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An Investigation and Comparison of the Aspects and Outcomes of the Transformational Leadership style Among Azad University and Payam-e Noor University Principals

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of the present study is to investigate and compare the aspects and outcomes of the transformational leadership style among Azad University and Payam-e-Noor University principals in the 2011-2012 academic years. **Method:** The study adopts an applied approach and is a descriptive survey with a population including all 82 principals of the Fars Province Payam-e-Noor University and Azad University, using the full counting method. For each principal 5 to 7 of their direct subordinates including vice-principals, managers, and deans were selected using random sampling. The instruments adopted include the standard MLQ, which investigates the aspects of the transformational leadership styles (ideal influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration) and outcomes (greater-than-expected attempt, effectiveness, and satisfaction). The questionnaire was validated using the supervisor and advisor's opinions and the reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha. Data analysis was conducted using the descriptive statistics components including frequency, percentage, and mean; findings were analyzed through correlation coefficients, and one-way variance analysis, using the SPSS. **Results:** The findings indicated no significant difference between Payam-e-Noor University and Azad University principals in terms of ideal influence and individualized consideration; however the latter gained greater score than the former in inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation. Also, in term of greater-than-expected attempt and leading effectiveness, Azad University principals gained greater scores than their counterparts in Payam-e-Noor University; however, no significant difference between the two groups was identified in terms of satisfaction. **Conclusion:** The results also revealed that the aspects of transformational leadership style are correlated with greater-than-expected attempt and satisfaction; and ideal influence is correlated with effectiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

This template, modified in MS Word 2003 and it is the official guide for authors of General Scientific Researches Leading involves influencing individuals so that they try to achieve group goals with interest (Irannejad and Sasangohar 2007). An individual's leadership style involves their behavior patterns while influencing other individuals' behaviors, based on other people's accounts of their behaviors. In other words, it indicates how leaders interact with their subordinates (Perra, 2000). As the leader of the organization, a manager can adopt various styles in leading the human force. Proper behavior patterns adopted by the manager create strong motivation in the staff and increase job satisfaction among the staff. Leadership is a key management component since other components of management must be developed and implemented by managers and leaders through thinking, working, innovation, and creation (Jasby, 1998).

The transformational and interactive leadership style is rooted in the works of Burns. Burns (1978) investigated the lives of great political and social leaders who transformed the nations, societies, and groups. He concluded that leaders adopt two different sets of behaviors to influence their followers: a. interactive leadership, b. transformational leadership.

Burns (1978) defined transformational leadership as a factor which motivates followers through making the ideals and values attractive. Since transformational leaders have a clear vision of the future, they seek to make changes and direct the organization in a direction which realizes their dreams. According to Bass and Avolio (1993), transformational leadership takes place when the leader stimulates interest in the followers to take a new attitude toward their jobs. A transformational leader creates an awareness of the mission or insight of the

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organization and stimulates the followers and colleagues to pursue interests which benefit the group, rather than themselves (Mayer HaghighiFardand et al, 2010).

Recent theories have identified transformational leadership as an influential leadership style which involves ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Story, 2004). Three outcomes of leadership include creating greater-than-expected attempts among the followers, effectiveness and satisfaction, which can be great indexes for evaluating the practical benefits of different leadership styles (Bass and Avolio, 1994).

In short, Burns believes that the secret of transformational leadership is that it leads people toward improving themselves. It is well reflected in four aspects of this leadership style (ideal influence and inspirational motivation are associated with abilities and features such as visualizing the future, challenging the followers by high standards, creating enthusiasm, meaning and challenge, using symbols and presenting ideas and stimulating the minds and emotions of the followers. Individualized consideration and mental stimulation involve behaviors which contribute to the development of the followers' skills and abilities to think about old issues in new ways) (Noorshahi, 2008).

Research Questions:

- 1- Are the principals of the Fars Province Payam-e-Noor University and Azad University different in terms of possessing four dimensions of transformational leadership (ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration)?
- 2- Are the principals of the Fars Province Payam-e-Noor University and Azad University different in terms of the outcomes of leadership (greater-than-expected attempt, effectiveness, and satisfaction)?
- 3- Are the aspects of transformational leadership and leadership outcomes correlated?

Methodology:

Regarding the purpose, the study is an applied one with a descriptive-survey nature. Conducted in the Fars Province Azad and Payam-e-Noor Universities, the study has a population including all 82 principals of these universities selected using the full counting method and for each principal, 5 to 7 direct subordinates including vice-principals, deans of departments and divisions were selected using random sampling.

