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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCUS OF CONTROL AND A TEACHER´S TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

Abstract

Only minimal attention is paid to the complexity and potential of psychological knowledge of the effectiveness of educational leadership in Slovakia. The aim of this study is to analyze the interrelationships between transformative leadership and personal causality among Slovak teachers. The research group consisted of 113 primary and high school teachers in the Slovak Republic. The level of personal causality was determined using the Origin-Pawn questionnaire (De Charms, 1976) and individual types of a transformative leader's behavior were determined using the Leader Behavior Inventory (LPI, Kouzes & Posner, 2017). The relationships of the variables were subjected to a Pearson correlation coefficient. The average values of individually monitored types of behavior in the selected model of the transformative leader were closer to below-average values. Most often, our respondents tended to support the heart and enable growth. The correlations between the observed types of behavior and personal causality were significant and positive.

Keywords: Transformative Leader • Internality • Locus of Control • Teacher.

ZALEŻNOŚĆ MIĘDZY POCZUCIEM UMIEJSCOWIENIA KONTROLI A PRZYWÓDZTWEM TRANSFORMACYJNYM NAUCZYCIELA

Streszczenie

Tylko minimalną uwagę zwraca się na złożoność i potencjał wiedzy psychologicznej w skuteczności przywództwa w edukacji na Słowacji. Celem artykułu jest analiza powiązań między przywództwem transformacyjnym a osobowością słowackich nauczycieli. Grupa badawcza składała się ze 113 nauczycieli szkół podstawowych i średnich w Republice Słowackiej. Poczucie umiejscowienia kontroli określono za pomocą kwestionariusza Origin/Pawn/Pešiak (De Charms, 1976), a poszczególne typy zachowań lidera transformującego za pomocą Inwentarza zachowań lidera (LPI, Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Zależności między zmiennymi poddano współczynnikowi korelacji Pearsona. Średnie wartości poszczególnych monitorowanych typów zachowania wybranego modelu lidera transformacyjnego były bliższe wartościom poniżej średniej. Korelacje między obserwowanymi typami zachowań a sposobem interpretowania przyczyn zdarzeń były znaczące i pozytywne.

Słowa kluczowe: przywódca transformujący • osobowość • miejsce kontroli • nauczyciel.

Introduction

The transformation of education, following the example of many foreign models, cannot be prevented. According to foreign studies, leadership plays a key role in increasing the efficiency of school education as a process of deliberate social influence, where the focus is on communication, creating a new paradigm and improving school culture. Through studying professional resources, it is possible to divide the key concepts of education leadership into three categories: school leadership, educational leadership, and teacher leadership, whilst this categorization does not take into account the related specifications of leadership (e.g. transactional, transformational, instructional, collaborative leadership, etc.), but only target groups, i.e. school management and teachers. „*Teacher leadership* is generally considered to be the ability and

energy to contribute to the school development beyond own classroom responsibilities. Teacher leaders are those who work with their colleagues to influence educational and pedagogical practice throughout the whole school…" (ozier, 2007, p. 56).

Our previous analyses (Sollárová et.al., 2019) confirm that the terms „school leadership" and „teacher leadership" are most clearly defined in terms of content, where „school leadership" refers only to school/education managers, while „teacher leadership" is defined and applies only to teachers. Leadership is often defined as a process, person, performance, or a group depending on the initial theory. One of the most current is the transactional and transformative approach to leadership. Transformative leadership is based on the leader's inner motivation and charisma, using four basic tools: idealized influence (the goal is to identify his followers), inspiration (the goal is to share the leader's vision with followers), intellectual stimulation (the goal is to involve followers in solving the problem) and personal approach (individual approach). These characteristics are also anchored in the theory of Kouzes and Posner (2013) and their tools for measuring leadership types of behavior (Leadership Personality Inventory, LPI).

Transformative leadership shows behavior that is observable, measurable, and developable. Therefore, it becomes a suitable evaluation criterion and a goal of development programs. Despite the development of adequate forms of behavior, many studies (Judge & Bono, 2000; Lim & Ployhart, 2004, etc.) confirm the existence of permanent personality characteristics of leaders that affect whether or not and how the leader will apply a transformative approach and thus influence the group performance.

The most analyzed model of leadership-related personality characteristics is the Big Five model by Costa and McCrae. An extensive meta-analysis from 2002 (Judge & Bono, 2000) is devoted to the issue of personality traits of the Big Five in relation to leadership, performed on 73 research samples. Other, frequently researched variables in relation to the emergence of leadership among respondents, include e.g. emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, masculinity, dominance, motivation or internality. Measuring

the leader's effectiveness is complex and most frequently realized from three perspectives – measuring the performance of the group, evaluating the others (superiors, colleagues, etc.) and self-evaluation (self-effectiveness). Performance motivation as a tendency to deliver high performance also contributes significantly to the effectiveness of the leader. One of the theories attempting to elucidate the individual components of performance motivation is the theory of causal attributions inextricably linked to the theory of control location (Heider, Weiner, Heckhausen, in Nakonečný, 1996). Attribution theory helps to understand how a person explains his achievements, because the consequences of these explanations are important for performance-oriented behavior in the future in relation to the time stability of the attributed cause. The attribution is a subjective perception of events, things, words and such. The attention focus is primarily on perceived causes of behavior. The primary interest of attribution theories is the analysis of processes where the subject explains the behavior of others and their own by attributing certain behaviors or external forces, to the behavior based on observation and social situations.

