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The Relationship Between Leadership Style and Organizational Entrepreneurship in the Staff Managers of Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences

Fatemeh Zare Qala Seyyedi [1], Boshra Havasi [2], Nayeb Fadaei Dehcheshmeh [3*]

[1] Student Research Committee, Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences, Ahvaz, Iran
[2] Department of Health Services Management, School of Health, Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences, Ahvaz, Iran
[3] Department of Public Health, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Shoushtar, Iran

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***Corresponding Author:**
Nayeb Fadaei Dehcheshmeh
Department of Public Health, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Shoushtar, Iran.

Email:
fadaei-n@shoushtarums.ac.ir

Tel:
+98-9166009661

ABSTRACT

Background: Today, the success of organizations depends on creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. One of the appropriate tools for the growth of organizational entrepreneurship is an appropriate leadership style tailored to the concepts of entrepreneurship in the organization. This study aimed to examine the relationship between leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship in the staff managers of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences in 2019.

Methods: This was a descriptive-analytic cross-sectional study conducted in 2019. All the staff managers (n= 85) of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences were approached to participate in the study. Sampling was conducted using the census method. Sixty participants completed the questionnaire. Data were collected using two questionnaires: 1) the leadership style questionnaire, Clark and 2) the organizational entrepreneurship questionnaire. Data were analyzed using $SPSS_{16}$ descriptive statistics (e.g. frequency, percent, mean ± Standard Deviation (SD)), and statistical tests including t-test, ANOVA and Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

Results: The mean ± SD of organizational entrepreneurship in staff managers was estimated at 3.18 ± 0.66. The highest type of leadership among managers was related to participative leadership with 3.90 ± 0.51. There was a direction and significant association between autocratic leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship (r = 0.30, P-value = 0.01). In contrast, no significant association was found between participative leadership and organizational entrepreneurship (P-value = 0.05) and between laissez-faire leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship (P-value = 0.62).

Conclusion: Having a leadership style tailored to the business environment makes the organization an entrepreneurial organization. In order to have an entrepreneurial organization, some measures must be taken so that managers can adopt appropriate leadership styles to provide the necessary environment for creating a successful organization and the presence of creative and entrepreneurial people in the organization.

Key words: Leadership style, Organizational entrepreneurship, Staff managers, Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences

Citation

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Introduction

The present age is called the age rapid and accelerating changes. Organizations as social units will be affected by the effects of these developments. They have to adapt to these rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes for survival and to update themselves in parallel with hardware, manpower and software changes (1). Scholars of organizational behavior and management believe that the success of today's organizations relies heavily on creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship (entrepreneurship is defined as the creation or extraction of economic value, and is viewed as change, generally entailing risk beyond what is usually encountered in starting a business, which can involve other values than simply economic ones) (2). Today, organizations attach special importance to innovation in order to survive in the field of competition due to the close and intense competition between companies and organizations, reducing the efficiency of traditional management in this field and the rapid growth of small companies (3). Entrepreneurship means exploring, evaluating, and exploiting opportunities through providing new goods and services, and entrepreneurship is defined as a process that can be accomplished in all organizations, of any size and of any kind (4).

There is a need for tools to achieve organizational entrepreneurship (the organizational entrepreneurship is one of strategic trends in organizations to gain a high functionality and reach substantial succeed). An appropriate leadership style tailored to the concepts of entrepreneurship at the organizational level is one of the appropriate tools for the growth of organizational entrepreneurship. Leadership (leadership is the ability of an individual or a group of individuals to influence and guide followers or other members of an organization) is defined as the process of influencing goals and strategies, commitment and acceptance of work to achieve goals, maintaining the group and influencing the culture of the organization (2). Leadership is very important for all organizations to achieve their goals. Given that leadership is considered as a key factor in improving organizational performance, the success or failure of the organization depends on the effectiveness of leadership at all levels.

