

Impact of Transformational Leadership on Creativity: With the Role of Knowledge sharing in the Municipals of Guilan

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Abstract: In the current world, referred to as a village, environmental changes and economical change (Ebrahimi et al., 2019c) affect all human decisions and behavior and if it does not prepare for confrontation and rational encounter with it in all areas will make it difficult for people and this will be more and more evident in organizations. Therefore, creativity of the staff in the organization is very important for dealing with these developments and organizations that have such staff will enjoy a high competitive advantage. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to measure the effect of creativity of employees on the basis of transformational leadership in Guilan municipalities. The statistical population of this research is 300 employees of the municipalities of western Guilan. Sampling method in the present study is convenience non-probabilistic sampling. Using the Morgan table, 169 subjects were selected as the sample size. This research is an applied descriptive-analytical and correlation method. Data collection tool is a questionnaire. Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests were used to analyze the data to determine the type of data distribution. Structural equation structural model approach and path analysis method were used for general fitting of model and spss21 and Amos software were used to test the hypotheses. The results show that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on knowledge sharing. Also, knowledge sharing has a positive and significant effect on creativity and finally, the transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on creativity of employees.

Keywords: Creativity, Staff creativity, Leadership, Transformational leadership .

INTRODUCTION

In the current world, referred to as a village, environmental changes affect all human decisions and behavior and if it does not prepare for confrontation and rational encounter with it in all areas will make it difficult for people. This issue will arise in organizations with further consequences. Therefore, creativity of the staff in the organization is very important for dealing with these developments (Ebrahimi et al., 2017). Those organizations that have such employees will have a high competitive advantage. Herbert Fox believes that creativity is a thinking process that solves the problem in an intuitive way. Creativity is expected in any activity and is not limited to any kind of activity. In general, what is important in the creativity process is thought (Rezaian, 2003). Gill Ford knows creativity as a behavior or action that provides the right solution for the problem. He believes that creativity is to show the creative action or behavior and ability and in general to act creatively; That is, providing the right solution for issues and problems (Pir Khayefi, 2005). Creativity in

organizations can be effective in organizing the productivity and effectiveness of organizations for managers and organizational leaders. Because effectiveness as the most important goal of any organization is a destination that all organizational efforts to achieve it. Leadership was no exception and will spend all its efforts on achieving organizational goals that are as effective as an organization. Creativity has contributed to such areas as the recruitment, staff retention, employee morale and commitment, customer loyalty and service quality. Increasing creativity in organizations can lead to an increase in the quantity and quality of services, lower costs, prevent loss of resources, reduce bureaucracy, increase competitiveness, efficiency, productivity, motivation and job satisfaction among employees. The role of manager is to foster creativity, stimulate and encourage employees, employees delegation, find creative minds and use the creativity of others (Mehri, 2005). As stated, there are many factors associated with creativity, including the sharing of knowledge that can affect the creativity of the employees in the organization. Common knowledge is a process in which individuals exchange their knowledge and create common knowledge (Van den Hooff and De Ridder, 2004). Some studies have also shown that sharing knowledge can have a huge impact on individual creativity (Tierney & Farmer, 2002; Gong et al., 2009). Knowledge sharing is the sharing of ideas and information through communication and interaction between individuals and desirable persons. The results of knowledge sharing depend on the quality and quantity of human resource communication, preparedness for the application of knowledge and individual competition (Liao, 2006). Knowledge sharing can be defined as a social interaction culture that involves the exchange of knowledge and experience of staff in the entire department or organization (Lin, 2007). More specifically, a new interactive study showed that employees who share more knowledge sharing are more likely to use their creative potential for creative results (Wang, 2010). In addition, knowledge sharing plays an aggravating role in increasing employee creativity (Wang & Noe, 2010). Another influential factor in creativity is the transformational leader who has tried in a large number of studies to understand the relationship between different leadership styles and their effect on creativity among employees (Mumford et al., 2002). The most promising way is to examine the role of transformational leadership in promoting employee creativity. This style of leadership has gained great popularity among organizational researchers due to a special inspiration for followers (Gardner and Avolio, 1998; Wang Cheng, 2010). Recent advances in theories of leadership have led to the transfer of the theory of effectiveness leadership, which assumed leadership as an unconventional entity and consider followers depends to leaders, to transformative leadership theory which takes into account the development and empowerment of followers for independent performance (Sanjegli et al., 2011). The Transformational Leadership Theory was first introduced by James Burns in the year 1987. Burns put forward the transformational leadership as a moral process whereby leaders and followers will be at a higher level of dignity (Humphreys & Einstein, 2003, p86). Some scholars agree on the dimensions of transformational leadership. Bernard Bass sees this dimension as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, that the leader can influence his subordinates using these factors. The results of studies over the past years on executive agencies, including the municipalities of Guilan province, indicate that the tendency toward transformational leadership has been less seen. Lacking transformational leadership as a policy in the municipalities of Guilan and having low creativity in employee has caused many problems in urban development and so on. Also, in these municipalities as an organization, what is most apparent is the lack of creativity in the staff and a kind of passive routine and everyday functioning in the administrative system. To this end, this research seeks to investigate the issue that transformational leadership can have an impact on the creativity of municipal employees in Guilan. Therefore, this research studies that: whether the role of knowledge sharing as an intermediate variable impact on transformational leadership and creativity of employees.

