

The Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Psychological Empowerment Considering the Moderating Role of Organizational Education

(Case Study of the General Administration and Supplying and Educational Acts of Prisons)

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Abstract: The main aim of present study is investigating the relationship between transformational management and psychological empowerment considering the moderating role of organizational learning in general management of prisons and educational and supplying acts of Golestan province. This study is a descriptive survey study and it is a correlational study in term of its data collection and it is a practical research in term of its aim. This study includes four hypotheses and it has made use of questionnaire as a data collecting tool. The reliability coefficient for the utilized questionnaires was acceptable. The population of this study includes all of the employees of prisons general administrations and the educational and supplying acts which during the period of study there were 380 ones. 195 ones have been studied as sample which was chosen using simple random sampling method. Considering Komo and Bartlet test which was done he data of study had the needed quality and due to this reason factor analysis technique and structural equation method were used in order to analyses the study hypotheses. And also the Lisrel software having version 8.8 was used. The findings of this study witness that there is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and psychological empowerment of employees. There is a significant and positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational learning. There is a significant and positive relationship between organizational learning and psychological empowerment. And also the findings of this study show that the moderating role of organizational learning variable is accepted in the relationship between transformational leadership and psychological empowerment.

Keywords: Organizational Learning, Psychological Empowerment, Transformational Leadership.

Introduction

Leadership is a fundamental process in any organization and the failure or success of each organization is under the effect of its leadership, so while success or failure of each organization usually its leadership is paid attention. So it can be said that individual perceptions in an organization depends on the kind of way of leadership

being present in that organization. Since each organization works in order to achieve some predetermined activities, in this regard it needs high effort, hardworking, and coordination between all of the units especially employees and managers and one of the very important factors in order to achieve organizational goals is motivating employees in order to use the latent potentials and transferring the potential skills to active ones and innovation. Considering these explanations it is found that the empowerment process needs a driving force which the transformational leadership can make a great effect in this relationship and in this regard organizational learning innovation can help in order to achieve the aims of leaders in order to improve. Emphasis on the human workforce being effective and efficient in all of the governmental and private organizations is increasing (Mogharab et al., 2005). So the only sustainable competitive advantage of each organization is its members and their role in success of organization which this is possible via empowering employees. In the recent years empowerment has been transferred to one of parts of management researchers and it has been highly paid attention in organizational sciences (Kamalian & Moloudi, 2010). In addition to leadership and employees empowerment as the essential factor of interaction with today dynamic environments, researchers in the management field of study has defined as unique competitive advantage for organization and this competitive advantage is nothing but knowledge and learning is the key to achieve knowledge (Goldsmith, 2003). In fact organizational learning as a modern method to answer environmental stimulus has been transferred to one of the most important management issues. Daily development and progress of sciences and technologies, complexity of social, cultural, political, economic, technological factors, and stating new sciences and ideas, lack of environmental trust, lack of certainty, and the continues change of world has made the importance and need of organizational learning more than past (Mirkamali et al., 2011). So in this study, three main concerns of human factor of organizational success, namely transformational leadership, empowerment, and organizational learning are mentioned.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Transformational Leadership

The primary concept of transformational leadership has been defined as the transformational leadership, a process in which leaders and followers lead each other to a higher level of morality and motivation (Barker, 1992). According to Bass & Avolio (1990) point of view the transformational leadership is a conscious spiritual and moral process which creates the patterns of organizational transform via the cooperative trusted pattern. Transform creative leaders can clarify the future perspective of organization, present the model which is in accordance with that perspective, increase the amount of accepting group aims, provide a widespread support for organization members and develop them, and also encourage them in order to follow organization goal (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Although some of people consider leadership and management synonyms. But according to some of them points of view leadership is an important aspect of management and the effective leadership ability is one of the prerequisites of effective management (Alvani, 2006). On the other hand another group believes that leadership is in fact management in a broader concept. Management is a specific type of leadership in which achieving organizational goals is prioritized to other goals (Rezaeian, 2004).

