

The Relationship between Principal's Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Styles in Primary Schools

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Abstract: There are various studies done on relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership, only a few of them were took part in educational organizations by focusing on view point of the Bass & Avolio's leadership styles and Bar-On's theory of emotional intelligence. This research made an attempt to prepare an empirical research-evidence for supporting the proposed link between school principal's emotional intelligence and leadership styles. Collected data (n=268) were analyzed by using the Pearson's correlation coefficient. The result indicated statistically significant relationship between principal's emotional intelligence and leadership styles. This significant relationship resulted that the higher level of the principal's emotional intelligence is linked to the transformational leadership style. In contrast, transactional and laissez-fair leadership styles were not positive associated with emotional intelligence. Consequently, school programmer should be focused on the especial training methods to enhance principal's emotional intelligence level whereby they can develop the transformational leadership style qualities. These development qualities concerns about transforming the present condition and followers requirements.

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1. Introduction

In the 21st century, a significant amount of research and attention has been given to identifying relationship between emotional intelligence regarding leadership (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2003) and leadership styles (Boss, 1990; Golman, 1998). Emotional intelligence has gained much popularity as an absolute necessity for effective leadership (Sosik & Megerian, 1999; Anand & Udaya Suriyan, 2010).

Effective leaders have a quality that sets them apart from ineffective leadership; they have the ability to understand why people do what they do when they do it (Hartley, 2004). This ability is called emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is so important in the work environment because the ability to gauge oneself and one's coworkers emotionally fosters the necessary social skills to succeed in a professional context (Dong & Howard, 2006; Ruestow, 2008). Human service leaders with a high level of emotional intelligence demonstrated less subjective stress and better physical and psychological well-being (Ogińska-Bulik, 2005). In addition, researchers have revealed that managers with high emotional intelligence obtain results from employees that are beyond expectations, developing and using talents crucial for organizational effectiveness (Barbuto & Burbach, 2006; Anand & Udaya Suriyan, 2010). With this in mind, and the increased popularity of emotional intelligence, researchers began to study the connection between

emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness (Golman, 1998; Golman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2002; and Caruso & Salovey, 2002). Dulewicz and Higgs (2003) identified common emotional intelligence elements that have been linked to effective leadership characteristics. Moreover, close to ninety percent of success in leadership positions is attributable to emotional intelligence (Chen, Jacobs, and Spencer, 1998; Anand & Udaya Suriyan, 2010). The leadership characteristics have been described by Boss (1990a, b) into three well-known styles of leadership; Laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership. Any leader can use any style, and a good mix that is customized to the situation is generally the most effective approach.

According to McColl-Kennedy (2002) the style of leaders is a considerable function as a particular important in achieving organizational goals. Leadership style refers to a leader's behavior (Boss, 1999). The leader's style is also considerable important in being able to evoke performance among subordinates (Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Zacharatos, Barling & Kelloway, 2000; Berson, Shamair, Avolio & Popper, 2001) and as playing a key role in developing effective behaviors for mentors (McColl-Kennedy, 2002). In an organization, Leaders expected to feel and display emotion (McColl-Kennedy, 2002) and emotional intelligence contributes to effective leadership in organizations (George, 2000). Emotionally

intelligence leaders know how to manage their disruptive emotions so that they can keep their focus, thinking clearly under pressure (Golman, 2002). By studying the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership styles, research aimed to contribute to the leadership literature and to test emotional intelligence applications for leadership.

Carmeli (2003) pointed out that the literature suggests that managerial skills in general and emotional intelligence in particular, play a significant role in the success of senior managers in workplace.

Chi and colleagues (2007) have been aimed to study the relationship among leadership styles and emotional intelligence affected to salespeople's job performance. Results showed that emotional intelligence of salespeople was moderating the relationship between leadership styles and job performance. However, the relation between leadership styles and job performance that moderated by emotional intelligence was significant negative correlate, can assumed that salespeople need to be more recognize and concentrate by leader as used transformational leadership styles, not only exchanged reward to attain the goals as transactional leadership styles.