Research Framwork

Creativity

Creativity is "using mental abilities to create a new thought or concept." In general, what is important in the process of creativity is thought. Today, the life and survival of the organizations depend on the power of their reconstruction; This reconstruction is done by coordinating the goals with the current state and improving the ways for achieving these goals. Organizations in the process of adapting themselves to changes inevitably strengthening the innovation and creativity processes, because over time, non-creative organizations are out of the way or are forced to rectify their systems. In fact, the occurrence of environmental changes necessitates a change in organizations, inevitably. In recent decades, the speed of environmental change has grown dramatically. In addition, today the need to anticipate needs and ways to eliminate them is emphasized, because organizations are forced to accept themselves to make such changes or to risk facing potential crises (Rezaeian, 2003). Various definitions of creativity have been presented in various sources, including: Albert Renn Georges states that creativity is a different look at the phenomena that other people also consider. Creativity is an attempt to make a targeted change in the organization's social and economic power. Eric Forem believes creativity is the ability to see and answer. Guilford (1950) considered creativity as the same as divergent thinking. We review creativity in three perspectives: 1) Definition of creativity from psychology point of view: Creativity is one of the main aspects of thinking. 2) Definition of Creativity from an Organizational Perspective: Creativity means providing new ideas for improving the quantity or quality of the organization's activities. 3) Definition of creativity from the social point of view: In this view, creativity is considered as sociological and group-oriented, and sociologists suggest that the creativity should be grounded at this level (Quinn et al., 1990).

Knowledge Sharing

The sharing of knowledge is a power and ability that encourages the exchange of knowledge and creativity and thus leads to high performance in intellectual power and intellectual capital (Aghdari, 2010; Poornemat and Ebrahimi, 2016). Knowledge sharing is so important that many have accepted that the success of knowledge management depends on the effective sharing of knowledge, as Buck and Kim believe knowledge sharing is the most important part of knowledge management. In fact, the tool by which knowledge is shared and the factors facilitating the sharing and transfer of knowledge, are fundamental issues of knowledge management. Different sources of knowledge sharing have been provided with various definitions, including: sharing knowledge is the voluntary dissemination of skills and experiences acquired by others. In other words, knowledge sharing is defined as an action that spreads through information among others (Wang et al., 2014). Also, all activities related to the transfer or distribution of knowledge from one person or organization to another person, group, or organization are called the process of dissemination or knowledge sharing (Danae Fard et al., 2011). A comprehensive and acceptable definition of knowledge sharing is provided by the US Quality and Productivity Center, which is: Knowledge sharing is right knowledge acquisition for the right people at the right time and place, so that they can make the most of their knowledge in order to achieve the organization's goals (Elikaee, 2013). Lee believes that the sharing of knowledge is the activities involving the transfer and distribution of knowledge (explicit and implicit) from an individual, group or organization to others. According to previous studies, the following types of knowledge sharing have been considered: The first type, explicit knowledge, is a person who is also known as self-knowledge and can be saved and retrieved from individual recessions and memory. The second type, hidden knowledge, is also a person who is called automatic knowledge (automatic) and is based on theoretical and practical experience and the learning of individuals. The third type is the explicit social knowledge of the organization, which is also known as declarative knowledge and can be found in patents and designs, or information stored in the organization's databases. The fourth type is the social tacit knowledge of the organization which is also known as collective knowledge and manifests itself in social and organizational affairs, systems, workflow and organizational culture. Spender believes that the implicit knowledge is the most secure and strategically important knowledge in organization (Keshavarzi, 2007).