Table 1. Difference between management and leadership.

| Managers criteria | Leaders criteria |
|---|--|
| Are appointed | Emerge from within the group |
| Are hierarchical | There is no hierarchy |
| Organizational goals has priority | Followers of the desired goals |
| To deal with the complexity of the | It deals with change |
| Runs | Invented the |
| Keeps | Improves focuses on people |
| Limited perspective | Due to the horizon. |
| Accepts the status quo | Is in conflict with the status quo |
| More attention to efficiency | More attention to the effectiveness of the |
| Impersonal and passive attitude towards their goals | Active attitude and personal goals. |
| Do not work in precarious positions. | Work in precarious positions. |
| Prefer to work with people | Intellectual tasks are dealt with. |
| In leadership, membership is not required. | The requirement is membership management |

Transformational Leadership Components

Transformational leadership needs for components or factors in order to take place which are identified as the constituting factors of this theory. These factors are as following:

1. Ideal influence (ideal characteristics, ideal behaviors): in this state the individual has the characteristics of a charismatic leader; he or she is trusted and encouraged. His subordinates know him as a pattern and model and try to be similar to him. Ideal influence includes ideal characteristics and ideal behaviors.
2. Inspirational motivation: managers encourage employees to believe the goal and its achievability. These people are usually optimistic about future and the probability to achieve the goal.
3. Mantel encourage: the leader encourages employees in mental state. These leaders encourage their subordinates to be creative while solving their problems and keep the clear hypotheses under the question mark. They encourage employees to investigate problems from different points of view and use the innovative solutions for the problem.
4. Personal considerations: leader will meet the emotional needs of employees. These leaders identify human needs and help them to develop some needs which they have to achieve determined goals. These leaders may spend a considerable amount of time to education and training (Spector et al., 2004).

Psychological Empowerment

Empowerment is defined as an incentive structure which emerges in different states of cognitivist, efficacy, personal decision- making, effectiveness, and trustworthy. These psychological states along with each other will result in dynamic bias toward job roles (Spreitzer, 1995). Empowerment is providing more job freedom, responsibility for decision making, and self-controlling of activities for employees of organization. From Kanger and Kanango point of view empowerment is process which promotes the feeling of success among the organization employees. In this process the situation which increases people ability and the productivity information of people via organizational activities and informal techniques which is given to them is identified (Moqimi& Ramadan, 2013).

Majority of managers consider empowerment as a mechanical process which aims to empower employees and give the subordinated the power of choosing, while researchers and pundits consider empowerment as an organic approach beyond management approaches and acts which aims to increase the intrinsic motivation of employees and some of its results are the increase of self-efficacy, independence, effectiveness, meaningfulness and trust to other. In one of the studies being the best about empowerment till now, Spritser had identified four cognitive dimensions in order to empower others. We had added one dimension to his model based on Mishra model. Empowered employees will be able to save the organization from crisis using the dimensions of empowerment and the will be able to show their loyalty to the organization through creating golden opportunities (Mooghali et al., 2009). When managers be able to grow these five dimensions in others they have been enabled with efficacy. The empowered people can not only do their tasks, but also can think about themselves in a different way. These five dimensions describe those (Vatan&KimAy, 2012).

Organizational Learning

Organizational learning is an active process which enables the organization to adapt to the changes very quickly. This process includes creating new knowledge, skills, and behaviors. Organizational learning is the main way to create job and knowledge and improve the organization efficacy. So a successful organization must be active in teach (Zhang et al., 2009). Not having learning, individuals and organization just repeat their past experiences and if they cannot learn how to learn, they will stay in the margins significantly.

There are various definitions of organizational learning which usually are emphasizing on the change in performance identifying the domain of potential behaviors of an organization (Hajipour& Kord, 2011). Organizational learning is a process, during which organization expands its new knowledge, and beside its ordinary business, it keeps people in organization and has an enormous potential to affect human behaviors and improve the organization capabilities.

These organizational learning attitudes, behaviors and strategies are some guiding lines for a long-term performance for organizations (Morales et al., 2006).The learner organization and organizational learning is not synonymous concepts. Organizational learning means individual and groups within the organization learning and the learner organization is a general system. In other words, learner organization is the result of organizational learning. So, we may distinguish organizational learning, individuals and groups within the organization, and learner organization, organizational learning as a general system (Sobhaninejad et al., 2006). In table2 the key factors of organizational learning success have been mentioned.

