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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROACTIVE PERSONALITY AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, MEDIATION EFFECT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL OWNERSHIP

Özkan Yavuz (a) *, Meral Elçi (a), Ahmet Cengiz Uçar (a)
* Corresponding author

(a) Gebze Technical University, 41400, Kocaeli, Turkey

Abstract

Our research handles the relationship between transformational leadership and proactive personality across the Turkish educational institutions. Also the research focuses on the mediating role of psychological ownership to the relationship between transformational leadership and proactive personality. In order to test the hypotheses, a field survey has been applied on 210 primary, secondary and high school teachers of 18 schools in Istanbul and Düzce in 2018. The field survey is consisting a questionnaire with 32 questions. The acquired data from the field survey were analyzed through the statistical software IBM SPSS. Regression analyses have been handled so as to test the hypotheses and to define the essence of the relationships. The results of this research show that transformational leadership is a significantly predictor of proactive personality. By the way, the results of this research demonstrate that psychological ownership seems as a full mediator on the relationship between transformational leadership and proactive personality.

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Keywords: Proactive personality, transformational leadership, psychological ownership.



1. Introduction

Due to globalization significant events are rapidly changing the business life. Significant events such as the rapid progress of technology, the reduction of natural resources, wars, migrations, the evolution of the world into a multi-polar system take place at the same time. Import/export operations, international collaborations, international projects, social media increase the effects of these changes and create a competitive environment.

It is accepted that proactivity is a critical driver of organizational effectiveness. A meta-analytical check refer that the proactive personality is associated with diverse desired individual and organizational outcomes (Li, Liang, & Crant, 2010). Proactive behaviour is useful for the organization because it is associated with overall performance, career outcomes, individual and organizational performance, such as sales (Fay & Freese, 2001; Parker, Williams & Turner, 2006). Predicting proactive behaviour at work has been a growing focus on business (Bindl, Parker, & Zedeck, 2011). The philosophy of leadership is naturally more transformational in organic organizations where there is a strong sense of trust and where members are highly intellectual and where members should be creative. In addition, it is vital that the leadership should be more transformational when there are social challenges, economic stress, social stress, and when organizations are not able to meet expectations and organization has disgruntled employees (Bass, 1985). Psychological ownership is a vital competitive factor for businesses during the information age. This competitive factor can be influenced positively by motivation and success. Because human beings are important resources for an organization, organizations focus on human resources in order to draw away. Thus, the level of psychological ownership of employees is a vital phenomenon for enterprises to be survived, to earn more and to be successful (Demirkaya & Kandemir, 2014).

In this crucial competitive environment, companies and institutions aiming the superiority need employees who proactively behave to seize opportunities, demonstrate successful management with leadership skills and possess the business or institution psychologically. The aim of our research is to show the relationship between transformational leadership and proactive personality in the educational institutions and the mediating role of psychological ownership to this relationship. The transformational leadership, proactive personality and psychological ownership have a vital role in the management and organization. At the end of the study, the relationship between the transformational leadership and proactive personality will be determined. Also the mediation effect of the psychological ownership to this relation will be detected.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1. Proactive Personality (PP)

The dynamic structure of the business world requires individuals who are able to create opportunities and accomplish tasks given by leaders (Delle & Amadu, 2015). Proactive individuals look for potential opportunities, they demonstrate initiatives for these opportunities, they take the necessary actions, they create a desire for the change in order to drive it (Bateman & Crant, 1993). They find new paths that change the organization's mission, they solve the organization's problems and they take responsibilities to influence the world around them. But non-proactive people go the other way; they make mistakes when they identify opportunities to change things, they are not able to seize them, they demonstrate little initiative and depend

on the power of others for this initiative, they passively adapt to new conditions, even fold (Bateman & Crant, 1993).

Proactive personality defines self-initiating, future-oriented actions that intent to improve all life outcomes. Proactive behaviour has two steps; The first one is to implement a proactive idea that involves accepting individual responsibility for advancing the business environment and second one is to solve problems that aims at future action to prevent the problem before recurring (Parker, Williams & Turner, 2006). Individuals who have proactive personality behaviour are striving to make changes and trying to create effects that will cause change (Baltaş, 2002). In other words, they are individuals who dedicate themselves to change and development, who desire to seriously affect the individuals in their environment, and also who transform these ideas into action for crowded masses. The dimensions of proactive behaviour are defined as individual differences including demographics, knowledge and skills, personality and situational differences including job characteristics, leadership and working climate (Spychala, 2009; Bindl et al., 2011).

