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Transformational Leadership and Crisis Management in Special Education: within the Initiatives of Prince Mohammed Bin Salman

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the degree of practicing transformational leadership among special education principals from the teachers' point of view. In order to achieve the objective of the study, the descriptive correlational approach is used. The study sample consisted of 190 male and female teachers who were chosen by the simple random method from the study population. The results shows that there are significant correlations between all dimensions of transformational leadership and crisis management. Results also indicate that ideal influence, inspirational motivation, individual considerations, intellectual stimulation, empowerment show high degree of practice. Moreover, results also indicate that pre-crisis stage, crisis stage, post-crisis stage show high degree of practice. The advancement of the school requires a pattern such as leadership, enthusiasm, and mobilizing the latent energies of the teachers in the school by influencing their behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Within the directives of Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the educational field, the national strategy for the development of general education emphasizes the availability of equal learning opportunities and support systems for all students, through the development of policies related to identifying and classifying students with disabilities, and the development of scientific tools that identify and assess them (Riyadh,2022), and the development of awareness and perception, building policies and frameworks; to integrate students with disabilities into general education commensurate with their abilities within the least restrictive environments.

Additionally, to create equal enrollment opportunities for equal and appropriate education in schools for all students with disabilities without regard to gender, material social background, geographical location, or the nature of special needs, and to provide customized learning opportunities that meet the special needs of gifted and creative students, introduce school support systems for at-risk students, and provide other or alternative opportunities for lifelong learning for those outside the educational system or who have not attended school (Riyadh, 2022).

Schools, like other sectors, are now facing many challenges and crises due to rapid updates and changes in the field of science and knowledge. Therefore, leaders face increasing pressures that may affect the performance of the institution. Which requires increasing their enjoyment of awareness and awareness to confront them, and from this standpoint, it was necessary to have appropriate leaders with multiple tasks and administrative, technical and social responsibilities that work on building strategic plans according to scientific foundations based on making appropriate decisions to keep pace with the explosion of knowledge, information and developments of the age, and work to achieve effectiveness in performance in order to face those challenges and crises (AlMuqhem,2020).

The leadership skills of school principals are among the most important requirements for managing educational crises, and that weakness in their possession of these skills may cause weakness in the ability to manage crises (Rajbhandari,2017). One of the leadership styles that possess these skills is what is called transformational leadership, as the transformational leadership style is characterized by a high ability to face modern developments and challenges (Kıral & Suçiçeği, 2017)

The educational institution, whose leadership is transformative, has the ability to identify problems before they escalate, and leaders in this style work to empower their workers and delegate them to perform tasks so that they feel that they are decision-makers at the heart of events, so they can discover their talents and skills within an organizational climate that helps adapt and innovate, and learning, and they work in it with their leader with common goals motivated by satisfaction and not out of fear, which contributes to the success of the work (Mostafa, 2014)

The transformational leadership style is characterized by strength and striving to transform teachers into leaders who may excel in their performance and achievement at work. It is concerned with structuring the change required to transform the educational institution from one state to a better one, and it also promotes the use of collective problem-solving methods (Rajbhandari, 2018).

The advancement of the school requires a pattern such as leadership, enthusiasm, and mobilizing the latent energies of the teachers in the school by influencing their behavior

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(Kim & Borowska-Beszta, 2018).
Transformational leaders spread the spirit, inspiration and motivate them to innovate positive ideas. The transformational leader in the service sector has the ability to manage all stages of the crisis with his team, whether it is in the stage of anticipation of its occurrence or discovery, prevention and containment (Akyol & Ulutaş, 2021; Siman, 2015).

Problems Statement

The occurrence of crises in schools is a realistic matter. A type of such crisis has recently appeared in all countries of the world due to the Corona epidemic, which created a crisis that exceeded all expectations, and was outside the educational planners' calculations of potential future threats to educational institutions. Public and private schools were closed to avoid the spread of the epidemic. Crisis management needs a leadership style capable of providing appropriate alternatives to contain and deal with crises of all kinds, such as the transformational leadership style. The lack of leadership skills among school principals is one of the most important obstacles to managing educational crises. The leader has a prominent role in motivating the workers, cultivating factors of confidence in them, prevention, preparedness, and good dealing with ambiguous and complex situations, which increases the ability to deal with crises.

Transformational leaders have a positive impact on developing and increasing the level of creativity and self-efficacy of teachers. Transformational leadership is a modern approach that must be practiced because of the innovations, challenges and increasing pressures that schools face that require the presence of a team of teachers who can overcome these difficulties with the help of their transformational manager through his application of the dimensions of transformational leadership with its positive impact on them, stimulating their thinking to present creative ideas, inspiring them to increase their motivation and enthusiasm, enhancing their individual capabilities, and enabling them to prepare all means for better performance by working in all emerging circumstances.

Study Questions

What is the degree of practicing transformational leadership among special education principals from the teachers' point of view?

Purpose

To investigate the degree of practicing transformational leadership among special education principals from the teachers' point of view.

Methods

In order to achieve the objective of the study, the descriptive correlational approach is used.

Participants

The study sample consisted of 190 male and female male and female teachers who were chosen by the simple random method from the study population, with a confidence rate (95%) and a margin of error (5). The researcher distributed the questionnaire electronically within the study community.

