EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS AND WORK ENGAGEMENT AT LIBYAN SCHOOLS IN TURKEY

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Abstract: **In leadership field, a large number of researches demonstrated that different leadership styles negatively or positively predicts different variables in organizational behavior field. In accordance with this reality, the aim of this study is to discover the relationship between perceived transformational leadership behaviors and work engagement. For exploring this relationship, an empirical research was conducted with teachers of Libyan schools in Turkey. In the context of the research, perceived transformational leadership behavior was measured by "Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X)" of Bass and Avolio (1995). On the other side, work engagement was measured by "Work Engagement Scale" of Schaufeli and Bakker (2003). Due to the findings of reliability and validity analyses, reliability and validity of these scales were proven once again in this research. In order to determine the relationship between variables of the research, correlation analysis was used. On the basis of the findings, it can be seen that there is a positive and significant relationship between perceived transformational leadership behaviors and work engagement of teachers. Moreover, this relationship was examined in detail in terms of different aspects of dimensions of transformational leadership behaviors and work engagement.**

Keywords: **Perceived Transformational Leadership Behaviors, Work Engagement, Libyan Schools in Turkey.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Transformational leadership style focus on getting employees more involved in fulfilling their organizational goals (Bass, 1985). Some elements of leadership like as the ability to make decisions about completion, performance assessment and task scheduling, support from the set and freedom to practice capabilities are especially important for improving work-related resources. Thus, such resources positively influence employee work engagement (Breevaart, Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). Schaufeli and Bakker 2004, indicates to engagement as a positive, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption. In this context, the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' work engagement has begun to take attention of the scholars (Salanova, Lorente, Chambel & Martinez, 2011). Transformational leadership behaviors are accepted in the literature as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. These dimensions directly or indirectly have led to work engagement (Gözükara and Şimşek 2016). Previous studies have shown that transformational leaders influence their employees' work

engagement (Tims, Bakker & Xanthopoulou, 2011). Employees' participation in the organization is considered a source of innovation and development. Management exercise transformational leadership style. Transformational leadership style explains that supporting positive behavior or the leader can followers to think bigger(Ghafoor, Qureshi et al. 2011). Targeting follower's abilities and interests, transformational leadership enable enhance the follower's commitment towards their organizations (Piccolo and Calqitt, 2006). Transformational Leadership method encourages the culture and human resource exercise which motivate employees to contribute in organizational development. These exercise engage employees into their mission and decision making process.

Current study also draws attention to the relationship between transformational leadership and work engagement. Meanwhile, this study is differentiated from others by focusing on education sector. The mentioned relationship is tried to be addressed from the perspective of the teachers. The aim of this study was to take attention on the usage of transformational leadership in order to develop the experience of work engagement of teachers.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Leadership has been accepted as a central concept in the literature of management and organization behavior field (Yukl, 1989). In this context, transformational leadership have been spoken in the literature for a long time. Burns, defined transformational leadership as a process in which leaders tried to raise the consciousness of followers by appealing to higher ideals and moral values, and this type of leader was attentive to the needs and motives of followers and tried to motivate followers to reach collective outcomes by going beyond their own self-interests (Muenjohn 2010). Transformational leadership (TFL) refers to a multidimensional leadership style that give the followers support to act beyond expectations and give special importance to collective values and needs rather than followers' individual values and needs (Yukl 1999, Bass and Steidlmeier 2006).

Transformational leadership is the ability to get people to want to change, to improve, and to be led, and therefore, a transformational leader could make the company more successful by valuing its associates (Hall, Johnson, Wysocki & Kepner, 2002). The various definitions of transformational leadership have a primary focus on common on organizational goals: transformational leaders inspire their followers to act better for the benefit of the organization. Rewards and praise are used to encourage a stronger concentration on achieving high outcomes (Rafferty and Griffin 2004). Transformational leadership theory argues various elements (or dimensions) of leader behaviors. For example,(Bass 1985)includes inspirational motivation (communicating a stimulating vision), idealized influence (serving as a motivating role model), intellectual stimulation (stimulating followers to think outside of the box), and individualized consideration (an emphasis on followers' development) (Van Dierendonck, Stam et al. 2014).

Transformational leaders exert additional influence by broadening and elevating followers' goals and providing them with confidence to perform beyond the expectations specified in the implicit exchange agreement (Dvir, Eden, Avolio & Shamir, 2002). Transformational leadership raises the follower's level of maturity and ideals besides concerns for achievement, self- actualization, and the well-being of others, the organization, and society(Bass 1985).