Transformational leadership

Leadership is one of the few words that do not agree on its definition and the definitions given by the leadership are, in terms of number, equal to the number of those who seek to define it (Afjeh, 2006; Kelidbari et al., 2016; Ebrahimi et al., 2016). Transformational leadership also emphasizes the charismatic and participatory role of the leader. Transformational leadership focuses more on motivating, inspirational and facilitation (madsen & Albrechtsen, 2008). According to Burns (1987), the transformational leadership action leads to the bond between the leader and the followers to continuous and mutually pursue of supreme goals. Therefore, transformational leaders have a profound effect on followers (surie et al, 2008). Transformational leadership has four important dimensions (idealistic influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration) (mittal et all, 2015). Idealistic influence, also called charisma, refers to leaders who have the power and influence that lead followers to accept them as a leader model. Transformational leaders have high ethical standards and values and adhere to ethical codes of conduct; they create a vision for their followers. As a result, followers feel respected and admired by their leaders (Northouse, 2004). Inspirational Leadership refers to leaders who raise their employees' motivation level beyond their expectations. The leader, through intellectual stimulation, provokes the ability of his staff to rethink the problems and rethink of a new position. The leader, with individual consideration, listens personally to problems and supports the individual requirements of his followers. Consequently, this theory has quickly become a chosen approach for many researchers (mittal et all, 2015).

Theoretical literature

Wang and Wang (2012) state that knowledge sharing affects organizational creativity and performance. Also, Mittal, Swati, Rajib, Lochan Dhar (2015) state that the leader, through the transformational leadership style, can grow creative self-efficacy and creativity for employees and create a common knowledge for employees in high performance. In his research, "The Advancement of Personnel Creativity", Sirkwoo (2015) explores the relationship between various functional leadership, transformational leadership, empowerment leadership and employee creativity. The results showed that (1) Transactional leadership increased responsiveness creativity, (2) transformational leadership increased responsiveness and creativity and (3) empowered lead to any suggestion of creativity. Moradi et al. (2010) investigated the relationship between transformational leadership style and individual and organizational creativity. In this paper, in addition to the direct relationship between leadership style and creativity, the intermediary factors that are considered in this effect are examined. The results showed that transformational leadership increases the creativity of employees and organizations by strengthening internal motivation, rational stimulation, empowerment, supporting innovation and freedom, creating prospects, encouraging and challenging. The challenge of work, managerial support, work freedom and influence of the director are factors that play a mediating role in the relationship between transformational leadership and creativity. Jalilian et al. (2010) state that transformational leadership style is one of the effective and important factors for creativity of employees and organizations. Mokhber et al. (2015) analyzed the relationship between each component of transformational leadership and organizational innovation at the organizational level. The results confirm the positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational innovation at the macro level of the organization. In addition, the findings of this research show that among the five components of transformational leadership (idealism influence, charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individual considerations) only three components of charisma, inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation have a positive relationship with organizational innovation. Ellicae (2013) studied the role of "Knowledge Management in the Creativity of Products in the Iranian Automotive Industry". The results show that knowledge management can predict product creativity by as much as 15% and it affects it and this relationship is significance. Khosro Pesand (2013) states that there is a significance relationship between knowledge absorption and its dimensions and creativity.

Research model and hypotheses

Alkins and Claire (2003) state that transformational leadership has close relationship with other determinants that help to create a creative workplace. These factors include the use of a clear vision, encouragement, autonomy and promotion of innovation and challenges. Walumbwa and Hartnell (2011) concluded that there is a positive relationship between transformational leaders and their employees' self-efficacy, which results in a higher degree of employee performance. Another study by Gong and colleagues (2009) found a direct relationship between transformational leadership and creative self-efficacy. According to Mittal (2015), there is a relationship between transformational leadership with knowledge sharing and creativity among employees. Guist and Michel (1992) explains that when employees engage in creative activities, a high degree of self-efficacy can help them find solutions to a problem. Choi (2004) states that transformational leadership creates a direct relationship between creative self-efficacy, creative performance and employee creativity. As a result, creative self-efficacy can play a role as an intermediary between transformational leadership and employee creativity. According to Wang (2010), in relation to the moderating role of knowledge sharing, employees who share a higher level of knowledge share, they use their creative potential more for creative results. According to Wang Vedon (2010), sharing knowledge plays an aggravating role in increasing the creativity of employees. According to Wo et al., (2011), it has been considered as an intermediary variable between employee self-efficacy and creativity.

