

Gender Differences in Transformational Leadership Behaviors of School Principals and Teachers' Academic Effectiveness

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to empirically investigate the gender differences in the transformational leadership behaviors of school principals and its impact on teachers' academic effectiveness. On the basis of literature four transformational leadership behaviors (idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized considerations & inspirational motivation) proposed by Bass in 1985 were selected to assess the gender differences in principals' transformational leadership behaviors. Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5x-short form leaders & rater forms) was administered over 250 school principals and 2300 teachers from private and public secondary schools. The study reported no significant gender difference in practicing transformational leadership behaviors and found significant negative relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and teachers' academic effectiveness.

Keywords: Gender differences, Transformational leadership behaviors, Teachers' academic effectiveness

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Introduction

Schools' poor academic performance is a most prevalent academic issue in Pakistan. Every year the schools are facing decline in their academic performance. Although there are numerous factors associated with schools' academic performance but the school principals' leadership behavior is one of them. Leadership is defined as the process of influence to motivate a group of people towards the achievement of common goals. Several researches have been conducted to see how people are unique in adopting a specific leadership style. For the last few decades, the gender is the most researched area to see how men and women are different in adopting a particular leadership style and behaviors, e.g. Kim and Shim (2003) found female leaders adopt distinct leadership style.

The research conducted till late 1900s by the social and management psychologists (e.g, Nmark, 1993; Hollender, 1992; Bass, 1996; Jogulu & Wood, 2006) disapproved the pervasive gender difference in leadership effectiveness. A lot of research confusion exists because of multiple findings and conclusions as Powel (1990), Rosener (1990) and Bass, (1997) started questioning their own previous work that reported no gender differences exist in leadership behaviors and their effectiveness. Therefore, it has become imperative to investigate how men and women differ in their leadership behaviors and effectiveness to reduce the level of confusion and gender inequality on leadership positions. Although the research has contributed much in improving the situation in developed countries like USA, UK, Japan, China and many others where the women are found more qualified and proved as effective leaders than men (Schein, 2007) but still the inequalities exist even in developed countries(US Department of Labor, 2002). Several explanations have been given by the researchers and one of them is the less explored area in developing countries (Patel & Buiting, 2013) especially in Pakistan this area is still in big gap and situation is worst as the women is the largest proportion of the country's population. Therefore, in depth research is required to eliminate the stereotyped perception about ineffectiveness of women as leaders. No doubt such type of efforts will contribute in decreasing the gender inequality.

Statement of the Problem

Principals as school leaders are considered the key to the success of the school. Their success greatly depends upon the teachers' academic effectiveness and research has proved leadership behaviors as one of the most influential factors in this context. Although ample research is available on different approaches of leadership styles but gender differences in transformational leadership behaviors is scarcely explored. To improve the leadership practices of the school principals this area needs in depth research to increase the teachers' academic effectiveness

Objectives of the Study

Following are the objectives of this study

1. To identify the gender differences in school principals' transformational leadership behaviors.
2. To identify the relationship between gender differences in principals' transformational leadership behaviors and teachers' academic effectiveness

Hypothesis

- H₀1: There is no significant gender difference in the self-perception of the school principals for transformational leadership behaviors
- H₀ 2: There is no significant difference between the self-perception of school principals and teachers' perceptions for transformational leadership behaviors of their principals.
- H₀ 3: There is no relationship between the gender differences of school principals' transformational leadership behaviors and teachers' academic effectiveness

Literature Review

There is ample research data available, that female leaders practice diverse leadership behaviors than male leaders (Grant, 1988; Kabacoff & Stoffey, 2001; Karau & Eagly, 1999; Kim & Shim, 2003; Eagly, Alice, Mary. Johannesen, & Van Engen, 2003). Few researches, conducted in Germany found no gender differences in leadership style and their effectiveness (Fortune, 2007; Mohr & Wolfrom, 2008). While in a study conducted by Burke, and Collins (2001) concluded that male leaders are more effective than female leaders. The research conducted till late 1900s found no significant difference in effectiveness of female and male leadership behaviors but in later years the significant researchers e.g. Powell (1990), Rosener, (1990) and Bass, (1997) started questioning their own work and research confusion was identified for in-depth investigations. This confusion initiated an ongoing debate on the different leadership behaviors adopted by male and female leaders and their effectiveness.