Demography: Age has a negative effect on proactive personality in relation to environmental adaptation. Age has also a negative influence in relation to career behaviour of proactive person. Young employees may not have got to their last career positions. For this reason, they are more likely to focus on career behaviours. Ethnicity can act a role in proactive behaviour of individuals (Bindl et al., 2011). When gender was considered, no significant perceived differences were found for variables containing proactive personality (Duygulu, 2008).

Knowledge and Skills: Taking initiative requires complete job understanding and one needs information, physical skills and cognitive skills related to the job (Fay & Freeze, 2001). Individuals with expertise have confidence of convictions of their ideas for change (Wu & Wang, 2015). These arguments were supported by researches. A study in Eastern and Western Germany demonstrated that there was a moderate positive relationship between job competence and personal initiatives as well as other initiatives. Another study in East Germany showed that a positive correlation was found between cognitive ability and personal initiative (Fay and Freeze, 2001).

Personality: Proactive personality as a personality trait was investigated by researchers as a premise of proactive behavior and as a tendency to influence an individual's environment many times (Bindl et al., 2011).

Job characteristics: Both positive and negative job traits can initiate proactive behaviour (Wu & Parker, 2013). Any stressful thing may launch proactive behaviour due the fact that it may point development areas. If the real workload exceeds the preferred workload (it is called time pressure), the accomplishment of the task may be at risk. This kind of risks may be called situation constraints. Proactive behaviour is necessary to change something to act to reduce this contradiction, to take necessary actions. This makes the need of proactive behaviour clear (Spychala, 2009).

Leadership: The proactive behaviour of employees depends on the managerial styles, attitudes, expectations, and depends on the relation between the leader and the follower. Generally leaders who have supportive behaviours create opportunities for followers to participate in decision making (Bindl et al., 2011). These leaders, with a positive manner towards change and openness, strengthen proactive behaviours of the employees. Transformational leaders motivate followers to challenge the status quo. Not

only the type of leadership, but also the quality of the relationship between leader and follower may influence proactive behaviour. Followers, who have a high quality relationship with their leaders, are more likely to bring positive changes to their organizations and receive resources from the managers for these changes (Wu & Parker, 2013).

Climate: The trust with the colleagues may increase the proactivity reported by employees by expanding the roles they perceive. Trust leads to the realization of proactive problem solving through the flexible role orientation which refers to the orientation of employee's role, what the employees as the limits of their roles, the scope of the tasks, objectives and difficulties they perceive as part of their responsibilities (Parker et al., 2006). Employees who have a flexible role orientation feel they have innovative and creative goals except narrow job descriptions, thus they are more focused on efforts to achieve these goals than employees who do not view these goals as part of their work (Beltran, Bou-Llugar, Roca-Puig, & Escrig-Tena, 2017).

Proactive behaviours have been shown to affect individual outcomes (job performance, prosperity, identity, etc.), team outcomes (such as team activity) and organizational outcomes (performance of the organization) (Spsychala, 2009; Bindl et al., 2011). By fulfilling basic needs such as self-efficacy and self-identity, employees will be proactive in protecting and improving the sense of ownership. For this reason, employees must be proactive in making behavioural contributions to the organization (Pierce et al., 2004).

The results of a study show that proactive personality is a predictive of work engagement (Bakker, Tims & Derks, 2012). In another study, findings confirm that proactive personality is associated with an increase in work engagement after some duration. Some other researches have addressed the relationship between work engagement and psychological ownership. For instance, a research has shown that work engagement is a vital dimension of both psychological ownership and happiness (Olekers, George, & Van, 2017). In another research, psychological ownership has been shown to be positively correlated with work engagement (George, 2015). From the above relations, we can assess that a similar relationship may be between proactive personality and psychological ownership. In this manner proactive personality may be positively correlated with the psychological ownership.

2.2. Transformational Leadership(TL)

Leaders encourage their followers to accomplish specific goals that represent the expectations of both themselves and their followers, taking into account their values and their passion (Burns, 1979). Transformational leaders empower unexplored requirements or change these requirements. Transformational leaders try to make their followers more consciousness about the outcomes. This consciousness raises awareness of the value and the importance of outputs. They ensure that team members overcome their personal capacity for the benefit of the organization, they widen the portfolio of people's needs and desires (Bass, 1985).

