

ORIGINAL RESEARCH**Leadership style from perspective of the hospital's administrators and their employees**

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Abstract

Introduction: Leadership style is one of the most important elements of leadership or management position in labor industries. Leadership style is not how a manager or leader behaves in a given situation, but also how other employees and subordinates understand a behavior. Leadership style of a manager is a field in which such differences may occur easily. Therefore, managers not only should pay attention to the exact perception, but also predict other perception and be able to properly respond in different situations.

Material and Methods: The statistical sample consists of 18 senior executives (manager and matron) of teaching hospitals and 125 middle managers at clinical and administrative departments of hospitals. Data collection tool is a standard questionnaire of leadership effectiveness and flexibility by Hersey and Blanchard. Data were analyzed using descriptive and non-parametric tests (Kruskal-Wallis, Fisher) through SPSS 17 software.

Results: The results showed significant difference of leadership style from perspectives of managers and their subordinates based on Fisher test $p=0.024$.

Conclusion: There is a significant difference between leadership style from perspective of managers and their subordinates that reflects the weakness of managers communicating with subordinates. Thus, providing feedback by subordinates can improve the relationship between managers and subordinate as well as increase the awareness of managers and their subordinates.

Keywords: Leadership Style, Managers, Subordinates

Introduction

Leadership is defined as a process of social influence in which one person can utilize others assistance to perform a specific task (1). Leadership style, which is used by manager during working, is one of the most important elements of leadership or management position (2).

The importance role of manager is highlighted when organizations can overcome the difficulties in order to meet their needs and coordinate human resource to meet achieve their goals. This coordination is achieved when the most important task of manager as leader is developed and improved (3). If the managers' leadership style matches with the ability and willingness of subordinates, the effectiveness of leadership will increase. Additionally, suitable conformity between leadership style and subordinates readiness will enhance the performance of subordinates. Leaders must assess the readiness of followers then apply the appropriate leadership style, so the followers of the leader determine the leader's behavior (4).

On the other hand, leadership style may vary among individuals. Leadership style of a manager is a field in which such differences may easily occur, while we may assume ourselves free and democratic, but our behavior may be perceived strict and authoritarian from others perspectives. Thus, managers should not only pay attention to their accurate perception continuously, but also to predict the perception of others and be prepared to react it (5).

Mohammad Arab (2003) demonstrated that the leadership styles of managers are collaborative, while employee's perspective showed that the managers leadership styles are authoritative (6). Leadership style from perspectives of employees and managers in the study of Ibrahim Akhtari Shojaei et al. (2004) was different, this means that although directors and managers thought about collaborative leadership style, but employee's opinion were opposite and perceived it as autocratic leadership style (7). But, the findings of Ali Mohammad MossadeghRad (2003) showed that participative management style was the dominant leadership study in the research community among managers and employees (8). Lowry Kokin et al. (2001) showed that middle managers thought about

interactive leadership style and divide responsibilities between subordinates, while only 18 percent of these managers receive appropriate feedback on the performance of their job by their superiors (9). Mahmoud Rafigh and Evan et al.(2009) concluded that the majority of people working in libraries founded autocratic leadership style of their managers (Task-oriented) (10). Elizabeth Thach (2002) examined 281 executives in six-month training and leadership process and the 360-degree feedback. The results have shown that the combination of feedback and individual guidance will increase the leadership effectiveness to more than 60 percent (11).

Subordinates perspective is important, because communications between managers and subordinates are an important part of management and they are a key link for executives. Employee's evaluation can provides useful information about their perception of the strengths and weaknesses of managers (12).

It is imperative for managers to recognize how their subordinates perceive them. Therefore, the aim of this study is to identify the leadership style of managers at hospitals (using the theory of Hersey and Blanchard) and its differences from the employee's perspective to guide managers through reflection of obtained information and provide appropriate feedback to select applicable leadership style.

Methods

This study employed the descriptive and analytical method. The study was conducted in training hospitals of Medical Science University of Shiraz. The statistical population of this study included all senior executives and managers of nursing services in addition to middle managers of nursing services and administrative departments of training hospitals in Shiraz in 2013.

Census method was used for sampling of senior executives (executive and managers of nursing services) due to the limited population (n =9 senior executive managers, n=9 managers of nursing services). In the case of middle managers, a total of 125 samples were determined. Data collection tool was a standard questionnaire describing the effectiveness and flexibility of leadership,

which was made both lead-self and lead-other. The questionnaire described twelve positions, and there were four answers for each situation. Each of the answers represented one of leadership styles in Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theory. It is worth noting that validity of the questionnaire was determined previously in Iranian society and the reliability coefficient $r = .76$ in the study of Hassanian and $r = .92$ in the study of Nouraei et al. (13) In this study, the results were analyzed using Fisher and Kruskal-Wallis, non-parametric test through SPSS17 software.