Mckensey in (2007) explored that the companies and business organizations that have a large percentage of females in their top leadership and management positions tend to experience greater positive impact on financial performance as well as organizational effectiveness. Women are reported as more democratic participative and transformational than men (Trinidad, Anthony, & Normore, 2004) because of their gender stereotyped perception of being more sensitive, sincere diplomatic and communicative (Olssan & Walker, 2003).

Transformational Leadership Behaviors and Gender Differences

Transformational leader stimulates the employees for dramatic changes by raising their higher order needs and motivate them for the outshining performance beyond expectations. They present themselves as role models and gain followers trust, confidence by empowering employees and raising their potentials (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Following are the five transformational leadership behaviors identified and explained by Bass and Avolio (1990).

1. **Idealized Influence** is one of the most prominent behaviors of the transformational leaders expressed by acting as role model which enhanced their trust and integrity for the employees or subordinates. They buildup admiration, conviction and esteem among their followers by doing so they exhibit autonomy, empowerment and trust (Avolio & Bass, 2002) and in return the followers devote their trust and idealize the leader. Thus Idealized influence is the core quality of transformational leaders' which casts a strong impact on the followers and they share/own the higher objectives. Transformational leader carries a charisma (Sarror & Santora, 2001) for motivating, raising the morale and performance of the followers by applying different inspirational strategies (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). This quality in principals is essential to foster a culture of trust and respect and collaboration in schools. When people trust and respect each other, they become more close community having a shared vision to bring about higher order changes. Schools where leaders promote such a quality, in fact a true reflection of the teamwork observed.
2. **Intellectual Stimulation** is one of the most prominent behaviors of a transformational leader, expressed by challenging the status quo and encouraging the employees for creativity and innovation. The fast paced changes in curriculum, IT and pedagogy require from principals not only to equip the teachers with the required resources but also prepare them about how to accept all changes by challenging the status quo.
3. **Individual Consideration** as the second most significant transformational leadership behavior. The leader extends his/her support from group or organizational level to individual level so, the employees can communicate their new ideas without any reluctance and fear and recognition at individual level can be ensured for better performance. A leader, with transformational behaviors tries to explore the individual needs of the associates. They rationalize their needs with the needs of the organization; such practices not only provide mentoring but also raise the self-image of the employees. Sometimes they allocate individual tasks for individual growth (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

4. Inspirational motivation is the charismatic behavior of the transformational leaders (Conger, 1999). They have the clear vision that enables them to inspire and motivate the employees for excelling and extra performance to achieve the desired objectives or goals. No doubt, high level of motivation requires a high level of change. The behaviors of transformational leaders increase the commitment & motivation (Bryant, 2003) for higher objectives and provide meanings to the vision. They always try to think harder on the strategies to keep the motivational level of employees high. They predict a bright future and transform motivation in associates to achieve the future targets.

Although empirical data on gender differences in transformational leadership behaviors is limited but few researches (Carless, 1998; Bass, 1999; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003; Mandell & Pherwani, 2003; Burke & Collins, 2001) demonstrated that men and women practice different transformational leadership behaviors and women are more transformational than men (Eagly & Johnson, 2001) because of their stereotyped perception, nature or nurture. Women are more people caring, good in communication, more effective in mentoring their employees but there is no significant difference in their effectiveness (Eagly, Karau & Makhijani 1995). Judeh, M. (2010) explored no significant gender difference in transformational leadership behavior excluding intellectual stimulation as men scored higher than women and employees express more innovation and creativity when transformational leadership behaviors are practiced by male leaders (Reuvers, Van Engen, Vinkenbunrg, & Wilson-Evered, 2008).

A study conducted by Gibson in 1995 explored that “men express more assertive behaviors whereas women are credited as affectionate and emotional expressive”. Eagly and Johnson (1990) found in his study that women are found exhibiting the higher level of consideration and initiating structures in their leadership styles. Women are more democratic in their behavior than men. Female leaders were adopting more consideration oriented leadership styles and male leaders were adopting combination of both consideration and initiating structure oriented aspects of leadership (Stafyla, 2008). Bass, Avoilio and Atwater (1996) conducted on gender differences in leadership styles and they observed females more transformational than men.

Pakistan as a developing country is known as male dominated society but a change is in process as it is being observed that women are excelling in almost all the fields. They are leading in various fields as compared to men, therefore, it is important to explore the facts behind such a change. Developing countries are striving hard to match the pace of global change and for this they have to promote the culture of gender equity in every field of development and no, doubt research is the only way to bring this change.

