7: 99-108.
- Ansari, M.E. and H. Teimouri, 2003. Management of transformation. *Tadbir Mon.*, 18: 174-189.
- Bass, B.M. and B.J. Avolio, 1990. Developing transformational leadership: 1992 and beyond. *J. Eur. Ind. Training*, 14: 21-27.
- Bennett, N. and L. Anderson, 2003. *Rethinking Educational Leadership: Challenging the Conventions*. Sage Publication, London, UK., ISBN: 9780761949251, Pages: 206.
- Blanchard, H., L. Kodandapani, P.R.E. Mittl, D.S. Marco and J.K. Krebs *et al.*, 1999. *Enabling Management of Employees*. Modiran Publication, Tehran, Iran.
- Chang, L.C. and C.H. Liu, 2008. Employee empowerment, innovative behavior and job productivity of public health nurses: A cross-sectional questionnaire survey. *Int. J. Nurs. Stud.*, 45: 1442-1448.
- Chaudhry, A.Q., H. Javed and M. Sabir, 2012. The impact of transformational and transactional leadership styles on the motivation of employees in Pakistan. *Pak. Econ. Soc. Rev.*, 50: 223-231.
- Cheung, F., C.S.K. Tang and S. Tang, 2011. Psychological capital as a moderator between emotional labor, burnout and job satisfaction among school teachers in China. *Int. J. Stress Manage.*, 18: 348-371.
- Kanter, R.M., 1983. *The Change Masters: Innovation for Productivity in the American Corporation*. Simon and Schuster, New York.
- Luthans, F., C.M. Youssef and B.J. Avolio, 2007. *Psychological Capital: Developing the Human Competitive Edge*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK., Pages: 246.
- Moye, M.J. and A.B. Henkin, 2006. Exploring associations between employee empowerment and interpersonal trust in managers. *J. Manage. Dev.*, 25: 101-117.
- Nezhad, A.R.M., 2004. The relationship between organizational justice and motivation of employees, case study of the Iran Chinese factory company. MBA Thesis, University of Science and Culture, Tehran, Iran.
- Shapira, L.O. and S. Tsemach, 2014. Psychological empowerment as a mediator between teachers perceptions of authentic leadership and their withdrawal and citizenship behaviors. *Educ. Admin. Q.*, 20: 41-50.
- Thomas, K.W. and B.A. Velthouse, 1990. Cognitive elements of empowerment: An interpretive model of intrinsic task motivation. *Acad. Manage. Rev.*, 15: 666-681.
- Zaeimipour, K.M., 2004. The effect of training-group technique in nursing management development on nurse managers leadership styles and the nursing staff empowerment. MSc Thesis, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran.