

The Relationship between Principals' Humor Orientation and Leadership Effectiveness

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Abstract

This research has been conducted aiming at investigating the relation between humor orientation and principals' leadership effectiveness from the perspective of teachers. The target population of the present research includes all teachers of Fanuj city and the studying case consisted of 220 subjects (130 males and 90 females) who were chosen using stratified and simple random methods. The inventory of humor orientation of Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1991) and the leadership effectiveness of Jantzi and Leithwood (1996) were used in order to collect data. One-sample t-test, Pearson correlation coefficient test and enter regression analysis were used to analyze the research data. Research results showed that a significant relation exists between principals' humor orientation and their leadership effectiveness. In addition, humor orientation predicts their leadership effectiveness.

Keywords: Humor Orientation; Principals' Leadership Effectiveness; Teachers

1. Introduction

In the present age, leadership and management are the title of an important and indispensable issue attracting social and educational sciences thinkers and experts' attention. Leadership is not a newly-appeared phenomenon, but the antiquity of leadership is rooted in the human history (Jones-shoemaker, 2000: 7). Undoubtedly, the dream of each society is development, promotion and achievement of high positions politically, economically, culturally and socially. If we want to reach such a society, which has all the characteristics of an advanced society, certainly, educational system should be transformed and this transformation should occur from the education and its management and leadership itself. Educational principals have important duties at educational and social levels and doing important duties manifest itself through playing two roles, the first one official and supervisory and the other is the role of leadership (Shakoor et al., 2011). The success of each organization depends on effective and lofty leadership and this issue concerns school as an institution that educates manpower of each society directly. Effective leaders are able to lead individuals to achieve the sublime goals of their own organization. As the result of this issue, the society continues its growth and health. On the other hand, principals' humor exists. Stern principals are unable to communicate with their employees effectively. They consider sternness as part of their management prestige. Definitely, working with a stern principal is extremely hard, exhausting and boring and this factor can disturb the achievement of goals or minimally slow it. Considering humor in the workplace could be effective in many cases. Humor facilitates communications, reduces stress, grants human perspective, increases attention and bestows happiness. Humor is a manner of encounter and a new style in life and a new method for beholding the bright aspects of living in the hard working situations for being free from psychological pressures and having moderate and lofty view to life not a chaotic one (Tripathy, 2005). The benefits of using humor in the workplaces are extremely high. It reinforces individuals' mental flexibility, increases their compatibility power in the adverse conditions, the state of aversion is dominant over them lesser, enables employees to be flexible more against difficulties helping them in accepting new ideas and methods. In addition, it boosts team spirit in the individuals, increases their courage of taking risks and innovation and finally improves their spirit.

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Healthy humor creates, reinforces and improves communications, if we can enjoy recreation, smile and delight together, undoubtedly we can work with each other better (Tripathy, 2005). Certainly, when we can work with enjoyment, we can achieve our goals sooner.

According to the results of researches consider factors such as organizational culture, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and organizational communications in the effectiveness of the leadership of organizations and being aware of the importance of human relationships, the researcher, in this research, aims to investigate the relation between humor orientation and communicative qualification to test with the principals' leadership effectiveness of the schools of Fanuj in order to find out that whether a significant relation exists or not, while examining humor orientation among principals and teachers as well as principal's communicative qualifications. Until now, various research have been conducted in order to identify the effectiveness of humor in the individuals with strong orientation and those with weak humor orientation. Eftekhari (2009) in his research titled "humor, the entrance of wit to the job work", investigated the effect and position of humor in management. Results showed that humor is effective in improving organizational communications, increasing motivation and job satisfaction as well as reducing stress and conflict in the workplaces (Eftekhari, 2009). Kumar et al. (2014) studied the role of humor in the teaching of professors and learning of students. The research results indicated that the professors' high level of humor orientation has a significant relation with the second language learning in students. Furthermore, a strong correlation between students' behavior and second language learning shows the effect and importance of humor. Hoption et al. (2013) in their research investigated the leaders' use of humor. Their research show that humor can minimize or intensify the status difference between leaders and followers. Although it seems that a contradiction exists between work and humor, this research shows that how leader can use humor for improving the behavior between leader and follower.

Heath (2012) in his study examined the relation between humor and leadership. He, in this study, deals with the positive and negative effects of humor on the leaders' leadership and expresses that if humor is used appropriately, it can be effective in reducing stress, promoting the leadership efficiency, increasing team construction, reinforcing communications and developing organizational culture. This study shows that humor should not be regarded as a threat for leadership, but as a worthy resource. Mesmer-Magnus et al. (2012) presented a meta-analysis of positive humor in the workplace in order to investigate the potential role of humor in the organizational effectiveness and employees. The results of meta-analysis show that principals' humor is related with the increase of employees' performance, job satisfaction, consistency of group work, health, reduction of job weariness and reducing stress. The research results of Ho et al. (2011) showed that self-increasing humor plays a key role in their leadership. In addition, self-increasing humor increases innovative behavior and leadership effectiveness. Contrary to self-increasing humor, aggressive humor has a negative effect in leadership. Fields' research results (2011) indicate that a significant relation exists between humor and job satisfaction. Moreover, a positive, significant and noticeable relation is reported in the personal relationships of teachers and principals who have humor orientation. Lang and Lee (2010) in their research investigated the relation between three functions of humor and organizational creativity. They expressed that the issue of humor in the workplace and organizational creativity is converted to the principals' favorite issue. Their research results show that free humor has positive relation and humor control has a negative relation with organizational creativity. Hurren's research results (2006) showed that teachers' job satisfaction that their head masters had humor orientation was higher than those that their head masters had less or no humor orientation. Jones' research results (2006) indicate that a significant relation exists between humor and leadership effectiveness and its six fields and can predict it. In addition, the research results showed that head masters who had communicative qualification and humor orientation are considered as effective leaders in 50 percent of cases. Campbell et al. (2001) attempted to examine the relation between principals' humor behavior and subordinates' job satisfaction. Their research results shows a positive correlation among all of these variables. Frymier (1999) concluded that a positive correlation exists in the students' perception towards the humor orientation of professors. Furthermore, students' report of learning indicates the profound effect of humor on professors and their methods (Mcgi, 1984). Vanzir et al. (1995) studied the relation between communicative qualification and humor. Their research results showed that individuals with high humor are more flexible in their communications with others. Moreover, their research results indicate that individuals with high witness are more aware of their emotion and feelings and use them for leading their communications. The researcher in this research attempts to answer the following questions:

- What condition are principals in terms of humor orientation in?
- How is the condition of principals' leadership effectiveness?

- Is there any relation between humor orientation and principals' leadership effectiveness?
- To what extent, principals' humor can predict principals' leadership effectiveness?

2. Method

In this study, a descriptive and correlational survey is used. The target population of this research includes all teachers of Fanuj in Iran. 220 subjects (130 males and 90 females) were chosen based on Morgan's (1970) size determination table using stratified sampling method in accordance with the size and simple random method. Table 1 shows the teachers' status according to gender, age, marital status, academic degree, teaching level and teaching background.

Table 1: The Details of Sample (N=220)

Variable	Group	N	Elementary teacher	High school teacher
Sex	Male	130	88	42
	Female	90	77	13
Age	-30	109	88	21
	30 - 35	82	63	19
	+30	29	14	15
Marrital Status	single	35	27	8
	married	185	138	47
Academic degree	Associate degree	91	78	13
	Bachelor's degree	129	87	42
Teaching experience	-5	29	27	2
	5-10	120	90	30
	+10	71	48	23

Tow inventories of leadership effectiveness and humor orientation were used to collect information:

Principal Leadership Questioner (PLQ)

The inventory of principals' leadership effectiveness is designed by Jantzi and Leithwood (1996) based on the six dimensions of transformation-oriented leadership. This inventory has 24 items based on Likert five-point scale (strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=5) and teachers express their opinions regarding their head masters based on it. Table 2 shows the six dimensions and the questions assigned to those dimensions and reliability coefficient of each dimension.

Table 2: Dimensions, Questions and Reliability

Dimensions	Questions	Reliability
Provide vision	5	0.88
Modeling	3	0.86
Foster group goals	5	0.80
Individual support	5	0.82
Intellectual stimulation	3	0.77
High expectations	3	0.73

Humor Orientation Scale (HOS)

The humor orientation scale is designed and developed by Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1991) in order to measure individual differences in employing and codifying humor. This scale has 17 items that each item is designed based on Likert five-point. In the scoring method, items 6, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14 are scored reversely. The calculated reliability by the researcher is 0.81. The statistical analysis of data is performed using SPSS 21 and frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, one-simple t-test, Pearson correlative coefficient and enter regression analysis are used in the analysis of statistical indices.

3. Findings

Question 1: What condition are principals in terms of Humor Orientation in?

To answer this question, one-sample t-test was used. The results of this test are in Table 3.

Table 3: One-Sample T-test of Principals' Humor Orientation (N=220)

Variable	M	SD	t-value	df	t-test	Sig.
Humor Orientation	52.86	10.25	51	219	2.695	0.008

The results of one-sample t-test show that the mean of principals' humor orientation is 52.86 and its standard deviation is 10.25. The obtained mean is higher than the criterion mean, which is 51 and this difference is significant at 0.01 level statistically. Thus, it can be mentioned with 99 percent of confidence that the condition of principals' humor orientation is higher than the average ($t=2.695$, $p<0.01$).

Question 2: How is the condition of principals' Leadership Effectiveness (LE)?

To answer this question, one-group t-test was used. The results of this test are in Table 4.

Table 4: One-Sample T-test of Principals' Leadership Effectiveness and Sub Variables (N=220)

Variable	M	SD	t-value	df	t-test	Sig.
Provide vision	18.61	4.80	15	219	11.161	0.000
Modeling	10.268	3.11	9	219	6.033	0.000
Foster group goals	18.20	5.02	15	219	9.459	0.000
Individual support	14.13	3.85	12	219	8.199	0.000
Intellectual stimulation	13.29	3.99	12	219	4.793	0.000
High expectations	9.28	2.87	9	219	1.478	0.141
Leadership Effectiveness	83.79	19.77	72	219	8.846	0.000

The results of Table 4 show that the mean of principals' leadership effectiveness is 83.79, which is higher than the criterion mean, which is 51 and this difference is significant at 0.01 level statistically ($t=8.846$, $p<0.01$). Thus, it can be mentioned with 99 percent of probability that principals' leadership effectiveness is higher than the average. In addition, the mean of all components is higher than the criterion mean of each of them and statistically, all of the components except the fifth component (expectation of high-level performance) are significant at 0.01 level.

Question 3: Is there any relation between humor orientation and principals' leadership effectiveness?

To answer this question, Pearson correlation coefficient test was used. The results of this test are in Table 5.

Table 5: Correlation between Principals' Humor Orientation (H.O) and Leadership Effectiveness (L.E) and Sub Variables (N=220)

Variable	P.V	Mod	F.G.G	I.Su	I.St	H.E	L.E
H.O	0.449**	0.424**	0.437**	0.443**	0.329**	0.300**	0.498**

Note: ** $P<0.01$: Provide Vision (P.V), Modeling (Mod), Foster Group Goals (F.G.G), Individual support (I.Su), Intellectual Stimulation (I.St), High Expectations (H.E)

Pearson correlation coefficient test was used to investigate the relation between humor orientation and principals' leadership effectiveness. The results of data analysis (Table 5) show that a positive and significant relation exists between principals' humor orientation and their leadership effectiveness ($r=0.498$, $p<0.01$). In addition, a positive and significant relation exists between humor orientation and all components of leadership effectiveness at 0.01 level.

Question 4: To what extent, principals' humor can predict principals' leadership effectiveness?

To answer this question, regression analysis was used. The results of this test are in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6: Enter Regression of Humor Orientation (H.O) and Leadership Effectiveness (N=220)

Model	Variable	R	R ²	Adj.R ²	SE	F	Sig.
Enter	H.O	0.496	0.246	0.242	2.744	21.605	0.000

Note: Dependent Variable: Leadership Effectiveness

Table 7: Moderated Regression Analyses

Model	Variable	B	SE	β	t	Sig.
Enter	Constant	33.28	6.105	0.496	5.451	0.000
	H.O	0.955	0.113		8.427	0.000

Table 6 shows the results of regression analysis in simultaneous method in order to predict principals' leadership effectiveness based on humor orientation. The results of regression analysis showed that humor orientation with regression coefficient 0.496 is able to predict 24.6 percent of principals' leadership effectiveness. In addition, Table 7 shows that humor orientation with beta coefficient 0.496 is significant at 0.01 level. Thus, it can be mentioned that principals' witness orientation significantly predicts their leadership effectiveness.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The need to leadership and management in all organizations and institutions of society is a noticeable and vital issue that material and human resources of society would be wasted and destroyed without proper leadership. The existence of an effective leadership in education as the administrator of educating the future manpower of all institutions and organizations has a particular importance. Effective leadership of organization is the main factor in creating consultation and agreement and effective leaders are those who can gather different individuals under one thought and view umbrella and create this understanding that conflicts are petty and unimportant and what is worthy and creditable is collective spirit that should be dominant over a complex or organization. One of the most important factors that can play a crucial role in school head masters' leadership effectiveness is interpersonal relationships and how head master communicate (for example humor) with teachers, students, parents and all people who are in contact with them in some ways. The results of this research showed that teacher consider their head masters' humor and leadership effectiveness desirable. In addition, the results of this research indicate that a positive and significant relation exists between head masters' humor orientation and communicative qualifications and their leadership effectiveness and the variables of humor orientation and communicative qualifications are able to predict head masters' effectiveness to a large extent. The results are in consistent with the research results of Heath (2012), Fields (2011), Jones (2006) and Eftekhari (2009).

According to the obtained results, it can be concluded that skill in communicating namely how we behave with our subordinates and people around us or how we communicate can plays an extremely important role in achieving goals. Therefore, it can be expressed that head masters have strong communications and relationships with the people around them and they have humor in communicating with others and have more effective leadership. According to the results, the following points are suggested:

- Existing the relation between head masters' humor orientation and their leadership effectiveness, it is necessary to consider useful educational courses along the year for head masters and assistants.
- Regarding the existence of the relation between humor orientation and head masters' leadership effectiveness, the head masters should use positive humor (considering individual and personal characteristics of the addressee) optimally in their daily activities.
- Existing a significant relation between humor and head masters' leadership effectiveness, it is suggested that head masters learn the effective and better ways of using humor and use them for the improvement of their leadership.

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