Teachers' Academic Effectiveness

The teachers' academic effectiveness is the multifaceted construct signifies performance outcomes on specific educational goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in schools, colleges, and universities (Ricarda, Anja, Anne & Linda, 2015). Because of the multifaceted nature of the construct there are several criteria that indicate teachers academic effectiveness e.g. subject mastery, effective communication, lesson preparation, presentation experience and professional trainings but the most accurate measure is the academic gains of the students (Akiri, 2013). The academic gains of the students is commonly measured by the Cumulative Grade Point Assessment (CGPA) (Galiher, 2006; Stephen & Schaban, 2002) or by standardized assessments. Academic gains of students, not only reveal the students' success but also signifies the teachers academic effectiveness (MeenuDev, 2016).

Academic achievement is considered as one of the indicator of school effectiveness (greatly depends on the teachers' academic effectiveness. The world has shifted its educational paradigm from information & conceptualized to skill based learning that has increased the pressure on academic leaders (principals) especially at school level to address this shift appropriately. No doubt, this shift requires a lot of innovation, motivation, commitment not only from the teachers and students but also by the principals as the key resource of all academic activities at school. This paradigm shift in academics has transformed the entire canvas of education in the world regardless of developed and developing countries. The developed countries have embraced the shift more successfully because of their proactive approach towards research and innovation but the situation is still challenging for the developing countries where the research culture is not developed up to the required demand. Since the last few decades school principals are under constant pressures for bringing highest academic achievement in schools that depends on teacher's academic achievement. Several studies have been conducted to identify the most effective leadership behaviors associated with teachers' academic effectiveness. Leadership behaviors contribute in high students' academic achievement and the overall culture of a school (Moffitt, 2007) e.g., research conducted by Huitt, Huitt, Monetti, and Hummel, (2009) found instructional leadership behaviors more effective as compared to transformational leadership behaviors and assumed that transformational leadership behaviors can work better while developing and molding the school culture and in creating an environment conducive to teaching and learning (Shatzer, Caldarella, Hallam, & Brown,2014).

Methodology

Sample of 235 principals and 2,350 teachers of secondary schools were randomly selected. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5x form (MLQ 5xForm) was adapted for this survey. Leader and Rater form developed by Bass and Avolio, in 1997 were used to assess the leadership behaviors. Although MLQ was grouped into three main categories; transformational, transactional and passive avoidant leadership styles but only transformational leadership behaviors were taken as scale and translated in local language (Urdu). The scale was comprised of two forms; Rater Form and Leader Forms. Leader's Form was applied to identify the transformational leadership behaviors of the school principals and Rater Form was administered to teachers to measure their perceptions about the transformational leadership behaviors of their principals. Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) comprised of four behaviors of transformational leadership; Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation and Individual Consideration. Three factors as outcomes of leadership styles were also included in MLQ (5xshort form). These outcome factors were Extra Effort, Effectiveness and Satisfaction. The Cronbach's Alpha of the scales ($\alpha = .80$). The reliability for each leadership factor scale ranged from ($\alpha = .74$) to ($\alpha = .94$) (MLQ, Manual). Three years consistent external results of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) of Board of Intermediate and Secondary School Examination (BISE) CGPA's were taken as to assess the teachers' academic effectiveness.

Findings

H₀ 1: There is no significant gender difference in the self-perception of the school principals for Transformational leadership behaviors

Table 1

Comparison of mean scores between self-perception of male and female school principals on transformational leadership behaviors

| Leadership Behaviors | Male | | Female | | t.value | df | p.value |
|----------------------|------|------|--------|------|---------|-----|---------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | | |
| IIA | 2.69 | 0.60 | 2.74 | 0.61 | -.671 | 233 | .503 |
| IIB | 3.05 | 0.43 | 2.93 | 0.50 | 1.981 | 233 | .049* |
| IM | 3.13 | 0.49 | 2.99 | 0.53 | 2.146 | 233 | .033* |
| IS | 3.02 | 0.48 | 2.91 | 2.91 | 1.717 | 233 | .087 |
| IC | 3.04 | 0.48 | 3.00 | 0.53 | .683 | 233 | .495 |
| E-Effort | 2.72 | 0.73 | 2.64 | 0.77 | .858 | 233 | .392 |
| Effectiveness | 2.70 | 0.50 | 2.80 | 0.58 | -1.60 | 233 | .111 |
| Satisfaction | 2.90 | 0.62 | 3.69 | 0.47 | -2.30 | 233 | .022* |