Researchers believe that leadership refers to the ability to influence employees' attitudes, abilities, and beliefs in order to achieve organizational goals (5). By playing the role of manager as the leader of the organization, he/she can choose different styles in managing human resources. The manager's appropriate behavioral patterns in any organization create strong morale and motivation in employees, and increase their satisfaction with their job and profession (6). The manager chooses the leadership method or style with the aim of gaining the most influence from his / her effectiveness as a leader and choosing the right leadership style that is compatible with external motivation can meet the needs of belonging, respect, position, improving performance, job promotion and job satisfaction of employees, and ultimately lead to the achievement of individual and organizational goals (7).

Leadership style refers to the way in which a leader tries to influence the behavior of his/her subordinates, make decisions about group leadership, and strike a balance between the performance of achieving the group goal and maintaining the group goal. In general, different leadership styles are needed for different situations, and each leader needs to know when to demonstrate a particular approach (8).

According to the results of related studies, organizational success depends on effective leadership, and this is true in all organizations, including academic centers. As universities and higher education institutions face increasing challenges in the third millennium AD, resolving such challenges will require efficient and effective leadership and management (9).

Universities of medical sciences and health services are recognized as the trustees and executors of a wide range of health care at the four levels of prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care while also fulfilling the important mission of teaching and research at the highest levels in the field of medical sciences. On the other

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hand, there are several challenges in the approach and managerial system governing them (10). Mirsafian (2014), in a descriptive-correlation study entitled "Investigating the relationship between managers 'transformational leadership style and entrepreneurial behaviors of employees", demonstrated that there is a positive and significant correlation between managers' transformational leadership style and entrepreneurial behaviors of employees (11).

Stefan et al. (12) suggested that the cultural concepts of ideal leadership or theories of cultural leadership are important for entrepreneurship, and more entrepreneurship was found in cultures with self-centered (self-centered leaders often isolate themselves by being overly self-reliant and unwilling to delegate tasks. They become convinced that they are the only ones that can perform a given task correctly, and therefore they must do it themselves) and charismatic leadership (charismatic leadership is a leader who uses his/her communication skills, persuasiveness, and charm to influence others. Given that they have an ability to connect with people on a deep level, are valuable within organizations that are facing a crisis or are struggling to move forward). A study by Hosseinpour et al. (13) demonstrated there is a positive relationship between servant leadership and organizational entrepreneurship, intellectual capital and organizational entrepreneurship and servant leadership and intellectual capital, and also found that both variables of intellectual capital and servant leadership (servant leadership is a leadership style and philosophy whereby an individual interacts with others either in a management or fellow employee capacity to achieve authority rather than power) are able to predict organizational entrepreneurship.

Although everyone acknowledges the role of organizational entrepreneurship, less has been done on this issue in Iran's health sector (14). Considering the scope of activities of managers and staff experts in Ahwaz University of Medical Sciences, their staff and supervisory role can improve effective interactions between employees, groups and organizational units, the possibility of creating new knowledge, transfer and exchange of knowledge and innovation. Participation, mutual cooperation and exchange of ideas and thoughts lead to improving human resource productivity and subsequent organizational success. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship in the staff of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences.

Materials and Methods

This was a descriptive-analytic cross-sectional study conducted in 2019. All the staff managers (n = 85) of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences were approached to participate in the study. The researcher took action to distribute and complete the questionnaires after the issuance of the project implementation permit by the Vice Chancellor for Research of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences. Finally, 60 questionnaires were completed (the response rate was 70 %). At the beginning of the questionnaire, demographic information such as age, gender, service history and education of individuals were considered. The following questionnaires were used:

Questionnaire 1: The questionnaire identifying the leadership and management style of individuals in the organization, which was designed by Clark in 1991 and included 30 terms and 3 subscales of authoritarian (autocratic), participative (democratic) and delegative (laissez-faire) leadership styles. Each subscale consisted of 10 terms. The subject had to agree or disagree with each of the terms on a 5-point Likert scale (Always; Very Frequently; Occasionally; Rarely; Very Rarely; Never). His leadership style was determined by calculating the experimental score in 3 subscales. In other words, the sub-scale in which the subject scored the highest score reflected his leadership style. The validity of this questionnaire was confirmed in a study by Hobi and Dadashi (15) (2016), and its reliability was reported by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the leadership style of authoritarian (0.57), participative (0.65), and delegative (0.59).