Transformational leader let the followers have inputs into the vision, so followers feel more valued themselves and the relationship becomes established. This energizes and motivates their subordinates to improve their possession of the shared vision and to realize that vision. Morale increases and team members get empowered to develop their leadership abilities (Rolfe, 2011). From these definitions, leaders will ensure that their followers contribute vision and followers who adopt this vision will realize the more

preferable results. We can indicate that the transformational leadership is a leadership process that acts by influencing followers, enabling them to acquire more abilities beyond their existing capacities.

Transformational leadership was somehow related to theory of trait. The thinkers, who depend on the theory of trait, believe a perfect person should be born, anyone can not be perfect later. Contrary to the "perfect man" idea, the four antecedents of the transformation leadership may be seen as the path to desire to be a perfect leader (Provitera & Ghasabeh, 2017). Four dimensions of transformational leadership are charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Charisma (idealized influence): In this dimension, leaders perform behaviors that will form a role model for the followers. Transformational leaders put their important values on the table so they argue for these values together. These leaders are appreciated, respected and trusted people. The leaders who overcome the difficult factors and foster trust in the organization, will also emphasize the importance of the goals, the commitment and the ethical results of the decisions (Demir & Okan, 2008). The leader provides a vision, mission and faith and also inspires subordinates about the goals of the organization (Ahmad, Abbas, Latif, & Rasheed, 2014).

Inspirational Motivation: Transformational leaders motivate and encourage their followers for objectives of the organization. With a simple and apprehensible style, they allow employees to struggle harder to reach the goals of the organization; bring a team spirit to the organization in order to create a more efficient working environment. In the organization, they create an excited, enthusiastic environment where positive approaches and feelings are spread. Transformational leaders indicate that working more will give better results (Avcı, 2015). Transformational leaders build a participated idea for their followers. When there is a vision based on facts, followers learn not because of the commands, they learn because they really want to. This approach is more appreciated than requirement hierarchy and is inspired among subordinates by triggering a participated understanding of organizational goals (Matin, Jandaghi, & Farjami, 2009).

Intellectual Stimulation (mental stimulation): Transformational leaders encourage their followers for new perspectives and methods by questioning old assumptions, traditions, odds and beliefs. While followers are encouraged to experience new methods, they are not criticized by their superiors (Demir & Okan, 2008).

Individual Consideration: Transformational leaders are mentors and they guide their followers. They create new opportunities, working environments, conditions for followers to develop themselves; they create an organizational climate that promotes learning and self-improvement. At this point, followers reach the highest level of their capabilities and abilities and they can use them to make the organization even much more successful (Avcı, 2015). The transformational leader creates warm relationships with his/her followers. Leader follows their needs individually and shows individual interest in them. This is vital that the leader should behave differently but fairly. Eventually, this approach of the leader makes the followers feel different, private, encouraged and motivated. This situation increases the success of the followers. This feature of the transformational leader is described as coaching, mentoring (Kurtuluş, 2003).

Transformational leaders drive new methods to their subordinates, they help them to be creative and therefore followers can make great decisions. Transformational leaders refer their followers logical frameworks. As a matter of fact that the self-efficacy and flexible role orientation develop the proactive

behaviors of followers directly. Analyses show that transformational leadership has an influence on personal effectiveness and flexible role orientation. A transformational leader is not a direct role model for proactive personality, even the followers perform proactive behaviors. Thus transformational leadership may be a motivator underlying the proactive behaviors of followers (Tinneveld, 2013).

In this manner transformational leadership may be one of the predecessors of the proactive personality.

2.3. Psychological ownership (PO)

Psychological ownership is defined as "an attitude with emotional and cognitive elements" and that is a state of mind that implies informal and non-legal ownership, and the goal of ownership can be concrete or intangible with a conceptual base focused on the ownership (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2003). This is very critical that the leaders who deal with the competition problem should understand the psychological ownership well and understand the effects of psychological ownership on the followers and the organization. These leaders should know at which level the qualifications of employees may be affected with psychological ownership, also they should know what type of qualifications of employees may be affected with psychological ownership (Demirkaya & Kandemir, 2014).

