



Research Paper

Relationship between Humble Leadership and Employee Innovation Behavior in Public Libraries in Hamadan Province: Explaining the Mediating Role of Positive Psychological Capital

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Abstract

Background and Objectives: As a bottom-up leadership style, leader humility has received considerable attention from researchers. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between humble leadership and employee innovation behavior with the emphasis on the mediating role of positive psychological capital among the employees of public libraries in Hamadan province, Iran.

Methodology: The present study was descriptive and correlational. The total statistical population of this research involved 187 employees of public libraries in Hamadan province, from which a sample size of 123 people was selected using the simple random sampling based on the Morgan table. For collecting data, three standard questionnaires of innovation behavior, positive psychological capital and humble leadership were used. Besides, the proposed model was analyzed using structural equation modeling with Smart PLS2 software.

Findings: The results showed that our theoretical model can properly be used in the process of employee innovation behavior formation, and all the direct relations between variables in the model are significant. Furthermore, the results of modeling the structural equations showed that, in a humble leadership explaining 83 percent of positive psychological capital, humble leadership accounts for 78 percent of the employee innovation behavior; positive psychological capital clarifies 17 percent of employee innovation behavior; and humble leadership explains 15 percent of employee innovation behavior through positive psychological capital.

Discussion: This study provided some insights for organizations in implementing humble leadership and motivating employee innovation behavior. Humility has been understood as the core trait of servant leadership, level-five leadership and participative leadership. However, humble leadership as a new type of independent leadership style has yet to be thoroughly investigated. By confirming the mediating role of PsyCap, the research further uncovers why followers under humble leader behaviors are more likely to engage in employee innovation behavior. Moreover, this study offers additional insight into the fact that followers may differ in the degree to which they are receptive to leader's effect.

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Introduction

Environmental dynamism aims to stimulate a firm to increase its corporate innovation activities. Environmental changes and volatility can encourage innovation as firms attempt to take advantage of new opportunities created by change (Huse et al., 2005). Individuals' innovative behaviors in the workplace are the foundation of any high-performance organization, and thus "the study of what motivates or enables individual innovative behavior is critical (Carmeli et al., 2006).

Human resources are also a key factor in increasing the competitiveness, innovation and competitive advantage of organizations. This resource with features such as value creation, scarcity and difficulty of imitation provides the basis for improving the capabilities of organizations. Innovation creation depends on the evolution of capital in organizations, and today capital has changed from the traditional form of economic capital to the form of psychological capital. According to Carmen and Jones (2008), psychological capital is a key factor influencing innovation in the organization; In other words, psychological capital creates innovation in the organization by creating a suitable environment (Lutans et al., 2007; Rego et al., 2012).

Having psychological capital increases creativity and innovation in individuals (Luttange et al., 2007) and identifying the psychological capital of individuals is considered as a tool for fostering their innovation (Jafari, 2012). According to Luttange et al. (2007), psychological capital based on positive psychological components leads to enhancing the value of human and social capital in the organization. These components give meaning to a person's life in an interactive context with an evaluation approach. Therefore, psychological capital helps the individuals to change stressful situations and enter the arena of action, hence ensuring their resilience and tenacity in achieving goals. AVEY et al. (2010) showed that psychological capital is a factor that can be used to better understand the signs of organizational innovation as well as employee creativity.

The literature on humble leadership and employee innovation remains sparse and the linkage mechanism has not been well examined (Jeung and Yoon, 2016). Humble leaders admit their own shortcomings, appreciate their subordinates' advantages and contributions, and learn from others. These features of humble leadership will reduce a staff's psychological burden of innovation failure and result in more psychological freedom, which may foster idea generation and innovation behavior (Hennessey and Amabile, 2010).

However, an intriguing question remains regarding whether humble leader behaviors equally influence their followers. Leadership is a social or interactive process determined by both leaders and followers (Zhu et al., 2009). Therefore, although generally we expect humble leader behaviors to positively influence follower PsyCap, it should be noted that followers may differ in the degree to which they value innovation behavior for personal growth and development at work.