Table 2. Key success factors in organizational learning.

| Researchers | Key success factors in organizational learning |
|--|--|
| Ander and Mayo (1994) Pilar (2006) Sobhaninejad (2006) | Strategies and policies, leadership, human resource functions, relationship with the environment, using information technology, discovery, creation and dissemination of knowledge, values and beliefs, language, speech and behavior of high-level, time and money, Pride and Prejudice, power of property. |

BourbourJafari and Rastegar (2015) in a study named study of the effect of transformational leadership on employee's empowerment considering the moderating role of learning in Semnan University. In this study using questionnaire as tool and distributing it among 130 employees' data were collected and Lisrel software was used in order to analyze data. The results of the study showed that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership, learning and empowerment, and the hypothesis of effect of learning on empowerment is rejected. Also the results showed that the transformational leadership components and learning on whole describe 61 percent of empowerment changes. And it was observed that learning cannot be an indirect path for the relationship between transformational leadership and empowerment of employees.

In a study named the relationship between organizational learning and psychological empowerment of employees in the Tehran province central office of sports and youths. Using standard questionnaires collected data. Then using Kolmogorov- Smirnov tests the Pearson and Regression correlational coefficient the research hypotheses were analyzed. The findings of study show that there is a significant positive relationship between organizational learning and psychological empowerment.

Hamze (2014) in his MA thesis named investigating the effect of transformational leadership on human resources empowerment in the central offices of Maskan bank. After studying the normality of data the Pearson parametric test was used to analyze data. The result showed that there is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and employees' empowerment.

Seifolah Rahman Khan et al. (2014) in a study named the relationship between organizational learning culture and psychological empowerment considering the moderating role of job attitudes (job satisfaction, emotional commitment and organizational commitment) among the Banking institutes and insurance companies in Malaysia. In this study after collecting data using questionnaires they have analyzed data. In the results it was observed that there is a significant relationship between organizational learning culture and psychological empowerment concepts. Also there is a direct and indirect relationship between these two variables and emotional commitment.

The effect of transformational leadership has been studied on organizational performance via organizational learning and innovation in a Spanish company. In this study which for data collection a 168 sample was used in the data analysis it was shown that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and organizational learning and innovation have a direct positive relationship. Transformational leadership indirectly via organizational learning and innovation positively effects on organizational performance.

Hypotheses and Conceptual Model of Study

1. There is a significant positive relationship between general administration and supplying and educational acts of prisons employees' transformational leadership and psychological empowerment of employees.
2. There is a significant and positive relationship between general administration and supplying and educational acts of prisons employees' transformational leadership and organizational learning.
3. There is a significant and positive relationship between general administration and supplying and educational acts of prisons employees' organizational learning and psychological empowerment.
4. There is a significant relationship between general administration and supplying and educational acts of prisons employees' transformational leadership and psychological empowerment considering the moderating role of organizational learning.

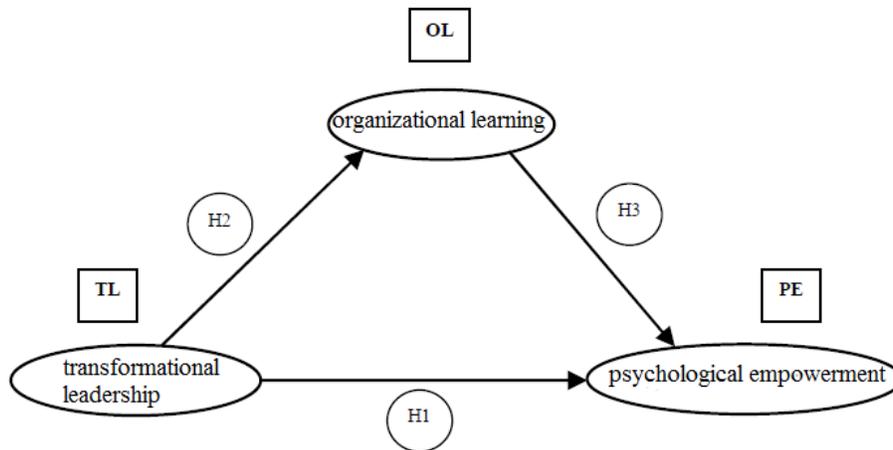


Figure 1. Research conceptual model.

Among the mentioned factors in the research hypotheses and models the transformational leadership as a independent variable, psychological empowerment as dependent variable and organizational learning as the moderating variable were introduced. In this study the conceptual model of BourbourJafari &Rastegar (2015) was used. In this study in order to make models and determine the relationship between variables structural equations modeling method was used.