Data Gathering Instrument:

The instrument used in the study was the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ form 5x) 5th edition, which involved 44 items and a 5-option Lickert scale in 2 editions for leaders and colleagues. Each individual's leadership style was measured based on the average of their own scores and those of their colleagues.

The questionnaires were validated by the supervisor and the advisor. Cronbach's alpha demonstrated high reliability. One exception was the ideal influence variable with 4 items and low Alpha's coefficient, which was improved to 0.745 after eliminating item number 22. The reliability of the principals' questionnaire was 0.79 and that of the colleagues was 0.82.

3. Results:

First question: Are the principals of the Fars Province Payam-e-Noor University and Azad University different in terms of possessing four dimensions of transformational leadership (ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration)?

To test this question, the one-way variance analysis was adopted. Table 1 demonstrates the mean and SD of four aspects of the transformational leadership style among Payam-e-Noor and Azad University principals.

The above table demonstrates that the principals of both universities gained the highest scores in ideal influence. Inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration were in the following ranks, respectively. The SD of the data shows the accuracy of the results. The lower the SD is, the higher the accuracy. The SD's of the four dimensions among the principals of both universities indicate that the scores of intellectual stimulation and ideal influence had the highest and lowest accuracies, respectively.

a. Ideal influence

In order to test the difference between the principals of the two universities in terms of ideal influence, the one-way variance analysis was adopted. As the results, demonstrated in table 2, show, the principals of the two universities are not different in terms of this aspect ($F(1, 54) = 0.305, p \leq 0.583$).

Table 1: Mean and SD of Principals' scores in transformational leadership dimensions.

Total			Payam-e-Noor Principals			Azad University Principals			Aspects
N	SD	$\bar{X}$	N	SD	$\bar{X}$	N	SD	$\bar{X}$	
55	3.52	24.54	28	3.18	24.28	27	3.89	24.81	Ideal influence
55	2.31	12.85	28	2.49	12.05	27	1.79	13.68	Inspirational motivation
55	2.2	11.50	28	2.45	10.67	27	1.52	12.37	Intellectual stimulation
55	2.41	11.45	28	2.35	11.53	27	2.51	11.37	Individualized consideration

Source: findings of study

Table 2: One-way variance analysis for ideal influence.

Significance	F	Mean of squares	Degree of freedom	Sum of squares	variable
0.583	0.305	3.84	1	3.84	Intergroup
		12.60	53	668.28	Error
			54	627.13	Total

Source: findings

b. Inspirational stimulation:

In order to test the difference between the principals of the two universities in terms of inspirational motivation, the one-way variance analysis was adopted. As the results, demonstrated in table 3, show, the principals of the two universities are significantly different in terms of this aspect ($F(1, 54) = 7.70, p \leq 0.008$). Given the mean scores of the aspects demonstrated in table 1, it could be concluded that the managers of Azad University scored higher than the Payam-e-Noor University principals.

Table 3: One-way variance analysis in inspirational motivation.

significance	F	Mean of squares	Degree of freedom	Sum of squares	variable
0.008	7.70	36.59	1	36.59	Inter-group
		4.75	53	251.74	error
			54	288.33	total

Source: findings

c. Intellectual stimulation:

In order to test the difference between the principals of the two universities in terms of intellectual stimulation, the one-way variance analysis was adopted. As the results, demonstrated in table 3, show, the principals of the two universities are significantly different in terms of this aspect ($F(1, 54) = 9.35, p \leq 0.003$). Given the mean scores of the aspects demonstrated in table 1, it could be concluded that the managers of Azad University scored higher than the Payam-e-Noor University principals.

Table 4: Results of one-way analysis for intellectual stimulation.

significance	F	Mean of squares	Degree of freedom	Sum of squares	variable
0.003	9.35	39.34	1	39.34	Inter-group
		4.20	53	222.90	error
			54	262.24	total

Source: findings

d. Individualized consideration:

The one-way variance analysis was used to investigate the difference between Azad and Payam-e-Noor University principals in terms of individualized consideration. The results indicated no significant difference ($F(1, 54) = 0.063, p \leq 0.802$).

Table 5: One-way variance analysis for individualized consideration.

Significance	F	Mean of squares	Degree of freedom	Sum of squares	variable
0.802	0.063	0.367	1	0.376	Inter-group
		5.92	53	314.26	Error
			54	314/63	Total

Source: findings

Second question: Are the principals of the Fars Province Payam-e-Noor University and Azad University different in terms of the outcomes of leadership (greater-than-expected attempt, effectiveness, and satisfaction)?

In order to test this question, the one-way variance analysis was adopted. Table 6 demonstrates the means and SDs of outcomes of the transformational leadership style in Azad and Payam-e-Noor University principals.