Psychological ownership is a successful attitude of increasing an organization's competitive power and utilized as an instrument to motivate members of the organization. Members, who feel psychological ownership towards their institution, assume that they are responsible for setbacks. They try to resolve the issues and assist other members, in spite of the fact that these actions do not exist in their responsibility (Uçar, Elçi, & Erzen, 2017). In total quality management owning the organization and feeling like "this is my place", "this place is my institution", "this is our job" or "this place is ours" are very significant for the organization. It is very important for the members of the organization how to behave. Psychological ownership is one of the most important construct of research in organizational behaviour research, because the outcome and the performance are directly influenced. For this reason, it can be said that the psychological ownership, which is seen as an important key for the organization, is able to affect motivation and success in workplaces (Demirkaya & Kandemir, 2014). The psychological sense of ownership towards the organization maintain employees to identify themselves as part of the organization (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2001). Employees who have psychological ownership towards their organizations, describe themselves with the organization, or imagine the organization as an extension of their presence. They also hold themselves and others accountable for their decisions and actions. They feel like they are at home. So they can naturally defend their assets, jobs or organizations (Avey, Avolio, Crossley & Luthans, 2009; Pierce et al., 2001). Seven predecessors of psychological ownership are declared; self-efficacy, self-identity, belongingness, accountability, autonomy, responsibility, territoriality (Pierce et al., 2003; Avey et al., 2009, Olckers, & Plessis, 2012).

Studies show that there are some individual and organizational antecedents of psychological ownership. Past researches show that it is positively associated with organizational commitment, job satisfaction, self-esteem focused on organization, performance, and behaviours of organizational citizenship (Pierce et al., 2003). Psychological ownership reveals work engagement and proactive behaviours in order to preserve ownership goals (Pierce, Dyne, & Cummings, 1992). So psychological

ownership may be one of the predecessors of the proactive personality (PP). A research accomplished in the Pakistan telecommunications sector tested the relationship between employee engagement and transformational leadership and the mediation effect of psychological ownership. When employees feel themselves part of the organization, they become identified in the organization. This relationship improves employee commitment and improves performance. Both the transformational leadership style and employee commitment practice the sense of ownership in employees. The result of the study shows that the psychological ownership is performing partial mediation in the relationship between the transformational leadership and the performance of the employee (Ghafoor, Qureshi, Khan, & Hijazi, 2011). A survey performed in Singapore, a positive relationship found between the psychological ownership of middle-level managers and entrepreneurial behaviours. Job satisfaction was a partial mediator in this relation. This research suggests a positive relationship between these managers' satisfaction with their organization and business. Psychological ownership is not only important for management level, but also for all levels within the organization. Controlling their work, supporting positive organizational values, and providing positive emotions may influence psychological ownership (Mustafa, Martin & Hughes, 2016).

By literature mentioned above, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Transformational leadership is positively associated with psychological ownership.

H2: Psychological ownership is positively associated with proactive personality.

H3: Transformational leadership is positively associated with proactive personality.

H4: Psychological ownership mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and proactive personality.

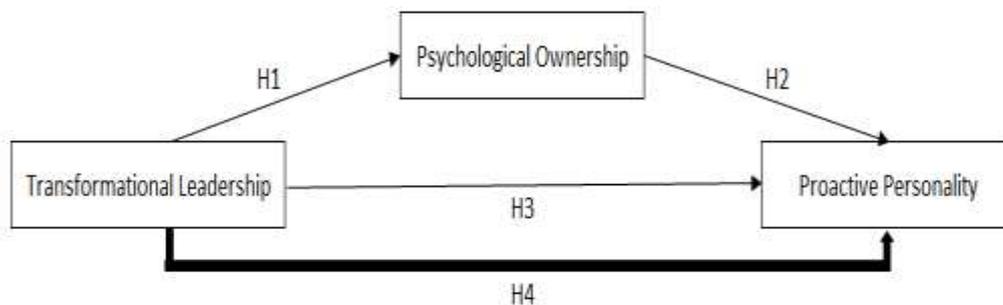


Figure 01. Hypotheses models

3. Research Method

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

The survey of this study was applied on 214 teachers in 18 schools which are primary, secondary and high schools in Turkey, during the year 2018. Schools were randomly chosen in 2 different cities, Istanbul and Düzce. 300 questionnaires were sent to these schools, but 210 of 300 questionnaires were able to be obtained. 4 questionnaires were taken out because they were not completed. Data obtained from 210 questionnaires have been analyzed through the statistical software IBM SPSS and four hypotheses that mentioned above have been tested by regression analyses.

3.2. Analyses

Organization based psychological ownership scale of Van Dyne & Pierce (2004) was used to measure psychological ownership.