Materials and Methods

In this study the present method in the inferential and descriptive statistics were used in order to analyses research data. SPSS and LISREL software's were used in this study in order to analyze data. This study is practical in terms of its aim and it is survey method in term of data collection and it is a correlational one. In order to clarify the theoretical concepts library studies such as books, scientific journals and internet were used, then using questionnaires having a five item likert scale data were collected from population. The used questionnaire was included of three parts which accept the demographic information four other sections were used via scales and standard questionnaires in this regard. The mentioned questionnaire include 49 questions in which 20 questions are about transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1997), 15 questions are about psychological empowerment, and 14 questions were about organizational learning. In order to make sure of questionnaires validity questions were given to a number of pundits and professionals and due to the positive ideas of them about the questions validity (content validity) the targeted questionnaire was given to the population. In order to make sure of the internal reliability of the questions of questionnaire the Chronbach's alpha technique was used which the results in table3 can be investigated. Since the obtained amounts are all over 0.80 the utilized questionnaires have desirable reliability.

Table 3. Chronbach's alpha coefficient (reliability) of the questionnaire.

| Variable | Number of questions | Chronbach's alpha |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Transformational leadership | 20 | 0.91 |
| Psychological empowerment | 15 | 0.88 |
| Organizational learning | 14 | 0.84 |

In this study the population includes all of the official employees of central office of prisons and educational and supplying acts employees of Golestan province which were 380 ones. In this study in order to estimate the sample volume Kerjcie and Morgan table was used. According to the mentioned table for a population of 380 ones, the sample volume is 191. In order to solve the problem of lost or incomplete questionnaires the sample volume increased to 210 ones. But finally since some of the respondents did not answer all of the items 15 questionnaires were deleted from the final analysis and 195 questionnaires were analyzed. Simple random sampling method was used in this study. After insuring the reliability and validity of collected scales, measuring model and research

hypotheses were analyzed. In this study structural equation method and Lisrel software version 8.8 were used. So at first we will shed light on the appropriateness of data for factor analysis. There are different methods for this task which among them we can mention KMO. If its amount is bigger than 0.7 there is a proper correlation between data for factor analysis. Considering the KMO number (bigger than 0.7) and the significant number of Bartlet test (>0.05 sig) it can be said that data are suitable for factor analysis and they have the needed situation.

Results

In order to achieve research structural models in standard state and significant state we must first analyze the hypotheses. First we should analyze the primary similarities which the results are witnessing appropriateness of all of the questions in the process of data collection, since the number of questions similarities is more than 0.5. Then we will pay to the determined variance which the result show that these questions make three factors and these factors cover and clarify 83.691 percent of the variance which indeed is he representative of questions appropriateness. Then the rotated factor matrix is provided. This matrix clarifies the correlation between items or variables and the factor which based on the amount of correlation this amount would be clear. In this matrix the factor bars for each of the variable is more than 0.55 and is under the control of targeted factor. And finally we will analyze the amount of correlation between reassert variables which considering the significant level (>0.01 sig) and (>0.05 sig) the amount of correlation between variables is acceptable. Then the intended models will be achieved and we will analyze the research hypotheses.