*p<.05 IIA= Idealized Influence Attribute, IIB=Idealized Influence Behavior, IM=Inspirational Motivation, IS=Intellectual Stimulation, IC=Individual Consideration, E-Effort=Extra Effort

Table 1 illustrates the comparison between mean score through independent sample t test on self-perception between male and female school principals on transformational leadership behaviors. Two transformational leadership behaviors (Idealized Influence Behavior, Inspirational Motivation) and one outcome factor satisfaction were found significantly different with $t(233), 1.981, p<.05$, which shows that male principals perceive themselves high on Idealized Influence Behavior, Inspirational Motivation. The outcome factor satisfaction was also significant with $t(233), -2.30, p<.05$ which demonstrate that male principals are more satisfied than female principals.

To validate the principals' self-perception on transformational leadership behaviors MLQ 5x short rater form was administered on the teachers (followers) working under similar principals.

H₀ 2: There is no significant difference between the self-perception of school principals and teachers' perception for transformational leadership behaviors

Table2

Comparison of mean scores between self-perception of school principals and teachers' perception on transformational leadership behaviors

| Transformational Leadership Behaviors | Principals | | Teachers | | t.value | df | p.value |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------|----------|------|---------|------|---------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | | |
| IIA | 2.72 | 0.60 | 2.43 | 0.66 | 6.30 | 2404 | <.01 |
| IIB | 2.99 | 0.47 | 2.57 | 0.63 | 9.80 | 2404 | <.01 |
| IM | 3.06 | 0.51 | 2.69 | 0.61 | 8.92 | 2404 | <.01 |
| IS | 2.96 | 0.50 | 2.47 | 0.50 | 11.08 | 2404 | <.01 |
| IC | 3.02 | 0.50 | 2.50 | 0.50 | 12.21 | 2404 | <.01 |
| E-Effort | 2.68 | 0.75 | 2.63 | 0.79 | 1.152 | 2404 | .249 |
| Effectiveness | 2.75 | 0.74 | 2.42 | 0.48 | 6.626 | 2404 | <.01 |
| Satisfaction | 2.98 | 0.85 | 2.42 | 0.56 | 6.63 | 2404 | <.01 |

IIA= Idealized Influence Attribute, IIB=Idealized Influence Behavior, IM=Inspirational Motivation, IS=Intellectual Stimulation, IC=Individual Consideration, E-Effort=Extra Effort

The results show the significant difference in the mean scores of the principals' self-perception and teachers' perception on transformational leadership behaviors that reflect that school principals perceive themselves high on Inspirational Motivation $t(2404), 8.92, p<.01$ and Individual Consideration $t(2404), 12.21, p<.01$.

H₀ 3: There is no relationship between the school principals' transformational leadership behaviors and teachers' academic effectiveness

Table 3

Correlation co-efficient between principals' transformational leadership behaviors and teachers' academic effectiveness.

| Transformational Leadership behaviors | Correlation (r) | p.value |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| IIA | -.102 | .120 |
| IIB | -.167* | .010 |
| IM | -.150* | .021 |
| IS | -.258** | <.01 |
| IC | -.213** | .001 |
| E-Effort | -.382** | <.01 |
| Effectiveness | -.395** | <.01 |
| Satisfaction | -.354** | <.01 |

IIA= Idealized Influence Attribute, IIB=Idealized Influence Behavior, IM=Inspirational Motivation, IS=Intellectual Stimulation, IC=Individual Consideration, E-Effort=Extra Effort

Pearson coefficient of correlation results show that there is statistically significant negative relationship between the transformational leadership behaviors and teachers' academic effectiveness. It means that principals' transformational leadership behaviors decrease the teachers' extra efforts, effectiveness and satisfaction.