Results

Results of this study showed that 143 senior and middle managers indicated the leadership style often used by senior executives at hospitals is participatory style (33.3 %) and the use of a leadership style for compounds (33.3 %). While, from the perspective of middle managers (subordinates), the dominant leadership style used by senior executives at hospitals, is autocratic leadership style (41.1%). (Table 1)

Table 1: Frequency distribution of dominant leadership style from the perspective of middle managers, senior managers in administrative departments at training hospitals in Shiraz

Perspective of middle managers		Perspective of senior managers		Frequency	Leadership style
number	percent	number	percent		
41.1	23	11.1	1		Autocratic style
32.1	18	22.2	2		Persuasive style
7.1	4	33.3	3		Participative style
1.8	1	0	0		Representative style
17.9	10	33.3	3		Combined leadership style
100%	56	100%	9		Total

Table 2: Frequency distribution of dominant leadership style from perspectives of nursing service managers and middle managers in clinical units at training hospitals in Shiraz

Perspective of middle managers		perspective of managers at nursing department		frequency	Leadership style
Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
20.3	14	22.2	2		Autocratic style
56.5	39	33.3	3		Persuasive style

10.1	7	33.3	3	Participative style
2.9	2	0	0	Representative style
10.1	7	11.1	1	Combined leadership style
100%	69	100%	9	Total

Table 3: Differences of dominant leadership style from perspectives of senior and middle managers in training hospitals at Shiraz

Middle managers		Senior managers		Frequency	Leadership style
Percent	Number	Percent	Number		
29.6	37	16.7	3		Autocratic style
45.6	57	27.8	5		Persuasive style
8.8	11	33.3	6		Participative style
2.4	3	0	0		Representative style
13.6	17	22.4	4		Combined leadership style
100%	125	100%	18		Total

Dominant leadership style from the perspective of managers in nursing department is persuasive and participative (33.3 %) and the leadership style used by managers at nursing department from the perspective of middle managers (subordinates) is persuasive (56.5 %). (Table 2)

Finally, the analysis of the dominant leadership style from perspectives of managers and subordinates based on Fishers test showed a significant difference between managers and subordinates perspectives ($p = 0.024$). (Table 3)

Discussion:

The results of this study showed that participative style is dominant from perspective of senior executive's managers, while autocratic leadership style were perceived by subordinates.

From the perspective of the researcher, the conflicting perspective among managers and their employees are due to the following factors. First of all, directors and managers have cooperative behavior in practice, but are not able to transfer these concepts to employees. Secondly, employees expect to be participated in the affairs, but managers do not understand their needs.

Thirdly, lack of proper culture of participation among directors and managers can be the cause of this difference, so that employees expect their views to be implemented in

practice, while the necessity of participation is that manager or boss applies a set of ideas or the best ideas into practice.

In Arab study, leadership style is advising from managers' perspectives. While reviewing employee's ideas about leadership styles of directors and managers indicated that leadership style is authoritative that in this regard is consistent with the findings of this study (6).

Ebrahim Akhtari Shojaei et al., in a study titled "leadership style and its relationship with job satisfaction of nurses," proposed that the leadership style is different from employees and managers perspective and is consistent with the findings of the researcher (7).

Other findings of this study indicated no significant difference between perspectives of nursing services managers and their

subordinates. The researcher interpreted this similarity due to the culture and atmosphere of clinical units. Thus, managers of these units often refer to a standard scientific basis that is acceptable to both parties, and most of them have a leading and justification role that's why they are less likely to feel that their subordinates are ordered. The findings of the current study are consistent with the results of Amir Ashkan Nasiripour (14).

Zahra Purfarzad, also founded a great understanding between administrators and subordinates perspectives in clinical units, that justification leadership style had the highest average from perspectives of head nurses and nurses (13). Results of this study are in line with the findings of Mossadegh Rad (8). Totally, the results of this study indicate the difference of the dominant leadership style is significant from managers and their subordinate's perspectives ($p=0.024$). These results are consistent with the Arab (2003), kavari (2001), Akhtari Shojaei (2004), Lovri Kokin (2001) and Mossadegh Rad findings (2003), (6), (15), (7), (9), (8). However, findings of this study was not consistent with Purfarzad (2010), Safaei (2003-2004) and Nasiripour (2007) (13,14,16). At the end, it is recommended to apply effective strategies to

eliminate fear of subordinates and raise superior's awareness and attitudes of managers in connection with a variety of leadership styles and select the most appropriate style in order to improve performance and efficiency in the hospital.

Conclusion

It can be argued that the inconsistency between managers' perceptions and subordinates about leadership style is due to the lack of proper communication between managers and their subordinates, so providing feedback from subordinates, empowers this relationship and managers can be informed about their weaknesses and strengths. Also, it will increase the efficiency of leadership style, job satisfaction and motivation of employees.

Due to the limited senior managers in our sample ($n=18$) and limited distribution possibility of this number between four styles of leadership and lack of significance in some data, it is recommended to conduct future researches in larger scale.

Conflict of interest

Authors declare no conflict of interests.

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