Table 01. Exploratory Factor Analysis (Principal Component Analysis, Varimax Method)

Item	TL	PP	PO
Considers me as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.	0.854		
Acts in ways that builds my respect.	0.847		
Suggests new ways of looking at how to complete assignments.	0.845		
Instills pride in me for being associated with him/her.	0.842		
Seeks differing perspectives when solving problems.	0.839		
Gets me to look at problems from many different angles.	0.835		
Helps me to develop my strengths.	0.834		
Considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.	0.824		
Articulates a compelling vision of the future.	0.818		
Treats me as an individual rather than just as a member of a group.	0.817		
Displays a sense of power and confidence.	0.815		
Talks optimistically about the future.	0.812		
Specifies the importance of having a strong sense of purpose.	0.792		
Goes beyond self-interest for the good of the group.	0.784		
Talks enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished.	0.774		
Expresses confidence that goals will be achieved.	0.721		
Talks about their most important values and beliefs.	0.508		
If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen.		0.803	
No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen.		0.778	
I excel at identifying opportunities.		0.761	
I can spot a good opportunity long before others can.		0.750	
I am always looking for better ways to do things.		0.748	
If I see something I don't like, I fix it.		0.738	
I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition.		0.725	
I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life.		0.713	
Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality.		0.651	
This is MY organization.			0.797
I sense that this organization is MY company.			0.786
It is hard for me to think about this organization as MINE.			0.761
I feel a very high degree of personal ownership for this organization.			0.737
Most people that work for this organization feel as though they own the company.			0.732
This is OUR company.			0.714
Cronbach alpha	0.974	0.916	0.932
R ²	36.80 %	18.60 %	14.25 %

Notes. Total R²:69.65 %; KMO: 0.949; Chi-Square: 6777.34; df: 496; p<0.001. TL: Transformational Leadership, PP: Proactive Personality, PO: Psychological Ownership

To analyse transformational leadership, multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) of Avolio & Bass (2004) was used and to test proactive personality, proactive personality scale (Bateman & Crant, 1993) was performed. All scales are adapted to Turkish language by the co-author Ahmet Cengiz Uçar. These scales were in the form of 5 point Likert type from 1="Definitely Disagree to 5 "Definitely Agree". Exploratory factor analysis is performed as illustrated in Table 1. The reliability coefficient Cronbach alpha of the psychological ownership scale was 0.932. The reliability coefficient Cronbach alpha of the transformational leadership scale was 0.974 and the reliability coefficient Cronbach alpha of the proactive personality scale is 0.916.

4. Findings

Table 02. Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable	Predictor	Regression Test		
		B	Std. Error	Beta
PO	TL	0.578	0.051	0.617**
	<u>Step1</u>			
PP	TL	0.294	0.047	0.399**
	<u>Step2</u>			
	PO	0.408	0.053	0.519**
	TL	0.058	0.053	0.079

Notes. **p<0.01 TL: Transformational Leadership, PP: Proactive Personality, PO: Psychological Ownership

As illustrated in Table 2 transformational leadership is a significantly predictor of psychological ownership ($\beta = 0.617, p < 0.01$). In Step 1, the results show that transformational leadership is a significantly predictor of proactive personality ($\beta = 0.399, p < 0.01$). In step 2, the results refer that psychological ownership is a significantly predictor of proactive personality ($\beta = 0.519, p < 0.01$) and when psychological ownership is included in the model, there is a significant decrease in the relationship between transformational leadership and proactive personality and the relationship is non-significant ($\beta = 0.079, p = 0.278$). The results prove that psychological ownership fully mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and proactive personality. The role of psychological ownership is being a full mediator on the relation between transformational leadership and proactive personality. This means if teachers already have proactive personality due to psychological ownership, transformational leadership does not affect the proactive personality of teachers. But also if leaders act as a transformational leader in the institutions, they certainly increase psychological ownership and as a result this may indirectly rise up proactive personality.