Table 6: Means and SDs of principals' scores in outcomes of transformational leadership style.

total			Payam-e-Noor University principals			Azad University principals			dimensions
N	SD	$\bar{X}$	N	SD	$\bar{X}$	N	SD	$\bar{X}$	
55	95.1	09.9	28	06.2	33.8	27	49.1	87.9	More-than-expected attempts
55	74.2	54.11	28	75.2	78.10	27	55.2	33.12	effectiveness
55	33.1	67.5	28	07.1	92.5	27	53.1	40.5	satisfaction

These results indicate that the principals of Azad and Payam-e-Noor Universities gained the highest scores in leadership effectiveness. Greater-than-expected attempt and satisfaction were in the following ranks, respectively. The SD's also indicate the accuracy of the results. The lower the SD's are, the higher the accuracy of measurements. Given the SD of outcomes among Azad and Payam-e-Noor University principals, the scores of satisfaction and effectiveness had the highest and lowest accuracies, respectively.

a. Greater-than-expected attempt:

In order to investigate the difference between the principals of the two universities in terms of greater-than-expected attempt, the one-way variance analysis was used. The results, shown in table 7, indicate that there is a significant difference between the principals of the two universities in this aspect ($F(1, 54) = 9.58, P \leq 0.0003$). Azad University principals gained higher scores.

Table 7: One-way variance analysis for greater-than-expected attempt.

Variable	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean of squares	F	significance
Inter-group	32.22	1	32.22	9.85	0.003
Error	173.32	53	3.27		
Total	205.54	54			

Source: findings

b. Effectiveness of leadership:

In order to investigate the difference between the principals of the two universities in terms of leadership effectiveness, the one-way variance analysis was used. The results, shown in table 8, indicate that there is a significant difference between the principals of the two universities in this aspect ($F(1, 54) = 4.66, P \leq 0.03$). Azad University principals gained higher scores.

Table 8: One-way variance analysis for leadership effectiveness.

variable	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean of squares	F	Significance
Inter-group	32.92	1	32.92	4.66	0.03
Error	374.21	53	7.06		
total	407.13	54			

Source: findings

c. Satisfaction:

In order to investigate the difference between the principals of the two universities in terms of satisfaction, the one-way variance analysis was used. The results, shown in table 9, indicate that there is no significant difference between the principals of the two universities in this aspect ($F(1, 54) = 2.13, P \leq 0.150$). Azad University principals gained higher scores.

Table 9:

variable	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean of squares	F	significance
Inter-group	3.73	1	3.73	2.13	0.150
Error	92.87	53	1.75		
total	96.60	54			

Third question: are the aspects of transformational leadership and outcomes of leadership correlated?

In order to answer this question, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used. Table 6 shows the mean and SD of the outcomes of transformational leadership style in Azad and Payam-e-Noor University principals.

As indicated by table 9, ideal influence ($r = 0.48, P < 0.01$), inspirational motivation ($r = 0.32, P < 0.01$), intellectual stimulation ($r = 0.44, P < 0.01$), individualized consideration ($r = 0.38, P < 0.01$), were positively correlated with greater-than-expected attempt. In other words, as the skills of transformational leadership grow, the principals' attempts in their jobs will also increase. Also, only ideal influence was positively correlated with effectiveness ($r = 0.36, P < 0.01$), while inspirational motivation ($r = 0.15$), intellectual stimulation ($r = 0.19$), and individualized consideration ($r = 0.19$) were not correlated with effectiveness. This implies that as ideal influence increase, the principals' effectiveness also grows. Finally, ideal influence ($r = 0.42, p < 0.01$), inspirational motivation ($r = 0.62, P < 0.01$), intellectual stimulation ($r = 0.45, P < 0.01$), individualized consideration ($r = 0.57, P < 0.01$) were positively correlated with satisfaction. This means that as transformational leadership skills increase, job satisfaction increases as well. The ** sign indicates significance at 0.01, and * indicates significance at 0.05. The closer the correlation between the two variables is to 1 or -1, the stronger the linearity is between the two. Therefore, inspirational stimulation and satisfaction are correlated more than the others.

Table 10: Pearson's correlation coefficient matrix for transformational leadership dimensions and outcomes based on total score.

variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ideal influence	1					
Inspirational motivation	0.60**	1				
Intellectual stimulation	0.50**	0.56**	1			
Individualized consideration	0.68**	0.75**	0.63**	1		
Greater-than-expected attempt	0.48**	0.32**	0.44**	0.38**	1	
Effectiveness	0.36**	0.15	0.19	0.20	0.61**	1
Satisfaction	0.42**	0.62**	0.45**	0.57**	0.53**	0.38**

4. Discussion:

This study was conducted to investigate and compare the aspects and outcomes of the transformational leadership style among principals of Azad and Payam-e-Noor Universities of the Fars Province.