Connelly and Ruark (2010) have been argued that leader emotional displays are important to consider both within and outside of transformational/charismatic paradigms and must look beyond positive and negative affect. Accordingly, they examined the effects of emotion valence as moderated by leadership style (transformational vs. transactional) on follower satisfaction, evaluations of the leader, and creative task performance. Findings showed differential effects of positive and negative emotions for different leader styles for evaluations of transformational leadership and leader effectiveness and for follower performance. Additionally, positive emotions with higher-activating potential resulted in more desirable outcomes than those lower in activating potential, but the reverse was true for negative emotions.

Charbonneau and Nicol (2002) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership in adolescents group. Their study results demonstrated that some aspects of emotional intelligence are associated with leadership in adolescents. They concluded that managers who scored high on the Bar-on (1997)'s emotional intelligence inventory were perceived by their subordinates as displaying more transformational leadership behaviors.

Mandell & Pherwani (2003) examined the predictive relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership style. A significant predictive relationship ($p \leq .05$) was found

between transformational leadership style and emotional intelligence. Lastly, no significant difference ($p > .05$) was found in the transformational leadership scores of male and female managers.

Palmer and his colleagues (2001) stated, emotional intelligence has fast become popular as a means for identifying potentially effective leaders and as a tool for nurturing effective leadership skills. Their findings indicate that EI may be an underlying competency of transformational leadership style.

Barling and colleagues (2000) Investigated whether emotional intelligence (EQ) is associated with use of transformational leadership in managers. They showed that three aspects of transformational leadership (i.e. idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration) and constructive transactions differed according to level of emotional intelligence. In contrast, active and passive management and laissez faire management were not associated with emotional intelligence.

Goleman and colleagues (2002) have argued that emotional intelligence is crucial component of leadership effectiveness, particularly as leader deal with teams. Emotionally intelligent leaders serve as a transformational influence over team members.

Sivanathan and Fekken (2002) resulted that the followers perceived leaders with high emotional intelligence as more effective and transformational. They found that emotional intelligence conceptually and empirically linked to transformational leadership behaviors. Hence, they concluded that having high emotional intelligence increased one's transformational leadership behaviors.

2. Material and method

This study employed a correlational cross-sectional quantitative survey design as it defines the relationship between the primary school principal's emotional intelligence and leadership styles. According to Smith and Glass (1987), such an approach provides the researcher with information regarding not only the direction of the relationship between two variables, but also the magnitude of the relationship.

The sample population of research consisted of all primary school (337 schools)'s principals in Golestan-Iran during 2010-2011 school years. Principals were identified as individuals who worked within educational organization and lead teachers. About 300 principals considered as real sample size. Then, based on real sample size and proportional fraction of principals of the cities within area study, principal sample sizes of the cities were computed.

The quantitative data for the study was gathered utilizing; 1) the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQi) (Bar-On, 1997) to ascertain the emotional intelligence of the school Principals, 2) the

leadership behaviors (Bass, 1990a,b) to ascertain the well-known styles of principal's leadership. Then, collected data (n=268; male=126, female=142) were used in the analysis process. The Pearson's correlation coefficient and Guilford's rule of thumb ($r < .20$; negligible, $r = .20$ to $.40$; Low, $r = .40$ to $.70$; moderate, $r = .70$ to $.9$; high, $r > .90$; very high relationship) were used for determining the strength and direction (positive or negative) of the relationships between two metric variables such as; IV= principals' emotional intelligence and DV=leadership styles. Pearson's method and Guilford's rule no indication is reflected on the significance of the relationship. Hence, t-test statistical method applied to analysis differences between groups of subjects.

3. Results

The result of the statistical analysis of the hypothesis testing done with the aim of defining the relationship between emotional intelligence-its subscales and different leadership styles-its sub-scales are stated as follows.

Table 1 shows the results from testing of the hypothesis of the research by using the Pearson's statistical method. The result indicated a statistically significant relationship between principal's emotional intelligence and leadership styles at 99% ($p < .01$) of the confidence level. This significant relationship is positive-high magnitude, between principal's emotional intelligence and transformational leadership style ($r = .765^{**}$, $p < .01$), negative-moderate magnitude between principal's emotional intelligence and transactional leadership style ($r = -.555^{**}$, $p < .01$), and negative-low relationship between principal's emotional intelligence and laissez - faire style ($r = -.334^{**}$, $p < .01$). It is concluded that most of the components of emotional intelligence have significant moderate-positive relationship with the