Transformational leaders who develop and communicate a vision and a sense of strategy are those who "find clear and workable ways to overcome obstacles, are concerned about the qualities of the services their organization provide, and inspire other members to do likewise(Swail 2003). Transformational leadership happens when leaders widen and raise the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they push their workers to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group(Bass 1991). Since its introduction by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985), transformational leadership theory has evolved to describe four dimensions of leader behavior (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). Bass identified dimensions of transformational leadership as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Bass, 1999; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). A brief description of each of these component is provided in the figure below (Boyett, 2006).

Table 1. Dimensions of Transformational Leadership

Idealized Influence *Leaders must be charismatic*	Leaders must exude confidence and competence. They must behave in ways that are consistent with their purpose and values. Leaders must conduct themselves as someone with whom their followers will take pride in being associated.
Inspirational Motivation *Leaders must be inspirational*	Leaders must develop and articulate a clear and compelling vision of the future. Leaders must generate enthusiasm for their vision and optimism that it can be achieved.
Intellectual Stimulation *Leaders must be considerate of their followers*	Leaders must deal with people as individuals with unique needs, abilities, and aspirations. Leaders must coach, advise and teach their followers.
Individualized Consideration *Leaders must be intellectually stimulating*	Leaders must question assumptions and the status quo. Leaders must seek innovative and creative solutions to old problems and encourage leadersr followers to do the same. Leaders must create excitement for finding new perspectives.

Transformational leadership mainly develops the feeling among employees that they mean a lot and their betterment is the purpose of the organization. This feeling improves their organizational attitude (Ghafoor, Qureshi, Khan & Hijazi, 2011). Transformational leaders are truly looking for the greatest good for the greatest number without violating individual rights, and are concerned about doing what is right and honest are likely to avoid stretching the truth or going beyond the evidence for they want to set an example to followers about the value of valid and accurate communication in maintaining the mutual trust of the leaders and their followers(Bass and Steidlmeier 1999).

The available evidence robustly indicates that leaders are most efficient in inspiring performance toward objectives and gaining followers commitment. Lot of researches conducted to understand transformational leadership and they have shown that transformational leadership positively predicts a wide variety of performance outcomes including individual, group and organizational level variables (Bass & Bass, 2008).

Work engagement indicates the relationship of the employees with their job. Engagement defined by Kahn (1990) as "the harnessing of organizational members' selves to their work roles". He also stated that "in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" and "in disengagement people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances". Particularly, Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) indicate to engagement as a positive, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption. Meanwhile, these are accepted as dimensions of work engagement, and a brief description of each of these component is provided in the figure below (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Table 2. Dimensions of Work engagement

Vigor	is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence also in the face of difficulties.
Dedication	is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge.
Absorption	is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work.

The most usually used definition of work engagement: an effective, positive work-related status which is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption. Vigor indicates to high levels of energy and mental flexibility while working, while dedication indicates to being strongly engaged in one's work and experiencing a feel of enthusiasm, challenge, and significance.(Schaufeli and Bakker 2004). The third defining characteristic of engagement is called absorption, which is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work. Recent research suggests, however, that vigor and dedication constitute the core dimensions of engagement(Hakanen, Bakker et al. 2006).

It is necessary ensure that engagement is independent of comparable concepts and has its own measure and characteristics. whereas some researchers have debated that work engagement is a unique motivational structure that has features characteristics from other constructs such as organizational commitment or job involvement, job satisfaction(Yasin Ghadi, Fernando et al. 2013), the majority of practitioner research results do not convincingly show that work engagement is various, and is only a repackaging of other structures (Macey and Schneider, 2008).

Work engagement is characterized by workers who are energetic, have meaning of engagement with their work activities and are contributed to the demands of their work (Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006). Work engagement has shown to be linked with positive employee status (being enthusiastic, feeling energetic, etc.), experiencing better psychological and physical health, creating his own job, spreading engagement to his environment, and so having better performance (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008).

Work engagement can be predicted by leader's empowering behaviors (Mendes & Stander, 2011). According to view of Bass, transformational leadership is defined as a leadership style that transforms the values and norms of the workers, whereby the leader motivates the employees to perform beyond their expectations (Yukl, 1989). This leadership style concentrate on enhancing the followers' involvement with the objectives of their organization (Bass, 1985). It is clearly thought that involvement results with highly engaged employees.