To see the significant predictor of teachers academic effectiveness regression analysis was done

| Gender | Model 1 | | Unstandardized | | Standardized | t | Sig. |
|--------|---------|---------------|----------------|------------|--------------|--------|------------|
| | | | Coefficients | | Coefficients | | |
| | | | B | Std. Error | Beta | B | Std. Error |
| male | 1 | (Constant) | 2.912 | .852 | | 3.416 | .001 |
| | | IIA | -.186 | .167 | -.116 | -1.117 | .267 |
| | | IIB | .251 | .253 | .112 | .992 | .323 |
| | | IM | .240 | .228 | .122 | 1.055 | .294 |
| | | IS | .091 | .255 | .045 | .358 | .721 |
| | | IC | .066 | .223 | .032 | .296 | .768 |
| | | Effectiveness | -.428 | .260 | -.239 | -1.649 | .102 |
| | | E-Effort | .271 | .233 | .171 | 1.165 | .247 |
| | | Satisfaction | -.215 | .304 | -.125 | -.709 | .480 |
| female | 1 | (Constant) | 4.569 | .756 | | 6.042 | .000 |
| | | IIA | .107 | .169 | .067 | .630 | .530 |
| | | IIB | -.212 | .244 | -.109 | -.871 | .386 |
| | | IM | .229 | .244 | .129 | .939 | .350 |
| | | IS | .075 | .229 | .041 | .327 | .745 |
| | | IC | -.180 | .251 | -.100 | -.717 | .475 |
| | | Effectiveness | .113 | .231 | .060 | .487 | .627 |
| | | E-Effort | -.267 | .195 | -.188 | -1.374 | .173 |
| | | Satisfaction | -.205 | .281 | -.113 | -.731 | .466 |

IIA= Idealized Influence Attribute, IIB=Idealized Influence Behavior, IM=Inspirational Motivation, IS=Intellectual Stimulation, IC=Individual Consideration, E-Effort=Extra Effort.

The regression results show not the single transformational leadership behavior or outcome of transformational leadership behaviors (Effectiveness, Extra Effort and Satisfaction) is the significant predictor for teachers' academic effectiveness.

Discussion

The main purpose of the study was to explore the gender differences of transformational leadership behaviors of secondary school principals. The male school leaders were found more transformational than female school principals. Although empirical data on gender differences in transformational leadership behaviors is limited. The findings are similar with researches conducted by (Carless, 1998; Bass, 1999; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003; Mandell & Pherwani, 2003; Burke, & Collins, 2000) found that men and women practice different transformational leadership behaviors and women are more transformational than men (Eagly & Johnson, 2001). The analysis corroborates with the findings of Eagly, Karau, and Makhijani, (1999); Stafyla, (2008); Judeh, (2010) found that women are more considerate than men and there is no significant difference in their effectiveness. The researchers Reuvers, Engen, Vinkenburg, and Wilson-Evered, (2008) also explored no significant gender difference in transformational leadership behavior excluding intellectual stimulation as men scored higher than women and employees express more innovation and creativity when transformational leadership behaviors are practiced by male leaders. Bass, Avolio and Atwater (1996) conducted on gender differences in leadership styles and they observed females more transformational than men.

Pakistan as a developing nationality is known as male dominated society but a change is in process, it is being observed that women are excelling in almost all the fields and getting lead in leadership fields than men so it is important to explore the facts. Developing countries are striving to match the pace of global change and for this they have to promote the culture of gender equity in every field of development and no, doubt research is the only way to bring this change.

Conclusions

The study was conducted to explore the gender differences in transformational leadership behaviors of school principals and its relationship with teachers' academic effectiveness. The study reported no significant gender difference in the practicing transformational leadership behaviors and significant negative relationship between transformational leadership behaviors teachers' academic effectiveness. The study demonstrated that transformational leadership behaviors decrease the academic effectiveness of the teachers. Though the findings are consistent with the previous studies (Manning, 2002; Eagly et al, 2003; Kent, Blair, Rudd, & 2010; Triana, Richard, & Yucel, 2017) yet it requires to explore more as qualification, experience and cultural differences in defining transformational leadership.

Implications

The main purpose of this study was to identify the most prevailing leadership styles at secondary school level and to see its impact on students' achievement. This study provided researched based information on three leadership styles. Nine leadership factors and three outcome factors of leadership were also included. On the basis of the study the following recommendation are made.

1. Our system of education demands high quality of change, innovation, transformation, direction and planning to bring it up to the required level. The school leaders are recommended on the basis of these findings to develop in themselves a leadership approach towards administration.
2. The school leaders should explore individual needs, talent, interests, and specialties of the teachers at a professional level and should offer them areas of expertise as per their capacities.
3. The teachers' ideas, approaches, perceptions, and opinions must be taken into consideration before making any plan for students' achievement.
4. The school leaders should cater the perception of their teachers regarding leadership practices. They should exhibit these qualities, in such a way that their teachers should reflect them in form of Extra Effort, Effectiveness and Satisfaction in their profession.

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