transformational leadership components (Table 1). Findings is confirmed the Megerian and Sosik (1996)'s theoretical linkage between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership style. In addition, it is supported by Robbins (2001) and Anand (2010) "an important component of transformational theories of leadership is the emotionally appealing aspect of leader behaviour". Moreover, Results is also supported by Charbonneau (2002) and Sivanathan and Fekken (2002) and Goleman and colleagues (2002)'s study that principals who got high emotional intelligence were displayed more transformational leadership behaviors. In contrast, active and passive management and laissez faire management were not associated with emotional intelligence. In other words, the emotional intelligence components and total (TEQ) has significant negative correlation with transactional components and laissez-faire leadership styles. This research finding is supported by Barling and colleagues (2000), "Management-by-exception active and passive and laissez faire management were not associated with emotional intelligence".

Finally, the result of the analysis indicated that the higher level of the principal's emotional intelligence is linked to the principal's transformational leadership style and principals with lower level of emotional intelligence are linked to laissez-faire style of leadership. In other word, a principal who shows a high level of emotional intelligence more like to display positive response to transformational style of leadership. In addition, the emotional intelligence level helps transformational principals to think positive in their attitude which in turn makes them to feel comfortable with their work relationships. Moreover, the good relationship with more experience makes the principals to express their thoughts and ideas clearly.

Table 1: Pearson's correlation coefficient between principal's emotional intelligence (EQi) and different leadership styles

Subscales Emotional intelligence	IP	IAP	SM	AD	GM	TEQ
Leadership styles						
Idealized Influence (attributed)	.506**	.502**	.557**	.478**	.453**	.670**
Idealized Influence (behavior)	.458**	.439**	.410**	.393**	.386**	.554**
Inspirational Motivation	.435**	.419**	.451**	.412**	.380**	.558**
Intellectual stimulation	.439**	.441**	.473**	.409**	.412**	.580**
Individualized consideration	.442**	.400**	.499**	.438**	.519**	.613**
Transformational Leadership	.585**	.570**	.616**	.547**	.553**	.765**
Contingent reward	-.351**	-.340**	-.204**	-.312**	-.295**	-.397**
Management-by-exception (active)	-.338**	-.313**	-.400**	-.255**	-.365**	-.447**
Management-by-exception (passive)	-.226**	-.197**	-.299**	-.166**	-.235**	-.301**
Transactional leadership	-.445**	-.414**	-.432**	-.358**	-.433**	-.555**
Laissez - Faire	-.264**	-.395**	-.204**	-.207**	-.183**	-.334**

IP=interpersonal, IAP=intrapersonal, SM=stress management, AD=adaptability, GM=general mood, TEQ=Total Emotional Intelligence, **=correlation is significant at .01 level

4. Conclusion

The aim of this study is to determine the relationship between the emotional intelligence level of primary school principals and their different leadership styles. Although it is stated that there is an important relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership behaviors, any research trying to determine this relationship for primary school principals has not been made. Therefore, it is important to determine the relationship between these two variables in schools. Principals are individuals who worked within educational organization and lead teachers. In addition, the principal is typically the person held accountable for all decisions within a school. Moreover, there is relationship between the effective leadership behaviors and academic success of school. Accordingly, success is higher in schools where principal's emotional intelligence is developed. One of the important subjects affected by emotional intelligence is behavioral styles of leaders. According to the results got from this research, as long as the level of primary school principal's emotional intelligence and its sub-scales increase, it becomes an increase tendency also in transformational leadership style. In other word, principals with high level of emotional intelligence would like to behave transformational styles and with low level of emotional intelligence would like to show transactional and laissez – faire styles in their behaviors as a leader of schools. Results of this research is supported by Charbonneau (2002)'s study that principals who scored high on the Bar-on's emotional intelligence were perceived by their subordinates as displaying more transformational leadership behaviors. Consequently, principals working in the schools need the emotional intelligence skills to work more effectively to important knowledge to their teachers as well as to maintain a cordial relationship with others in the school. This gives a training idea about the relevance of emotional intelligence and leadership styles in the schools. Therefore, educational programmers should be thinking about the especial training methods to enhance level of the principals' emotional Intelligence whereby they can improve leadership qualities.

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