Overall, our research aims to develop a conceptual model that explicates how and when humble leader behaviors may be most successful in facilitating innovation behavior. To this end, we incorporate PsyCap (mediator) into our model, and propose several specific assumptions, as described in the following sections.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee innovation behavior

Employees' innovative behavior refers to their contribution to the development of organizational innovations. Innovative behavior in the workplace is a multidimensional concept and refers to behaviors that contribute to the innovation process in the organization. This behavior should not only describe the mental process of generating new ideas but also introduce and apply new ideas, with the aim of improving organizational performance (Ren and Zheng, 2015). Organizational innovation has three areas of idea generation, idea promotion and idea implementation. Idea generation is the process of brainstorming and presenting new ideas and shows the extent to which a person generates new ideas. Idea promotion refers to people's efforts to gain the support and commitment of others in implementing new ideas. Implementing an idea refers to more practical efforts by the individuals to turn new ideas into practical solutions and implement them in organizational activities (Dijang and Denhartog, 2010; and Mora, 2013). In the operational definition, an employee has an innovative behavior, within the organization, by providing innovative ideas and solutions to work problems and constantly seeking new methods, techniques and tools to innovate in their work. In the promotion of ideas, an innovative employee seeks to gain the support and approval of others for their innovative ideas and makes the organizational managers eager to accept innovative ideas. Finally, in terms of generating ideas, the employee has an innovative behavior that introduces innovative ideas to his work environment in a systematic way so that these ideas can then be applied. (Tastan, 2013).

Positive Psychological Capital

Positive psychological capital is another construct derived from positive organizational psychology research, defined as the study of "positive human strengths and psychological capacities." It is a measurable construct that can be "developed and managed" to improve employee performance in the workplace (Luttange and Korch, 2002). Positive psychological capital consists of four dimensions that reinforce each other, all of which can be improved and managed for the success of employees and the organization (Luttange, Joseph and Olivier, 2007; Luttange, Avolio, Avoy and Norman, 2007). Self-efficacy is derived from Bandura's early work (Bandura, 1997) and refers to a person's self-confidence in his or her ability to perform actions and tasks. Positive psychological capital self-efficacy includes five behaviors: high goal setting is openness to challenging tasks, high self-motivation, use of effort to achieve goals, and perseverance through incompatibility (Luttange et al., 2007). Hope is based on the work of Snyder et al. (Snyder et al., 1996), which describes a person's motivation to achieve goals (Luttange et al., 2007). Hope requires motivating oneself to reach where one wants to be and creating realistic paths to achieve those goals even if you encounter obstacles (Luttange and Joseph, 2004). Optimism is the perception that negative situations arising from external sources are momentary and situational while positive situations are the result of internal and enduring reasons (Luttange and Joseph, 2004). Optimists gain self-confidence for positive events in life, increase self-esteem and avoid negative unfavorable situations. In this way, they protect themselves from depression, self-blame and despair (Luttange and Joseph, 2004). Flexibility includes the ability to recover from "incompatibility, uncertainty,

failure, or drastic change” (Luttange and Joseph, 2004). Resilient individuals have flexibility beyond constraints and problems and show higher levels of performance to respond to challenges seriously (Luttange and Joseph, 2004). Resilience enables the acceptance of reality, the development of strong beliefs, the understanding of life in terms of meaning, and the development of flexibility to adapt to important changes (Diover et al., 2019).

Positive assessment of the situation and the probability of success, based on motivational effort combined with perseverance is called positive psychological capital. In the literature on positive organizational behavior, four sources of psychological empowerment have been identified. Luttange and Joseph (2007) have introduced these sources together as components of psychological capital. The characteristics of positive psychological capital are: uniqueness, measurability, improved ability and development, and performance impact. In a positive view of organizational behavior, the growth of psychological resources and its effects on mental health can be explained by the positive psychological theory of Barbara Frederickson (2001) and the construction and development of positive emotions (Wright, 2003). This theory claims that people's positive emotions expand their mental feedback, which in turn leads to the development of sustainable personal resources, including physical, intellectual, social and psychological resources (Frederickson, 2001). This approach also shows that individuals' positive daily experiences over time are essential for predicting greater psychological well-being through the creation of personal resources (Togad, Frederickson, & Barrett, 2004). Psychological capital is defined as self-assessment of the context and likelihood of perceiving success (Howard, 2017). In Sum, the four main components are self-efficacy with an emphasis on commitment and effort to succeed in challenging tasks, optimism in the sense of positivity based on positive evidence of present and future success, hope in the sense of showing resistance in achieving goals and changing the direction of achieving goals, and resilience that means flexibility and perseverance in the face of difficulties and problems.

Humble Leadership

The advent of positive psychology in the early 2000s spurred interest in character strengths, including humility, in the psychological literature (Owens, Rowatt, & Wilkins, 2011). Humility is a stable and lasting positive human quality whose core characteristic is its “other-enhancing” orientation (Chancellor and Lyubomirsky, 2013). In the past, humility was perceived as a personal weakness (Morris et al., 2005) and associated with “shyness, lack of ambition, passivity, or lack of confidence” (Vera and Rodriguez-Lopez, 2004, p. 393). This emphasis on the negative aspects of individuals shifted to positive organizational psychology, which highlights the positive strength of individuals.