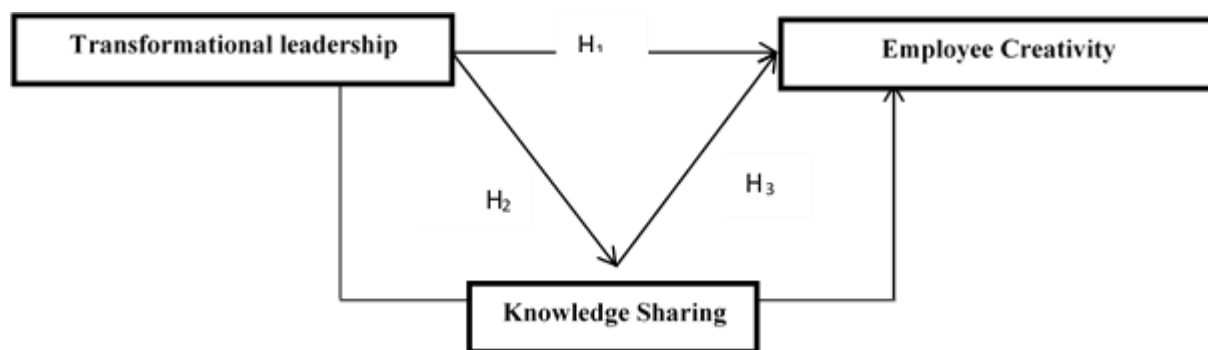


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Research

Based on the above model, the research hypotheses are expressed as follows:

- 1- Transformational leadership has an impact on creativity.
- 2- Transformational leadership has an impact on employee knowledge sharing.
- 3- Knowledge sharing affects on employee creativity.
- 4- Transformational leadership has an impact on employee creativity in terms of knowledge sharing

Research Methodology

This research is descriptive. The statistical population of this research is 300 employees of western Guilan municipalities. The sample size is 169 people and data collection tool is a questionnaire. The Creativity Questionnaire of Toahlor (2011) with 3 items, Bass & Alive Questionnaire (1997) with 36 items to measur Transformational Leadership and Hesu et al (2007) Knowledge sharing Questionnaire with 4 items were used. The Five-option Likert from 1- Very High to 5- very low was used. Content validity has been used to measure validity. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used for reliability of the instrument (Ebrahimi et al., 2018a; Ebrahimi et al., 2018b; Arbatani et al., 2019; Khajeheian and Ebrahimi, 2020). Cronbach's alpha coefficient for creativity, transformational leadership and knowledge sharing is 0.837, 0.843 and 0.772, respectively. In order to evaluate the proposed model, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used

(Ebrahimi et al., 2019a; Ebrahimi et al., 2019b). All analyzes were performed using SPSS 21 and AMOS software and , structural equation modeling method is used due to the presence of intermediate variable.

Results

The Kolmogorov and Smirnov tests (Ebrahimi and Mirbargkar, 2017) were used to determine the normal variables. The results of the test for the employee's creativity, transformational leadership and knowledge sharing variable, were 0.083, 0.061 and 0.079, respectively at level of 0.05 which represents the normal distribution (significance level, 0.05). The results of the research model analysis in the standardization are shown in the figure below.