Transformational leadership emerges as a style that fosters the development of employee engagement (Batista-Taran, Shuck, Gutierrez & Baralt, 2009). Many researches in the literature examine the role of transformational leadership on employee work engagement (Ghadi, Fernando & Caputi, 2013; Tims, Bakker & Xanthopoulou, 2011; Vincent-Höper, Muser & Janneck, 2012). However, it is also necessary to examine this relationship in education sector. Thus, hypotheses of the study appear as in the following.

H_1: Transformational leadership has a significant and positive relationship with work engagement.

H_{1a}: Transformational leadership has a significant and positive relationship with vigor.

H_{1b}: Transformational leadership has a significant and positive relationship with dedication.

H_{1c}: Transformational leadership has a significant and positive relationship with absorption.

H_2: Idealized influence has a significant and positive relationship with work engagement.

H_{2a}: Idealized influence has a significant and positive relationship with vigor.

H_{2b}: Idealized influence has a significant and positive relationship with dedication.

H_{2c}: Idealized influence has a significant and positive relationship with absorption.

H_3: Inspirational motivation has a significant and positive relationship with work engagement.

H_{3a}: Inspirational motivation has a significant and positive relationship with vigor.

H_{3b}: Inspirational motivation has a significant and positive relationship with dedication.

H_{3c}: Inspirational motivation has a significant and positive relationship with absorption.

H_4: Intellectual stimulation has a significant and positive relationship with work engagement.

H_{4a}: Intellectual stimulation has a significant and positive relationship with vigor.

H_{4b}: Intellectual stimulation has a significant and positive relationship with dedication.

H_{4c}: Intellectual stimulation has a significant and positive relationship with absorption.

H_5: Individualized consideration has a significant and positive relationship with work engagement.

H_{5a}: Individualized consideration has a significant and positive relationship with vigor.

H_{5b}: Individualized consideration has a significant and positive relationship with dedication.

H_{5c}: Individualized consideration has a significant and positive relationship with absorption.

3. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to discover the relationship between perceived transformational leadership behaviors and work engagement. This relationship is consequently tried to be addressed from the perspective of the teachers. Thus, an empirical research was conducted with teachers of Libyan schools in Turkey. Population of the research consists of all the teachers at these schools. A structured questionnaire was used to obtain primary data from the participants. In the data gathering process questionnaires were distributed to the whole of the teachers in Libyan schools in Turkey. Permissions of school administrations were taken for conducting the research. The number of teachers varies from one school to another and after receiving back the questionnaires, 17 of them were ruled out because of uncompleted questions. At the end of this process, 128 teachers participated the research.

In the context of the research, perceived transformational leadership behavior was measured by "Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X)" of Bass and Avolio (1995). This version is widely used and it is the standard instrument utilized to gather information about transformational leadership behavior. In the literature, dimensions of perceived transformational leadership behaviors are accepted as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. Questions related to transformational leadership in MLQ were utilized in this study to measure four dimensions of transformational leadership behavior. On the other side, work engagement was measured by "Work Engagement Scale" of Schaufeli and Bakker (2003). In the literature, dimensions of work engagement are accepted as vigor, dedication and absorption. Questions of Work Engagement Scale were utilized in this study to measure three dimensions of work engagement.

The reliability of these two scales were tested by Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient. Due to the findings of reliability analysis in this study, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value was computed as 92.3% (α=92.3) for the transformational leadership behavior part of MLQ and 74.3% (α=74.3) for the work engagement. Cronbach Alpha value was computed above the acceptability limit of 70% for both of the scales. The validity of these two scales were tested by confirmatory factor analysis. According to the findings of confirmatory factor analysis, transformational leadership behavior consists of four dimensions and work engagement consists of three dimensions as in the previous researches in the literature. Thus, it can be said that reliability and validity of the scale were proven once again in this study.

4. FINDINGS

Findings of the research were presented in this part. Data of the study has been analyzed utilizing a statistical analysis software program. First of all, demographic characteristics of the respondents and descriptive statistics of the transformational leadership and work engagement variables were examined. Then, correlation analysis was performed in order to achieve the purpose of the study and to test the hypotheses.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:		
Female	67	52.3
Male	61	47.7
Age:		
Below 35	52	40.6
Between 35 and 44	48	37.5
Between 45 and 54	21	16.4
More than 54	7	5.5
Education:		
High institute	19	14.8
Bachelor program	85	66.4
Master program	24	18.8
Total	**128**	**100**

Findings in Table 3 demonstrate that 47.7% of participants were male and 52.3% were female. Majority of the participants were in the age group of less than 45 (78.1%). Moreover, approximately two out of three of the teachers have obtained bachelor degree.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of the Variables