Weiner, Frieze, Kukla, Reed, Rest and Rosenbaum were the first to apply the causal attribution approach in performance motivation research (in Weiner, B. - Kukla, A., 1970). They proposed a classification scheme in which the individual causes can be divided depending on their time stability and depending on whether they relate to the person him/herself (internal) or to the environment (external). The research of these authors shows that the cause of behavior can be attributed to oneself, a deliberate stimulus from the environment or the overall situation. Here, the attribution theory overlaps with the control localization theory. The success or failure explained by the person provides information about the place of control. People with an internal place of control attribute their success to abilities and effort, the failure to the lack of effort, i.e. they see the source of action in themselves (personal attribution). People with an external control location see their successes and failures in the role, a chance, the lack of skills, mood, bias of others or their help, i.e. more or less in the stimuli of the

environment (stimulus attribution) and in the situation (situational attribution). Success or failure in the performance of tasks has an objective basis in the form of a result that is higher or lower than the aspired goal.

The role of emotions in performance motivation is undeniable, especially in the case of fear and anxiety. The ability to perform successfully under the influence of fear largely determines the course of mental processes. On the background of a negative mental state, the performance is subsequently deformed and is often the cause of an unsuccessful result. The fear of failure is not the only inhibitory factor of success- aimed activity, but the fear of failure can inhibit human activity only in conjunction with low appreciation of one's abilities. In addition to fear and anxiety, joy, happiness, enjoyment, shame, guilt or anger also play an important role in performance motivation. Shame and guilt are often the result of failure in a performance situation. Shame is the result of the attribution of failure due to low abilities, and guilt is the result of the attribution of lack of effort. Shame is evoked by the public characteristic of the self, which is not controllable by the will.

Guilt follows a breach of the norm and is caused by a judgment of one's own responsibility. For this reason, shame leads to hopelessness and closure, and guilt encourages the behavior leading to modification of action. There is a relationship between the two emotions, which can be interpreted as the fact that both emotions contain negative self-esteem, which is painful, evokes tension, agitation and depression. Hopelessness occurs when individuals have a low ability or a task that is too demanding. In despair, the stability of the causes is also important. If an individual anticipates that the failure will recur in the future, hopelessness may occur. From the above-mentioned, the key role of human emotionality clearly follows – not only at the level of perception and orientation in one's own emotions, but also their management or management for success, which motivated us to analyze the relationship between transformative leadership and personal causality in teachers. This orientation is based on the project of APVV-17-0557 "Psychological approach to the creation, implementation and verification of the

competence model of development in education leaders", where one of the goals is the preparation of an undergraduate program for the development of personal competencies of a teacher-leader. The aim of the study was to find out whether there is a connection between the main types of behavior of a transformative leader and the causation in his/her behavior.

Research question:

Will there be a connection between different types of behavior of transformative leaders among teachers and their internality?

Sample

The research group consisted of primary and secondary school teachers who voluntarily participated in our research and were acquainted with its purpose, processing or use of data. The research group consisted of 113 teachers with an average age of 43 years. The gender representation was 84 women (74%) and 29 men (26%).

Methods

We determined the level of personal causality through the Origin-Pawn questionnaire (De Charms, 1976), which is based on De Charms' theory of motivation dividing individuals into originators (they have their destiny in their own hands, trust their own abilities, are active, have an initiative and they control their actions themselves) and pawns (low self-confidence, they are passive, resigned to fate - organized from the outside).

The questionnaire has the form of an assessment scale. It contains 18 statements to which the respondent expresses the degree of agreement on a scale of 1 - 4 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = partially disagree, 3 = partially agree, 4 = strongly agree). For our use, we have modified the questionnaire so that the record sheet is part of it istead of being on a separate sheet of paper. The resulting score ranges from 15 to 60. The higher the score, the more a person feels autonomous, competent, capable, independent and proactive. We

subjected the questionnaire to the method of back language translation for its use in our population, while we excluded items 5, 9, 14 from the total score due to their low differentiating ability in our population. The reliability of the questionnaire measured by Cronbach's alpha was .791.

The level of transformative leadership was determined using the Leadership Practices Inventory Kouzes & Posner, 2017, for which, as the first and unique tool in Slovakia, we have exclusive usage rights secured by an agreement with John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (All rights reserved. Used with permission for Kaliska within the project APVV-17-0557). LPI is an inventory that focuses on the analysis of five main types of a leader's behavior that can be measured, learned, but also trained. The authors of the theory, through long-term analysis of interviews, case studies and analysis of a number of research findings, tried to identify the behavior of a leader, which can lead to exceptional changes. They identified 5 basic types of behavior: 1) Showing the way; 2) Inspiration with a common vision; 3) Activity support; 4) Allowing others to grow; 5) Stimulating the heart. The score takes values from 6 to 60, with a higher score indicating a higher occurence of the given behavior. The reliability of the questionnaire measured by Cronbach's alpha for individual components takes values from .732 - .774.