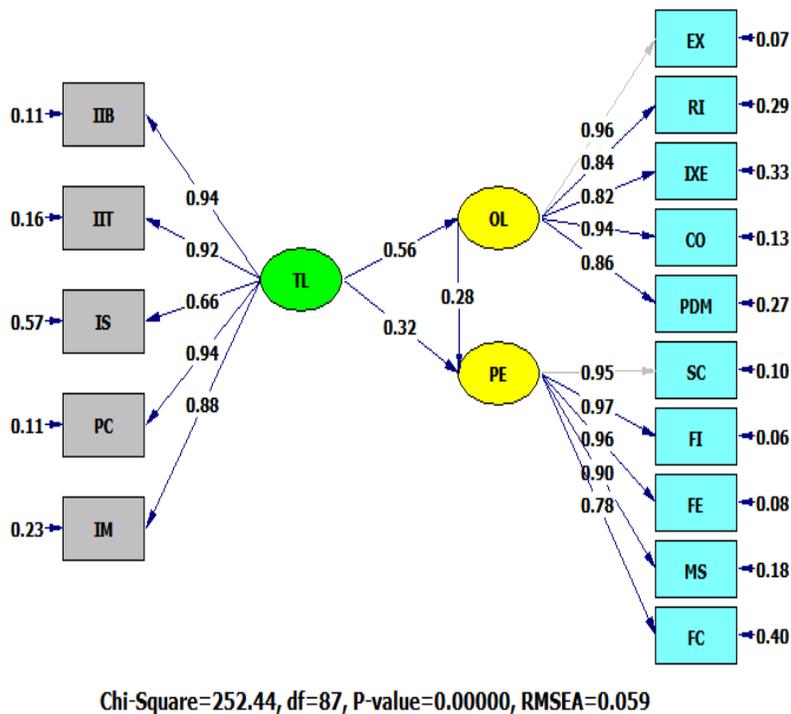
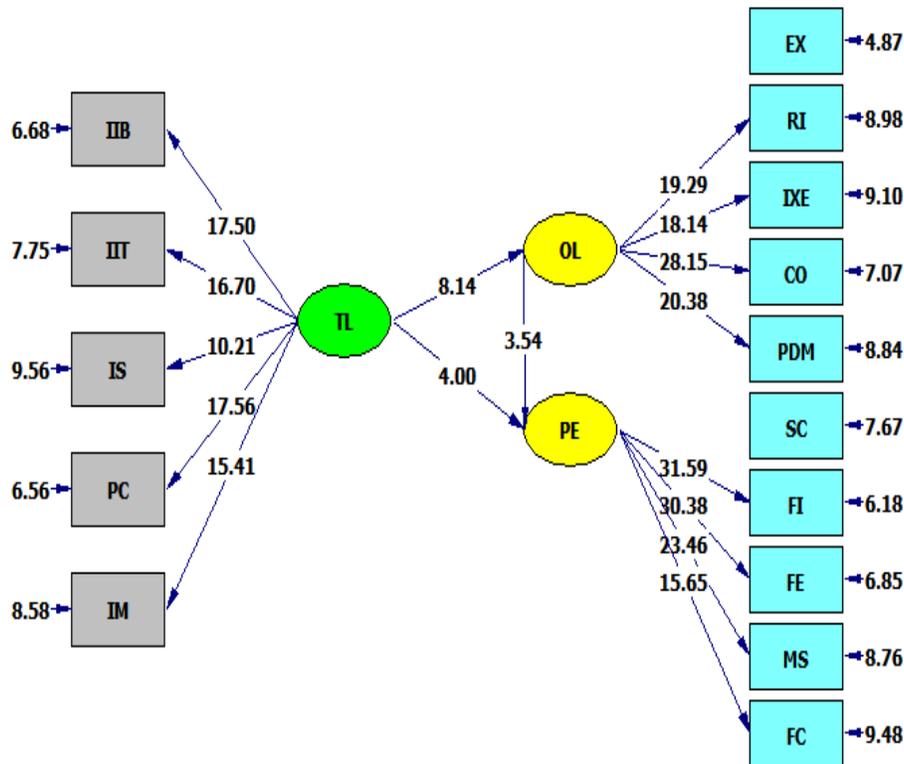


Figure 2. Research model in standard level.



Chi-Square=252.44, df=87, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.059

Figure 3. Research model in significant level.

Acceptable criteria to confirm the determined conceptual model was gathered using collected data, and they are the main discussion of the model fitness indexes, indexes which in some cases are called the fitness good indicators. In order to analyze the model the following indexes were used: the index of square of Khy 2 on the freedom degree($\frac{\chi^2}{df}$), comparative fit index(CFI), not normalized fit index(NNFI), root measurement squares error approximating (RMSEA) which can be explored in table4.

Table 4. The results of analyzing the fitness of research structural model.

| Fitness indicator | Accepted model | Amount | Results |
|---------------------|----------------|--------|---------|
| $\frac{\chi^2}{df}$ | <3 | 2.90 | PROPER |
| CFI | >0.9 | 0.95 | PROPER |
| GFI | >0.9 | 0.94 | PROPER |
| AGFI | >0.9 | 0.97 | PROPER |
| NFI | >0.9 | 0.97 | PROPER |
| NNFI | >0.9 | 0.94 | PROPER |
| RMSEA | <0.08 | 0.059 | PROPER |

Research Result Analysis

In the following table the path coefficients and significant values between the research variables are provided. As it can be seen, the path coefficient for 3 relationships in 0.05 level (t bigger than 1.96 or smaller than -1.96) have obtained to be significant.