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Transformational Leadership	128	4.07	.670
Idealized Influence	128	4.13	.725
Inspirational Motivation	128	4.18	.702
Intellectual Stimulation	128	3.97	.875
Individualized Consideration	128	3.99	.724
Work Engagement	128	3.93	.566
Vigor	128	4.19	.933
Dedication	128	3.81	.653
Absorption	128	3.74	.581

Note: All items used as 5-point Likert Scale (1= Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly agree)

Descriptive statistics of the transformational leadership and work engagement variables are reported in Table 4. The means range change between 3.70 to 4.20. Comparison of means indicate that participants report more work engagement towards transformational leadership behavior with inspirational motivation and idealized influence dimensions. Standard deviations are to one that is at an acceptable level.

Table 5. Findings of Correlation Analysis

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Transformational Leadership	1								
2 *Idealized Influence*	.879*	1							
3 *Inspirational Motivation*	.918*	.815*	1						
4 *Intellectual Stimulation*	.914*	.725*	.785*	1					
5 *Individualized Consideration*	.829*	.590*	.667*	.689*	1				
6 Work Engagement	.260*	.177**	.216**	.232*	.298*	1			
7 *Vigor*	.246*	.164	.214**	.220**	.273*	.841*	1		
8 *Dedication*	.154	.145	.140	.103	.165	.764*	.407*	1	
9 *Absorption*	.165	.074	.102	.184**	.218**	.639*	.237*	.475*	1

* $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$

Findings of correlation analysis are reported in Table 5. In order to understand the correlations between all variables in the study Pearson correlation is utilized. According to findings, Transformational Leadership has positive and significant relationship with Work Engagement (r=.260, p<0.01). Idealized Influence (r=.177, p<0.05), Inspirational Motivation (r=.216, p<0.05), Intellectual Stimulation (r=.232, p<0.01) and Individualized Consideration (r=.298, p<0.01) have also positive and significant relationship with Work Engagement. Transformational Leadership has positive and significant relationship with only Vigor (r=.246, p<0.01) as dimension of Work Engagement. Inspirational Motivation (r=.214, p<0.05), Intellectual Stimulation (r=.220, p<0.05) and Individualized Consideration (r=.273, p<0.01) have also positive

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and significant relationship with Vigor, whereas Idealized Influence has no relationship Vigor. There isn't observed any relationship between Dedication and Transformational Leadership with its dimensions.

Transformational Leadership also hasn't any positive and significant relationship with Absorption. However, Intellectual Stimulation (r=.184, p<0.05) and Individualized Consideration (r=.218, p<0.05) have positive and significant relationship with Absorption as dimension of Work Engagement.

Outcomes of the correlation analysis have given support for some hypotheses. In the light of the findings of above, H_1 and H_{1a}; H_2; H_3 and H_{3a}; H_4, H_{4a} and H_{4c}; H_5, H_{5a} and H_{5c} were supported while others are not supported.

5. CONCLUSION

Earlier studies have established that transformational leadership has a significant influence on employees' work engagement in the organizational setting. Recent focus on school leaders and teacher evaluations have fueled the public's demand to transform educational school leadership from a status quo paradigm to a leadership framework comparable to corporate leaders who should sustain performance while competing in a market driven industries. This study contributes to the literature by focusing on education sector. In this context, the study was structured for determining the relationship between perceived transformational leadership behaviors and work engagement of teachers. Depending on this purpose, an empirical research was conducted with teachers of Libyan schools in Turkey.

The findings showed that transformational leadership has a significant and positive relationship with teachers' work engagement. In the literature, dimensions of perceived transformational leadership behaviors are accepted as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration while dimensions of work engagement are accepted as vigor, dedication and absorption. Therefore, this remarkable relationship was also examined in detail by taking consideration the dimensions of transformational leadership behaviors and work engagement. Results obtained from the study imply that transformational leadership is deemed suitable for managing schools.

Transformational leaders provide support for education programs in terms of making the required assets available for teachers, raising their consciousness, motivating them and improving their performance. Schools that have leadership ability to change their management approach using leadership skills will further develop their performance. Thus, schools who want to adopt the work engagement must resource their initiatives and increase the abilities that should be given serious attention by school aiming to be in high level.

There are also some limitations in the study. The main limitation of the study revolves around participants because Libyan schools are new in Turkey, and being in a new culture with adaptation process might have influenced some of the relations studied. For future studies, researchers should concentrate on other private or government schools in other countries or Turkey. Future researches related to leadership in education sector may be also organize taking consideration different research methodologies.

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