The research data were processed using the program SPSS Statistics version 19. The univariate and bivariate descriptive analyses were followed by inferential statistical procedures. We assessed the normality of the variables distribution based on the distribution form description (skwness, kurtosis) and, as tab. 1 shows, none of the coefficients indicates significant deviations from the normal distribution. Therefore, we used Pearson's correlation coefficient to analyze the interrelationships.

Results

Table 1 shows that our respondents showed the highest average values in the variable of heart support (AM = 28.25) and the

lowest average values in the category of activity support (AM = 19.32) among the individual types of observed leadership behavior.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of a transformational leader´s behaviour and internality

	Mean	Median	SD	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
Modeling the way	21.31	22	.93	12	49	-.544	-.051
Inspiring the shared vision	23.36	24	.45	16	51	.033	-.591
Enabling other to act	19.32	20	.74	15	48	-.325	-.054
Challenging the process	24.73	25.5	.48	17	54	-.036	.258
Encouraging the heart	28.25	30	.75	14	45	.024	-.109
Internality	21.71	20	.71	23	58	.142	.502

Table 2 presents our research findings on the relationship between internality and individual types of leadership behavior.

Table 2. Correlate coeficients between transformational leader´s behaviour and internality

	Internality
Modeling the way	.370**
Inspiring the shared vision	.339**
Enabling other to act	.469***
Challenging the process	.512***
Encouraging the heart	.517***

** p< 0,01
*** p < 0,001

We found significant positive correlations between origin and behavioral tendency Heart support (r = .517 ***), Growth facilitation (r = .512 ***), activity support (r = .469 ***), but also show-

ing the path (r = .370 **) and inspiration with a common vision (r = .339 **).

Discussion and Conclussion

Leadership is known as the process of achieving goals through influencing followers based on a strong and attractive vision (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008). Leadership manifests itself in various ways in organizations and is influenced by a large number of factors, the most important being the leader's personality, the characteristics of his followers, the specificity of the educational context /in our case/ in which the process takes place. The interaction of all these factors results in the style of leadership practiced in the organization, regardless of size or area of activity. In recent years, two types of leadership have come to the fore: transactional and transformative. Transaction leaders influence people through a transaction: money or other reward (or punishment) in exchange for their work performance (predominance of external motivation). Transformative leadership involves a strong personal identification with the leader: followers share his vision and act beyond their own interest (internal motivation). (Miller, 2018). Following performance motivation, people who believe they can influence results through their own efforts, skills and qualities are referred to as internalists (originators), while those who perceive that their results are determined by external forces such as happiness. A coincidence, fate, and power of others are referred to as externalists (pawns). Several studies (Yukl, 2008; Kaufman, 2011; Dion, 2012) focused on the influence of the place of control on the leadership in the organization, different styles, as well as the employees' reactions to the leadership style. Findings suggest that leading internalists and externalists tend and exhibit different leadership styles (Tomal et al., 2014). At the same time, several studies confirm the connections of transformative leadership and internal localization of control (Chemers, 2000). However, all of them were implemented outside the educational context, which

led us to try to verify this relationship in our cultural and historical conditions of the educational environment.

Our findings clearly show that Slovak teachers are not very inclined to take the leading role. The average values of individual monitored behavior types of the selected model of the transformative leader were closer to below-average values. Most often, our respondents tended to support the heart, which is a behavior typical of mutual support and appreciation of the work of others. The second type of behavior used is enabling the growth, whose pillar is building trust and emotionally positive relationships in the team. Less often, our respondents look to the future and try to inspire others with a common vision. This finding partially confirms the predominance of transactional leadership in the conditions of educational practice in Slovakia, the essence of which lies in the existence of formally given leaders and thus leads to the school rather than the teacher leader. In our conditions, teachers are still predominantly motivated from the outside – by the financial side of the profession. This is also indicated by the lowest average score in the case of showing the way and support of activity (teachers do not significantly show leadership ambitions, do not take the initiative and do not present the values to which they would try to pull other colleagues). This leads us to recommend the development of leadership behavior as early as during the undergraduate preparation of students in teacher-trainee programs.

In analyzing the interrelationships of these types of behavior of the transformative leader and attributing the causes of our behavior, we found a weak and moderately significant relationship. We can therefore argue that our research has shown the existence of a relevant positive correlation between the place of control as a dimension of personality, and the behavior of a leader in terms of a transformative leadership style. In other words, a leader who believes he can influence results through his own efforts, skills, and qualities tends to behave like a transformative leader. The internal localization of control is therefore an important factor in the leader's effectiveness in the educational environment, too.

Compliance with ethical standards

Ethical approval procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the Institutional research committee Matej Bel University.

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