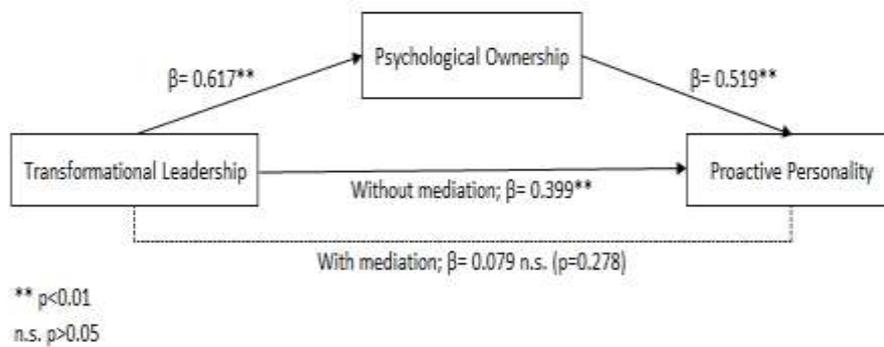


Figure 02. Mediation Model

Indeed, hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4 have been accepted.

5. Conclusion and Discussions

This research, which was implemented on educational institutions in Turkey, has remarked the relationship among the transformational leadership, proactive personality and psychological ownership. Transformational leadership can be a significant variable contributing to the employee's psychological ownership (Avey et al., 2009). Transformational leaders ensure their followers the opportunity to communicate with a topic that promotes psychological ownership in the workplace (Yuan & Lin, 2012). Transformational leaders provide a suitable environment for improving trust and hope for psychological ownership (Avey et al., 2012). H1 (Transformational leadership is positively associated with psychological ownership) is accepted and consistent with past studies in the literature. Psychological ownership causes work engagement and proactive behaviours in order to preserve ownership goals (Pierce et al., 1992). H2 (Psychological ownership is positively associated with proactive personality) is accepted and proper with past studies in the literature. Interactive and transformational leadership styles are closely related to being proactive (Meyer, 2003). It is found that transformational leadership has a positive effect to provide more proactivity to teams (Wu & Wang, 2015). H3 (Transformational leadership is positively associated with proactive personality) is accepted and suitable with past studies in the literature. The mediator effect of psychological ownership on the relationship between transformational leadership and proactive personality (H4) is handled for the first time in this research, which is unique from other researches. The most highlighted result from the data is that psychological ownership fully mediates the effect of transformational leadership on proactive personality.

This study has several limitations that should be noted. On the future research, researchers may examine whether proactive personality is associated with different predecessors rather than transformational leadership and psychological ownership. For example the antecedents of the transformational leadership such as charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration may be researched as a predictor of proactive personality. However this is stated that proactive personality is a predecessor of entrepreneurship (Duygulu, 2008; Delle & Amadu, 2015). So further researches may focus whether transformational leadership and psychological ownership are

associated with entrepreneurship. Additionally it is stated that proactive personality is an antecedent of objective job performance (Crant, 1995). Researchers may also check whether transformational leadership and psychological ownership are associated with objective job performance.

Another limitation of this research is that this survey was applied on educational institutions in Turkey. The participation of Turkish respondents may have affected our findings. Comparative studies across different cultural and international contexts are needed if we want to truly understand the underlying mechanisms among the relations. This is advised that future researches should be applied in different countries. So this may realize whether cultural, traditional differences have effects on these results. This is recommended that future researches should be done in different industries, such as manufacturing, information technology, telecommunications, finance, healthcare, logistics, etc. In addition to that, this is advised that further researches should be performed on different-scale organizations such as start-ups, small and medium enterprises, large enterprises, non-profit organizations, universities, etc. These may contribute for the generalization of results.

For executives the leadership in the workplace should be more transformational. Thus employees will contribute to the administration vision and employees will perform more successful results with acquiring more abilities beyond their existing capacities. In order to popularize transformational leadership, top managers may be aware of transformational leadership styles. When hiring new managers, there may be performed some assessments to check how transformational is their leadership style. Human resources may apply similar tests to check employees' proactive personality and psychological ownership. According to results of these tests there may be organized training sessions if needed. Regarding proactive personality, psychological ownership and transformational leadership the shared vision of the organization should be identified in a new way. Flexible role orientation positively affects the workplace climate which is one of the predecessor of the proactive personality (Parker et al., 2006). High-performance work systems may encourage the psychological ownership of employees who has flexible role orientation by giving employees the opportunity to participate with ideas or suggestions (Shukla & Singh, 2014). High-performance work systems may contribute to development of knowledge, skills and capabilities of employees. So these systems may increase proactivity by increasing their psychological ownership (Fay & Frese, 2001). In this manner, high-performance work systems may be adapted to the workplaces. New processes, new policies, new procedures may be created, applied and controlled in the workplaces. To do these the most significant one is to change the work climate in the workplaces.

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