Owens et al. (2015) see humble leadership as acknowledging individual limitations, highlighting the strengths of others, and being prepared to learn from models. Here, it is assumed that this set of behaviors helps reduce the social distance between leaders and followers by promoting reciprocal exchange relationships. Initially, by acknowledging individual limitations, a leader will be able to stand firm and approach his subordinates. Morris et al. (2005) describe this aspect of humility as an essential AVEY-seeking behavior. Overall, as Owens et al. (2015) point out, research has shown that self-disclosure leads to reciprocal self-disclosure. Second, by identifying and highlighting the

strengths of others (especially subordinates), leaders show respect for their subordinates and participate in subordinates' growth, which is likely to strengthen the relationship between leaders and followers. Ultimately, a trainable leader is someone who actively seeks feedback, is open to the ideas of others, and is up to date with new information. This is important for the relationship between the leader and the follower, because the leader is aware of the concerns, complaints, opinions and ideas of the subordinates and will be held accountable. We define humility as a personal orientation that tends to observe closely and tends to express itself precisely. We believe that genuine humility does not involve humiliation – nor does it seem too positive (aghghi, 2020).

This call for emphasis on humility in leadership is paralleled by a discussion of humility in the context of the existing leadership theories. For example, Collins (2001) conceptualized Level 5 leadership, the top-most tier in a hierarchy of leader capabilities, as a combination of personal humility and professional will. From this perspective, leader humility involves acting with a calm and quiet demeanor, motivating followers with inspiring standards rather than charisma, and giving credit for success to the team while accepting blame for poor results (Collins, 2001). Alternatively, characteristics of authentic leaders — a sense of self-awareness, expression of values, and transparency regarding desires and expectations — have also been described as intrinsically humble (May et al., 2003). Furthermore, both transformational leadership and servant leadership, two similar but distinct perspectives, possess features that could be characterized as expressions of humility — appreciation of others, mentoring or teaching, and empowering followers (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2003). Although it could be argued that aspects of humility were present in each of these perspectives, none of them agreed on a definition of humility or specifically emphasized humility as the determinant of successful leadership.

Conceptual Framework

Therefore, based on the above statements, the main question of this research is as follows. What is the mediating effect of positive psychological capital on the relationship between humble leadership and innovative behavior among the employees of public libraries in Hamadan province?

Based on the existing theories and previous studies, there are several relationships between variables such as employee innovation behavior, positive psychological capital, and humble leadership. With some of the previous studies, the research builds the following research model.

Based on the research objectives and theoretical review the research hypotheses are:

- 1) Humble leadership has an effect on positive psychological capital.
- 2) Humble leadership has an effect on employee innovation behavior.
- 3) Positive psychological capital has an effect on employee innovation behavior.
- 4) Humble leadership support has an effect on employee innovation behavior through positive psychological capital.

Based on the existing theories and previous studies, the proposed conceptual model of the study is presented in Fig. 1.

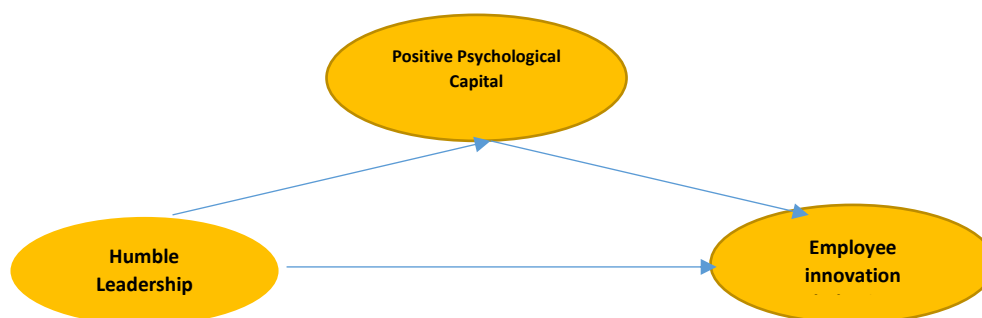


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODS

This study has a descriptive design using a correlational scheme type. The statistical population of this research consisted of the managers and employees of the public libraries based in Hamadan province, Iran, with a total number of 187 people. In the sample selection process, a simple random sampling method, and to determine the sample size the Krejcie and Morgan tables, were used. So, the sample was created with the participation of 123 Employees. Finally, based on the Smart Equation Modeling algorithm, SmartPLS (version 2) software was used to analyze the data.

Measures

All focus variables were rated by using five-point Likert-type scale, namely from 1, disagree strongly to 5, agree strongly. We reported Cronbach's α , composite reliability and the average variance extracted (AVE) to assess the reliability and convergent validity of the measurements. Innovation behavior was measured using a 6-item scale of Scott and Bruce (1994). Example items are "generates creative ideas" and "promotes and champions ideas to others." Responses were made on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from "not at all" to "to an exceptional degree" with a reliability of 0.89. The measure had a coefficient α of 0.87, the composite reliability was 0.90, and AVE was 0.62. The results showed that the measurement had adequate reliability and convergent validity.

