Investigating the Relationship between Management Style and Creativity of Academic Principals of Tehran Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between management style and creativity of academic principals of Tehran secondary schools in 90-91 academic years. 150 principal of boys' and girls' of Tehran school districts (total: 19) were selected by random sampling. a thirty-point Likert scale was used to determine management style, a sixty questions Torrance test was used to measure creativity and a questionnaire was used to determine principals' characteristics. T-test, chi-square, correlation coefficient and regression were used for data analysis. The results indicate that: 1. there is no significant relationship between management styles of private schools, public schools and model schools, 2. there is any significant relationship between creativity of male and female principals, 3. among variables of age, gender, management style, and management background, academic background of principal, management style can more significantly predict principal's creativity.

Key words: Creativity, Management Style, Secondary Grade;

Introduction

At the present time education as a micro-system of society plays a significant role in development process. If development factors are taken into account in different social, political, cultural, economic and educational dimensions, the role of education cannot inevitably be ignored. Therefore, such organization which itself facilitates development and is the engine of all development aspects is in pressing need of self-development. In the process of self-development, changing structure, aims and methods is inevitable, and one of the techniques to change education and consequently academic management is to apply participatory management. In a large organization like ministry of education which is faced with numerous problems in planning, organization, coordination, supervision and leadership, application of participatory management is an inevitable necessity. The basic philosophy of participatory management is a foundation for quality control and innovation in workplace. Nowadays, high dissatisfaction of employees and reduction of work force productivity encourages approval of participatory management more than ever. Experts consider staff dissatisfaction and indifference as central contributors to reduction of productivity [26]. In large organizations like education participation can be a strong arm for management which regulates many problems of organization [41]. In addition, as affairs of education become more and more complicated principals are required to establish appropriate human relations with staff and bring into play their opinions. Rapid changes and the necessity to make use of novel ideas in effectiveness of management and efficiency of organization activities are the most important features of organizational systems. Organization staffs are the most valuable assets of organizations as they possess ideas, thought and creativity. For the same reason, it can be held that participatory management is one of the management styles which can establish the identity of this asset proportionate to its features and attributes. This style endeavors to improve human identity and avoid instrumental identity of humans and contribute to activation of their ideas to more effectively realize objectives of organization. The real value of ideas is their participation in organization-related decisions [21]. Participatory managers consult with their staff, inform them of difficulties and participate them in decision-making so that they work like one team. In participatory management, managers are not authoritative people. They neither lose control of affairs nor forget management responsibilities. Participatory managers bear final responsibility of the unit they are in charge of, but they have learnt to participate with those who work honestly and correctly. The result of this
procedure is that by feeling involvement, staffs achieve group objectives.

Investigating the present status of organizations or academic environments reveals that there are significant inhibitory problems in creating an adequate environment to foster creative thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills [32] because creativity and innovation lead to growth and evolution of organization, improving productivity, increasing quality of goods and services, success in competition, increasing staff motivation and job satisfaction, reduction of costs, losses and waste of resources, diversification of goods and services, reduction of bureaucracy and encouragement of pragmatism. Therefore, organizations must do their best to carry out widespread research with the aim of creating, encouraging and institutionalizing creativity and innovation [14].

Creativity or innovation deals with creating and finding new ideas and innovating in applying ideas. From management point of view mere creativity is not enough, ideas must be put into action which requires applying new ideas in planning as every successful plan involves thousands of new ideas [31]. Considering scientific studies about different theories and styles of management clearly indicate that most creative and innovative motives and personalities and activities are under influence of managerial styles and theories. People are creative and innovative by itself, but if they work in an organization which is affected by classical management and has mechanical structure and authoritative management style, their creativity process faces some problems and even does not complete. In a bureaucratic organization too managers do not succeed. Creative and innovative manager and staff is not sufficient for creativity, but structure, strategy, environment, technology, size and life cycle, ability to control its human resources, culture and authorities must advocate this creativity [45].

Advocates of participatory management believe that organizations can reflect concerns of staff obtain novel ideas and develop the sense of unity and creativity [35]. Tabatabai (1999) assume that participatory management is a step toward evolution which is in agreement with general regime of world. Improving quality, increasing output, reducing wastes, economizing, etc. are some of the numerous objectives of this thinking [43]. Undoubtedly, Participatory management is a must in schools. A dynamic, efficient and effective academic system can be achieved through participation of teachers in management and delegating more responsibilities to schools. A system whose members have great self-confidence and personal differences are taken into account and members are aware of their merits and competences, creativity, innovation and group effectiveness develop [2].