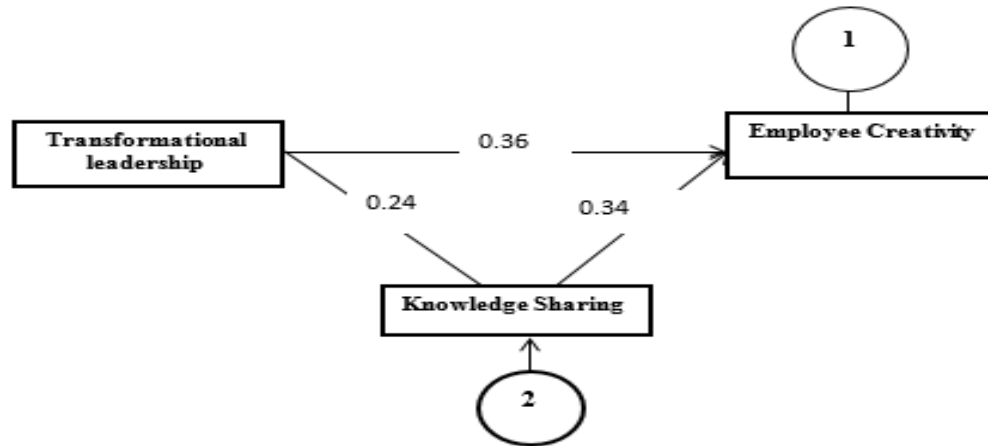


Figure 2: Path coefficients in standard mode

Table 1: Results of the research model

Independent variable		Dependent variable	Path coefficients	Sig.	Results
Transformational leadership	<--	Knowledge Sharing	0.281	0,00	Confirmed
Knowledge Sharing	<--	Employee Creativity	0.342	0,00	Confirmed
Transformational leadership	<--	Employee Creativity	0.380	0,00	Confirmed

According to the results of the research model and the above table, the result of the first hypothesis indicates that the path coefficient between transformational leadership and knowledge sharing is significant ($P < 0.05$) and is equal to 0.281. Therefore, it can be said that transformational leadership will be effective on sharing knowledge. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with Mittal's (2015). Also, the path coefficient between knowledge sharing and creativity was significant ($P < 0.05$) and equal to 0.342. So, we can say that sharing knowledge will affect the creativity of the employees. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with Mittal's (2015). This means that the second hypothesis is confirmed. On the other hand, the result of the third hypothesis shows that the path coefficient between transformational leadership and employee creativity is significant ($P < 0.05$) and is equal to 0.360. Therefore, it can be said that transformational leadership will affect the creativity of the employees. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with Mittal's (2015).

Table 2: Estimation of the research model

Model	NFI	RFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Model Estimation	.923	.996	.902	.921	.943	.640
Acceptable	close to 1	close to 1	close to 1	close to 1	close to 1	below 0.1

Conclusion

Transformational leadership brings about fundamental changes in staff attitudes and perceptions as well as the process of knowledge sharing and creativity and thus improves the capabilities needed to succeed in the organization. The present paper aims to examine the impact of transformational leadership on creativity in terms of knowledge sharing. It is suggested to provide suitable conditions for creativity by applying appropriate structures supporting the transformational leadership style and knowledge sharing. Transformational leadership was identified as one of the preconditions and factors influencing creativity. Therefore, it is recommended that organizations take into account programs such as: paying attention to the needs of one's followers and creating opportunities for their growth and enhancing them to a higher level of personality development, creating a supportive and friendly atmosphere to increase employee satisfaction and thereby increase effectiveness, establishment a climate of trust towards managers and organizational goals in the staff and a clear and transparent vision and the participation and interaction between managers and staff in terms of dialogue, negotiation and engagement to provide a suitable field for creativity. With regard to transformational leadership in increasing knowledge sharing, organizations are encouraged to provide the basis for the ever-greater and better knowledge sharing in the organization and, consequently, improve individual and organizational performance by applying transformational leadership style, build trust in organizational goals, draw up clear organizational goals, provide satisfaction and job security, pay attention to staffing needs, provide career advancement and take into account the necessary training in the knowledge sharing process. Given the fact that knowledge sharing increases creativity, it is suggested to provide appropriate context for sharing knowledge in the organization by utilizing programs such as educating managers and leaders about new concepts and approaches for sharing knowledge, design and implementation of documentation mechanisms from the findings and experiences of the organization' members during the conduct of activities and use of appropriate motivational tools for sharing employee knowledge with the use of information systems to record, maintain and retrieve them and the organization's commitment to periodic assessment of organizational knowledge and the provision of written reports and the creation of a quiet, healthy, dynamic and secure environment and institutionalize knowledge sharing.

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