Questionnaire 2: Organizational Entrepreneurship Questionnaire, which includes 31

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questions and includes the following components: Innovation (questions 1-3), Creative behavior (questions 4-6), Discovery and pursuit of opportunities (questions 7-9), Flexibility (questions 10-12), delegation (questions 13-15), organizational learning (questions 16-18), management support for new ideas of employees (questions 19-22), organizational culture (questions 23-25), training of entrepreneurs (questions 26-28) and the reward system (questions 29-31). The scale of the 5-point Likert scale questionnaire includes the following options, strongly agree (5), agree (4), have no opinion (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). A score less than 2.50 indicates a bad situation, 2.5 to 3.5 indicates a moderate situation, and a score higher than 3.50 indicates a good situation of organizational entrepreneurship (16). The validity of this questionnaire was confirmed in the study by Fadaei et al., and its reliability was obtained equal to 0.92 using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (17).

This study is the result of research project No. 98s35, approved by the student research committee of Ahwaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences with the code of ethics IR.AJUMS.REC. 1398.249 in 2019. Ethical considerations were observed in the present study, which included presenting an official letter of introduction from Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences to the subjects, obtaining permission from the faculty officials, explaining the purpose of the research to the participants, having the right to leave the study and keep the information confidential.

The research data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (e.g. frequency, percent, mean ± Standard Deviation (SD)) and inferential statistical tests, including t-test, ANOVA and Pearson correlation coefficient. The significance level in this study was 0.05, and $SPSS_{16}$ was used for data analysis.

Results

According to the results of the study, 43.10 % were female, and 56.90 % were male. The mean and standard deviation of the age was 42.09 ± 6.25 years, the most participants (49.10 %) were in the age group of 30-39 years, and the lowest (12.70 %) were in the age group of 50-59 years. The mean and standard deviation of work experience was 17.39 ± 6.72 years, and most people (43.90 %) had 10-19 years of work experience. Among managers, 1.80 % had an associate degree, 56.10 % had a bachelor's degree, 36.38 % had a master's degree, and 5.30 % had a doctorate (Table 1).

According to Table 2, the highest leadership style in the staff managers of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences is allocated to participative leadership with a mean and standard deviation of 30.90 ± 0.51, and the lowest to authoritarian leadership with a mean and standard deviation of 3.31 ± 0.54. It should be noted that the average and standard deviation of organizational entrepreneurship is 3.18 ± 0.66, which shows that the entrepreneurial situation of the managers of this university is at a moderate level (Table 2).

According to the results of the Pearson correlation test, there was a direct and significant relationship between authoritarian leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship (r = 0.30, P-value = 0.01). No significant relationship was observed between participative leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship (P-value = 0.05). There was no significant relationship between delegative leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship (p-value = 0.62) (Table 3).

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Table 1. Demographic information of the subjects

Variables		Number	Percent
Gender	Female	25	43.10
	Male	33	56.90
Age (year)	3.-39	27	49.10
	40-49	21	38.20
	50-59	7	12.70
Work experience (year)	Less than 9	9	15.80
	10-19	25	43.90
	20-29	23	40.30
Degree of education	Associate degree	1	1.80
	Bachelor	32	56.10
	Master	21	36.80
	P.H.D	3	5.30
Field of study	Medical sciences	17	29.30
	Managerial sciences	15	25.90
	Other	26	44.80

Table 2. Descriptive study of leadership style status and organizational entrepreneurship in the sample

Variables	Average	Standard deviation
Authoritarian leadership	3.31	0.54
Participative leadership	3.90	0.51
Delegative leadership	3.46	0.52
Organizational entrepreneurship	3.18	0.66

Table 3. The relationship between leadership styles and organizational entrepreneurship in university's staff managers

Variables	Organizational entrepreneurship The correlation coefficient (r)	Significance level (p)
Authoritarian leadership	0.30	0.01
Participative leadership	0.25	0.05
Delegative leadership	0.06	0.62

Discussion

This study was carried out aimed to determine the relationship between leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship among the staff managers of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences. Participative leadership was the predominant leadership style among the directors of this university. There was a significant and direct relationship between authoritarian leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship. No significant relationship was observed between participative leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship. There was no significant relationship between delegative leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship. According to the results, the staff managers of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences had a moderate status in terms of organizational entrepreneurship.