Instrument

For the purpose of this study, a questionnaire is development. It is of two parts: the first part concerns transformational leadership. It consists of five subscales: Ideal influence, inspirational motivation, individual considerations, intellectual stimulation, empowerment. As for the second part; crisis management, it consists of three subscales: Pre-crisis stage, crisis stage, post-crisis stage. It used a 5 points Likert scale:
1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither agree nor disagree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree
Reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha showed that all of the four variables used in this research were reliable as shown in Table 1.

Procedures

Prior to administering the survey, teachers were informed about purpose of the study and voluntarily stated that

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	Remarks
Transformational Leadership		
Ideal influence	0.756	Reliable
Inspirational motivation	0.843	Reliable
Individual considerations	0.856	Reliable
Itellectual stimulation	0.812	Reliable
Empowerment	0.877	Reliable
Crisis management		
Pre-crisis stage	0.801	Reliable
Crisis stage	0.822	Reliable
Post-crisis stage	0.833	Reliable

they accept to participate. To ensure that the respondents responded to the items honestly and sincerely, they were told not to identify themselves in any way on the scale paper. They were also informed that they should not be concerned with anything concerns their participation in the study and their responses are for research purposes only and would be kept confidential. All data were entered in an SPSS file.

RESULTS
Descriptive data and inter-correlations

Table 2 shows the means, descriptive statistics and inter-correlations of transformational leadership and crisis management. Table 2 shows that there are significant correlations between all dimensions of transformational leadership and crisis management.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and inter-correlations

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Ideal influence	-	.502**	.520**	.512**	.540**	.533**	.516**	.519**
Inspirational Motivation		-	.444**	.421**	.413**	.394**	.388**	.511**
Individual Considerations			-	.400**	.403**	.337**	.326**	.518**
Intellectual Stimulation				-	.379**	.387**	.356**	.520**
Empowerment					-	.357**	.324**	.500**
Pre-crisis stage						-	.455**	.466**
Crisis stage							-	.497**
Post-crisis stage								-

What is the degree of practicing transformational leadership among special education principals from the teachers' point of view?

To answer this question, means, standard deviations, and ranks of teachers' estimates on the domains of the transformational leadership tool were extracted. Table 3 shows these results. As shown in table 3 Ideal influence, inspirational motivation, individual considerations, intellectual stimulation, empowerment show high degree of practice.

Table 3: Means Standard Deviations, and Ranks for Transformational Leadership

Variables	M	SD	Practice Degree	Rank
Ideal influence	4.17	1.10	high	1
Inspirational motivation	4.10	1.14	high	2
Individual considerations	4.09	1.11	high	3
Intellectual stimulation	3.99	1.18	high	4
Empowerment	3.98	1.17	high	5
Transformational leadership as a whole	4.09	1.18	high	

What is the degree of practicing crisis management among special education principals from the teachers' point of view?

To answer this question, means, standard deviations, and ranks of teachers' estimates on the domains of the crisis management tool were extracted. Table 4 shows these results. As shown in table 4 Pre-crisis stage, crisis stage, post-crisis stage show high degree of practice.

Table 4: Means, standard deviations, and ranks for crisis management

Variables	M	SD	practice degree	Rank
Crisis stage	4.11	1.12	high	1
Post-crisis stage	4.08	1.00	high	2
Pre-crisis stage	4.01	1.03	high	3
Crisis management as a whole	4.12	1.13	high	

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the degree of practicing transformational leadership among special education principals from the teachers' point of view. The results shows that there are significant correlations between all dimensions of transformational leadership and crisis management. Results also indicate that ideal influence, inspirational motivation, individual considerations, intellectual stimulation, empowerment show high degree of practice. Moreover, results also indicate that pre-crisis stage, crisis stage, post-crisis stage show high degree of practice.

This result may be attributed to the presence of a high conviction among the study sample that their principals practice transformational leadership in its five dimensions. Permanent students in the school to face the developments and challenges in the internal and external environments.

This is consistent with Jensen *et al.* who claims that transformational leadership attempts by leaders to transform members to share organizational goals from desires in themselves. This behavior is characterized by transformational behavior because leaders are expected to see a clear vision as an important driver of unselfish employee action (Jensen *et al.*, 2016).

Transformational leadership focuses on developing teams and taking their needs into account. Leaders who focus on transformational leadership focus primarily on developing a system of values, morality, skills, and team members' motivation levels (Al Khajeh, 2018). Hooper and Bernhard (2016) characterized transformational leadership as a model for the school stakeholders to work together for the same common goal.

Leader with a prior crisis experience , as indicated by Alkhawlani *et al.*(2019)is more capable to handle the crisis situation.

Limitations

The limitation of the current study related to the generalizability; the findings of this study cannot be generalized to a wider context across cultures of other countries since the data collected for this study is limited to schools for special education in Saudi Arabia.

CONCLUSION

The principal's transformational leadership empowers him to manage a crisis and bring the school to a normal point . This type of leadership is effective. This study indicates that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect and a strong relationship in crisis management. When the leader is able to drive all the school staff members to work together towards its vision , he will be able to drive them all out of crisis . Leader with a prior crisis experience is more capable to handle the crisis situation.

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