According to the descriptive findings, a majority of the principals tend to adopt a transformational attitude in the leadership; 60% of them scored high and average in this regard. This is in line with the findings of Noorshahi, Bazrafsha, and Poor Shafei, who investigated the attitudes of Iranian college principals in 2003. Also, the investigation of the aspects of the transformational leadership style among principals indicates that a majority of the principals scored high in ideal influence, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation. This is in line with the finding of Mugholi (2002), who investigated the current state of leadership in Iranian organizations and measured the aspects of transformational leadership. According to Mugholi (2002), inspirational motivation, ideal behaviors, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration have been accepted as the aspects of transformational leadership in successful Iranian organizations. Nevertheless, in this study, principals gained low scores in individualized consideration, which is an important aspect of transformational leadership. This shows that this aspect is of minor presence in the principals' leadership. The factors contributing to this result can be the influence of social and cultural variables as facilitating or prohibiting factors for managerial behaviors. The social background of the organization can facilitate or prohibit certain forms of leadership behaviors in the organization, where it is possible to take into account the individuals' autonomous identities and their abilities, talents, weaknesses and strengths only if they hold certain political, social, and religious beliefs. Demonstrating an individually considered behavior can be considered as an anti-value or anti-norm by a manager or leader who holds special beliefs and he/ she avoid demonstrating such behaviors.

Regarding the first question, as indicated by tables 2, 3, 4, and 5, no significant difference was observed between the two groups in term of ideal influence and individualized consideration; however, in inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation, Azad University principals scored higher than their Payam-e-Noor counterparts. This might be accounted for by the educational nature of these universities. In ideal influence and consideration, the transformational leadership theory predicts the subordinates' emotional dependence on their leaders. In this study, the low scores of principals in individualized consideration could serve as the basis of staff's emotional dependence on managers. Equal maximum scores of principals in both universities indicate that these managers possess charismatic features regarding the ethical outcomes of decisions and focusing on trust, which can be a great strength for them. It should be noted that the managers' religious backgrounds as a criterion for choosing university principals boost ideal influence in them. In inspirational motivation, Azad University principals scored higher than their Payam-e-Noor counterparts. They seem to have set high standards by giving new ideas and challenging staff. This might be a source of strength for them in facing new challenges and complexities. High scores of Azad University principals in intellectual stimulation indicate their strengths in innovation, creativity and taking risks.

Regarding the second question, the results indicated that the two groups were different in terms of greater-than-expected attempt and effectiveness; Azad University principals scored higher than their Payam-e-Noor counterparts. However, in satisfaction, no difference was observed. Azad University principals scored higher in greater-than-expected attempt, which can be accounted for by the fact that they have higher expectations of their management compared to others. No difference was observed in satisfaction, which can be a sign of homogeneous management atmosphere in the country's state and private organizations. It should be noted that this study was conducted when 30 out of 42 Payam-e-Noor Universities were newly-established and do not possess long histories like Azad University centers, therefore, the fact that they scored lower than Azad University might be due to their lack of enough experience. Given the fast development of Payam-e-Noor University, this study might lead to different results in the future.

Regarding the third question, as demonstrated in table 10, the aspects of the transformational leadership style – ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration – are positively correlated with greater-than-expected attempt, indicating principals' increased attempt as transformational leadership skills grow. Also, only ideal influence was positively correlated with effectiveness. This implies that as ideal influence increases, the managers' effectiveness increases. Finally, ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration are positively correlated with satisfaction. This means that as transformational leadership skills grow, satisfaction increases. These findings to

some extent prove the theories in the literature since transformational leadership has been proposed by various sources to improve effectiveness, attempt and satisfaction for today's organizations, which the present study approves.

In conclusion, it should be noted that:

- 1- The principals in Azad and Payam-e-Noor Universities are not different in terms of ideal influence.
- 2- Azad University principals scored higher in inspirational motivation, i.e. the two groups are significantly different in this regard.
- 3- Azad University principals scored higher in intellectual stimulation, i.e. the two groups are significantly different in this regard.
- 4- The two groups were not significantly different in terms of individualized consideration.
- 5- The two groups were significantly different in terms of greater-than-expected attempt; Azad university principals scored higher.
- 6- There is a significant difference between the two groups in effectiveness. The means of scores indicate higher scores for Azad University principals.
- 7- No significant difference was observed in satisfaction.
- 8- The aspects of transformational leadership are positively correlated with greater-than-expected attempts and satisfaction. Also, ideal influence is positively correlated with effectiveness.

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