According to the literature, as employees are not involved in decision-making, they resist against renovation and change, abdicate responsibility and don't show enough sympathy. In such management systems less creativity and innovation occur. Factors like low staff motivation, no participation in decision-making, low manager-staff interaction, refusing responsibility lead to the failure of most programs of education. On the contrary, when employees are participated in decision-making by manager, they feel satisfaction, self-respect and freedom and therefore they bring about more productivity of organization [49]. In participatory management, manager consults with colleagues and subordinates and in practice makes use of their viewpoints and suggestions for decision-making and selecting the solution. Self-expression and being in the course of events of students, teachers and employees are considered by manager [32]. Leadership is defined as a participation which involves employees in all levels of hierarchy in decision-making and implementing decisions [10]. Participatory management is the process of coordination and permeation of employees in different levels of decision-making process in an active, real, voluntary, conscious in the direction of objectives so that it brings about motivation of staffs, trying to achieve objectives, undertaking responsibility and innovativeness [39]. Participatory management can be defined as staff participation in different areas like planning, decision-making, enforcement, control and evaluation [29]. Bartel (2006) describes participatory management as participation and effectiveness of staff in effective decisions of organizations [9]. Participatory management model can be employed in academic organizations and scholastic management. The application of this model in scholastic management is manifested in the following administrative techniques [41].

1. School-baseness: School management is the basis of decentralization of authority at school level which provides new strategies to expand participation of staff, students, parents and society in decision-making for school.
2. Decision-making councils: in participatory management, teacher council, student council, school council, etc. must become active. They must play an active role in participatory management and possess decision-making power. One of the differences between participatory and authoritative management is that in authoritative management teachers are not entitled to express their viewpoints in school decision-makings because of dictatorship. Teacher council is the best decision-making center in schools. When teachers are involved in proposing solutions and making decisions, they support that solution or decision which reduces likely resistance against the implementation of them.
3. Forming study groups: developing these specialized and research groups in schools can have following functions toward the objectives of...
participatory management and produce dynamism, creativity and innovativeness.
a. Pedagogic and academic planning  
b. Presentation and implementation of active teaching methods  
c. Presentation and implementation of scientific methods of testing and measurement of academic progress of students.
4. Developing evaluation notebooks: in participatory management accountability to what is done is essential but not as that of classical management. Therefore, it seems necessary to develop evaluation notebooks to evaluate all components of school system [41].
   The notion of conventional managements is the opposite of participatory management which is dealt with in classical theories. The literature of studies and research in the area of classical theory dates back to late eighteenth century. Generally, this theory evolved in three directions of bureaucracy, administrative and scientific management. The mentioned streams were basically founded based on similar assumptions and have equal scientific effect. Advocates of these three intellectual streams, organizations have a mechanistic structure. They identify organization as a structure consisting of authorities, objectives, roles, activities, communications and other factors which exist in the interpersonal relationship of those who work in a group [45]. Classical theory underlines dutifulness, rationality, behaving according to fundamentals, preserving hierarchy and professionalism. Rigidity of laws and inflexibility, stiffness of personality, emperor like self-eternity and self-centeredness, excessive authority of unqualified people, and anxiety and nervousness in organization are some disadvantages of classical management [22]. Classical theory implies bureaucratic and mechanic organizations which centralization of power, above mentioned rules and procedures, limited control domain, trivial use of work groups and impersonal and formal agreement are some of its features.
   On the other hand, authorities in social sciences pay considerable attention to creativity. Papalia considers creativity as the ability to see thing with a new and unusual viewpoint and to notice problems which are not distinguishable by others and then to provide new, unusual and effective approaches [20]. 
   In participatory management productivity is high, costs reduce in the competition direction, and staffs are satisfactorily happy [46]. In his study to establish organizational creativity, Woodman states that:
1. Free exchange of information in group situations enhances creativity.  
2. Creativity increases in an organizational atmosphere which encourages risk-taking.  
3. Mere obedience of rules and regulations reduces creativity.  

Maken (1991) introduced 5 factors which enhance creativity:
1. Encouraging and rewarding creativity  
2. External motivation  
3. Encouraging organized working habits  
4. Planning for participatory management and job enforcement  
5. Paving the way for professional development [23].  
   Amabil(1988) states that direct and precise supervision of staffs reduce their creativity. King and Anderson (1990) express in this regard that participation has a positive influence on individual's creativity in organizations. In examining personal values, organization context and self-perception of employees about creativity in Egyptian organizations, Rice (2006) states that manager's authoritative behavior has a negative relationship with employees' creativity. In addition, creativity of employees is low in directly-controlled hierarchical organizations. Conversely, creativity of employees is high in organizations which supportive behavior, high risk-taking, free and reliable space dominates. Esalmi poor (1995) concluded that participatory management increases productivity, saves costs, reduces wastes and enhances work force creativity [24]. Present study endeavors to investigate following hypotheses:
H1: there is a significant relationship between the managerial style and creativity of principals.
H2: there are significant differences between the managerial style of public, private and non-profit schools.
H3: There are significant differences between male and female principals' creativity.
H4: there are significant differences between the managerial styles of male and female training principals.
H5: among variables such as age, managerial experience, gender, educational background, style has the greatest impact on creativity.