Table 5. The result of direct relationship and significant coefficient of research model hypotheses.

| Structural path | abbreviation | Path coefficient (Beta) | T-value | results |
|--|--------------|-------------------------|---------|----------|
| Transformational leadership -psychological empowerment | TL-PE | 0.32 | 4 | ACCEPTED |
| Transformational leadership - organizational learning | TL-OL | 0.56 | 8.14 | ACCEPTED |
| Organizational learning -psychological empowerment | OL-PE | 0.28 | 3.54 | ACCEPTED |

Also the direct and indirect relationship between research variables in the final model of research is representative of the amount of direct or indirect relationship of variables on each other. And they are provided in table 6.

Table6. The amount of relationship between variables in the main research model.

| Relationship type | Direct relationship | Indirect relationship | Whole relationship |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| OL on TL | 0.56 | ---- | 0.56 |
| PE on TL | 0.32 | 0.56*0.28=0.16 | 0.48 |
| PE on OL | 0.28 | ---- | 0.28 |

Considering figure 1 and 2 and table 5 and 6 it can be said that the standardized coefficient (path coefficient) and the significant coefficient (T value) for all of this study variables are in a suitable level (bigger than the modulus of 1.96) and there is a significant relationship between all of the research variables. In fact it can be said that in all of the hypotheses the H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. And all of the research hypotheses were accepted.

The fitted model shows that the amount of standardized coefficient (path coefficient) between two variables (transformational leadership and organizational learning) is $\beta=0.56$, the T value between these two variables is 8.14 more than the modulus of 1.96 which is the representative of the significance of this model. On the other hand the amount of standardized coefficient (path coefficient) between two variables (organizational learning and psychological empowerment) $\beta=0.28$ and t value between these two variables is 3.54 bigger than the modulus of 1.96 which is the representative of this relationship. So it can be concluded that transformational leadership and psychological empowerment have a significant relationship through organizational learning. The result of this study is in accordance with the findings of BourbourJafari and Rastegar (2015), Hamze (2014), Seifolah Rahman Khan et al. (2014).

Findings of this study show that needs improvement and development of transformational leadership in order to increase the psychological efficacy of employees in all fields, since the transformational leadership has been confirmed as a factor in order to maintain competitive benefit in this study. Also the results of this study focus organization managers to the fact that facilitation and management of organizational learning process can help and support organization managers to achieve their goals regarding psychological empowerment. The organizational learning process enables employees to develop their experiences and knowledge which may lead to the organizational success and avoid organizational forgetting. In this regard the following suggestions are proposed:

- Holding scientific and practical conferences we must pay more attention to the dimensions of transformational leadership and make managers familiar with these criteria and mention the concepts of transformational leadership. Creating the appropriate situation in order to express employees' perceptions about the specialized issues and subjects of organization and encouraging them to consider an advantage for these people in the psychological empowerment issues.
- Increasing management support, encouraging to creation and innovation and employees cooperation in the organization result in improvement of organizational learning culture among employees.
- Creating scientific and technological groups in order to solve organization problems and issues regarding developing organizational learning process and psychological empowerment.
- Engaging employees in organization decision makings in a way that individuals have decision making ability and be able to see the result of their presence as the results of organization.

Limitations

It dares to be mentioned that the in hand study like any other study has faced some limitations which will be mentioned in the following:

- Since current study is done in the field of human and social sciences there is the possibility of some variables on the results of the research which is out of the control of researcher.
- Another limitation of this study is that the results and findings of this study is only applicable in the population of the study and it is not generalizable.
- Considering the nature of the study methodology of this study needs the help of the respondents to fill the questionnaire which some of them did not helped at first. Justifying the amount of importance of the subject by researcher it was tried to minimize the amount of disagreement.

Although the results of this study can help managers to understand the role and importance of leadership criteria, it seems that there is a need to more investigations in order to understand how they can do this. So it is suggested that the future focus on planning to apply and the way of implementing transformational leadership and organizational learning. Meanwhile what is known is clear is that the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational learning and consequently psychological empowerment with another organizational field must be considered.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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