These results were consistent with the results of relevant studies. According to the results of the study carried out by Shaemi Barzaki et al. (18) on three industries of home appliances, mineral water and plastofoam in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province, six organizations were placed in the category of very low organizational entrepreneurship, four organizations in the low category and four organizations in the much category, and none of the organizations earned the necessary points to be in the too much category of organizational entrepreneurship. According to the results of a study by Khodayari-Zarnaq et al. (19), the Vice-Chancellor for Health of Ahvaz

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University of Medical Sciences was in a moderate position in terms of organizational entrepreneurship (3.31), and the results of the study of Pour Kiani et al. (20) in Kerman University of Medical Sciences, it was the average for organizational entrepreneurship. The results showed an average level of organizational entrepreneurship (20). The status of entrepreneurship in the staff managers of the University of Medical Sciences must be improved in order to spread the entrepreneurial culture to its various deputies.

According to the results of the present study, the participative leadership style was the most used leadership style among the staff managers of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences. Young (21) concluded that different leadership styles could affect business performance; there is a significant relationship between leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship. Therefore, if entrepreneurship is related to leadership style, it is necessary to adopt an appropriate leadership style to prepare the necessary conditions for entrepreneurship; if managers do not use the appropriate leadership style will not be able to provide the necessary environment and conditions for the presence of creative and the entrepreneur people (20).

It seems that participative leadership can play an effective role in increasing the entrepreneurial spirit in the university due to today's complex situation in organizations.

The results of the present study show that a significant relationship was observed between authoritarian leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship. Enayati et al. (22) concluded in a study that there is a positive and significant relationship between authoritarian leadership style and entrepreneurship. The findings of this study, in line with other studies, indicate that authoritarian leadership can change the entrepreneurial status of the organization.

No significant relationship was observed between Participative leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship, but Gaviar et al. (23) concluded in a study that participative leadership had a significant impact on the entrepreneurship of private club employees, and the impact factor of consulting style was also significant. Singh et al. (24) found that interactive leadership and organizational culture lead to increased entrepreneurship and product innovation in the organization. They also showed that the leader and the culture of the organization are moving towards entrepreneurship and innovation in relation to each other, which is not consistent with the results of this study. The difference between the research environment and the research community seems to be the cause of this issue.

According to the results of the study, there is no significant relationship between delegative leadership style and organizational entrepreneurship. Enayati et al. (22) concluded in a study that there is a positive and significant relationship between delegated leadership style and entrepreneurship, which is not consistent with the results of this study. The difference between the research environment and the research community seems to be the cause of this issue.

The limitation of this study was the unavailability of the university's staff managers, which was solved with frequent follow-ups.

Conclusion

This study can assist the staff managers of the University of Medical Sciences in creating creative and entrepreneurial conditions. The results of this study showed that the participative leadership style was the most used leadership style among the staff managers of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences. Managers must allow employees to freely lead others. Also, participate in making decisions and delegating tasks to creative and innovative people. Having the leadership style tailored to the business environment makes the organization an entrepreneurial organization.

Measures must be taken to have an entrepreneurial organization so that managers can adopt appropriate leadership styles in order to provide the necessary conditions for creating a successful organization. It is suggested that future studies be conducted to provide solutions to

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increase entrepreneurship and also to apply the style of managers in organizations that can affect its entrepreneurship and develop entrepreneurial behaviors.

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Conflict of interests

The authors have no conflict of interests with each other and with relevant organizations to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

Authors' contributions

Havasi B designed research; Havasi B, Zare Qala Seyyedi F and Fadaei Dehcheshmeh N conducted research; Fadaei Dehcheshmeh N analyzed data; and Fadaei Dehcheshmeh N wrote the paper. Fadaei Dehcheshmeh N had primary responsibility for final content. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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