Methodology:
   The objective of present study was to investigate the relationship between management style and creativity of principals of Tehran secondary schools. The secondary objective of this research was to examine the effect of variables like age, gender, management experience, and academic activity experience and management style on creativity. It is a descriptive-correlative research. The population of this study consists of all principals of Tehran secondary schools who undertake the management of an academic unit in 2011-2012 academic years. According to Cochran's formula, sample size was 150. 71 principal were female, and 79 principal were male who were selected by stratified random sampling. Two instruments were used to collect data:
1. Management style scale: it consists of 30 questions which is arranged according to Likert scale. It measures four management styles: Authoritative, authoritative-philanthropic, consultative, and participatory management. This scale was filled in by principals of academic units. In order to examine the validity of questionnaire, some authorities and experts study the questionnaire and after making necessary revisions and changes the final version of it was prepared. In order to investigate the reliability of questionnaire, it was distributed randomly among 50 teachers of Tehran secondary schools. Afterwards, Cronbach’s alpha (.93) was calculated.

2. Torrance verbal creativity test was conducted to measure teachers' creativity. It consists of 60 three-item questions.

The collected data were analyzed by descriptive statistics (mean, percentage, data classification) and inferential statistics: Pearson's correlation coefficient (testing 1st hypothesis), Chi-square (testing 2nd hypothesis), independent groups t-test (testing 3rd hypothesis), Chi-square and independent groups t-test (testing 4th hypothesis) and multi-variate regression (testing 5th hypothesis).

Results:

The results in relation to the managerial style of training principals were shown that there was no principal in imperious style; there was 11.4% in imperious charity style, 77.2% in consultative style, and 11.4% in participatory style.
The result of this study is consistent with the result of Fallahi (1995), Azhdari fam (1993), Khalili (1994), and Rokh bakhsheh's (1994) research. Tosi (1991) quoted from Vailiz that leadership style has had effect on ingenuity and creativity. Alan Dank (1995) participatory managerial style has impact on staff's creativity and innovation. Fallahi (1374) wrote that the managerial style would be used for ingenuity and creativity of the staff.

**Conclusions:**

The results of this study show that:

1. The managerial style shows a significant relationship with creativity and there is no significant difference between the creativity of male and female educational principals, and also there is no significant difference between the managerial styles of principals in private, non-profits and public schools.
2. Among variables such as age, gender, managerial style, and teaching experience of educational principals, it was only managerial style that had effect on principals' creativity. It had impact on subtest scores of flexibility tests of Torrance creativity and had no effect on fluidity, originality, elaboration. Understanding these factors can possibly contribute to the education planning experts and authorities to provide situation in which competent and interested individuals are selected for the post of management.
3. The authorities must establish criteria for selecting principals that if they had the scientific and practical qualifications to be able to take the post. Principal must supervise and guide school staffs with spending time and provide an environment where creative ideas are reinforced at school. With creating new designs and approaches promote teachers individually and by group. And also provide a situation in which teachers using their all capacity and ensure that they teaching the students to apply their sacred duty.
4. Given that it has been proved that creativity can be taught [1], planning authorities in in-service educational programs should design these trainings to foster principals' creativity. Principals should have been had more freedom in specific and clear frames to be able to develop their creativity.
5. Creative principals encouraged by the authorities. Principals are encouraged to form a consultative and participative managerial style in their own managing.
6. In this study determination of managerial style is carried out only from the perspective of teachers. In future research, principal function should be investigated from the viewpoint of the authorities and staffs.
7. Other tests can be used to determine the level of principals' creativity. And other variables such as personality like self-esteem and core self-control, marital status, and socioeconomic conditions can
affect the managerial style and creativity that are not included in this study.

8 - According to various experiments and researches, it seems that staff's participation in decision-making is essential and using participatory management should be suggested to principals. The supporter of participatory management believe that through consultation with staffs and involving them in participatory management, organizations can reflect the concerns of staffs, gain new ideas and develop a sense of integrity and creativity among them.

References

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