All the measurement items of humble leadership used the scale developed by Owens et al. (2013), which includes three dimensions (willingness to view oneself accurately, appreciation of others' strengths, and teachability) and nine items. A sample item is "This person shows appreciation for the unique contributions of others." Many scholars have confirmed that this scale has high internal consistency. For this measure, the coefficient α was 0.93, composite reliability was 0.94, and AVE was 0.65. The results showed that the reliability and convergent validity of the measurement were good.

PsyCap was measured using a 24-item scale developed by Luthans et al. (2007), with four dimensions: self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. Example items are "I feel confident setting goals in my work area" (self-efficacy), "There are lots of ways around any problem" (hope), "When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the best" (optimism) and "When I have a setback at work, I have trouble recovering from it, moving on" (resilience). The measure had a coefficient α of 0.96, a composite reliability of 0.97, and an AVE of 0.58. The results showed that the reliability and convergent validity of the measurement were good.

FINDINGS

The sample was created with the participation of 123 employees. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are summarized in Table 1. The investigation of fitting of the structural equation model is performed in three sections: 1) the measurement or exterior models, 2) the structural or internal models Fit, and 3) the general model Fit. To evaluate the fitting of the measuring models in this study, the reliability and validity of the measurement models were examined.

One of the criteria that is controlled by measuring models is internal consistency. The traditional benchmark for this control is the Cronbach’s alpha. For confirmatory studies, this value should be greater than 0.7. As Table 2 shows, the Cronbach’s alpha value for all of the research variables is greater than 0.7, which indicates that the model has an appropriate reliability. The composite reliability (ρ_c) of all the reagents with the corresponding structure is used to determine the internal correlation of the measuring instrument. The appropriate stability value for each reagent is based on its corresponding structure and composite reliability is at least 0.7. Table 2 shows that all structures have a composite reliability of greater than 0.7, which shows fit for the measurement models. Moreover, convergent validity is used to fit the measurement models in PLS method. Some scholars consider 0.5 as the suitable value of this criterion. The results, indicated in Table 2, show that the convergence validity of all structures is higher than 0.5.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the sample group

Education	Work Experience		Age		Sex	
(highschool)	12	1-5 years	26	20-30	31	
diploma		5-10 years	25			male 57
Bachelor (B A)	86	10-15 years	26	30-40	33	
Masters' degree (M A) and higher	25	15-20 years	33	40-50	36	
		More than 20 years	13	Above 50	23	female 66

Table 2: Values of AVE, Cronbach’s alpha, composite reliability

Variable	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbachs Alpha
Employee innovation behavior	62•/	90•/	87•/
Humble leadership	65•/	94•/	93•/
Positive psychological capital	58•/	96•/	96•/

The measurement model has the goal of representing the relationship between the construct and its corresponding indicator variables (commonly referred to as the outer model in PLS SEM). Measurement models explain how constructs are measured and are reliable or valid and reliable by looking at convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability (Hair et al., 2017). The outer model in SmartPLS is as follows:

Table 3: Outer Loadings and t-value

Variable	Item	t-value	Outer Loadings
Humble Leadership	Q1	26,26	0,69
	Q2	23,26	0,68
	Q3	23,78	0,76
	Q4	27,96	0,76
	Q5	2,99	0,79
	Q6	17,98	0,68
	Q7	56,60	0,84
	Q8	8,08	0,45
	Q9	41,56	0,79
Employee innovation behavior	Q10	22,24	0,69
	Q11	70,36	0,84
	Q12	8,42	0,57
	Q13	47,80	0,80
	Q14	14,85	0,60
	Q15	7,11	0,43
	Q16	22,44	0,74
	Q17	25,24	0,74
	Q18	25,84	0,71
	Q19	34,65	0,80
Positive Psychological Capital	Q20	22,70	0,73
	Q21	20,27	0,71
	Q22	29,87	0,79
	Q23	29,01	0,81
	Q24	15,52	0,65
	Q25	23,90	0,70
	Q26	31,38	0,78
	Q27	9,74	0,57
	Q28	16,47	0,63
	Q29	28,65	0,77
	Q30	16,72	0,66
	Q31	6,94	0,45
	Q32	16,70	0,63
	Q33	21,69	0,80
	Q34	18,14	0,77
	Q35	8,34	0,72
	Q36	5,98	0,68
	Q37	18,20	0,80
	Q38	56,26	0,81
	Q39	23,16	0,73

Therefore, after considering the fitting of the measuring models, the fitting of the structural model of the research is achieved. To evaluate the structural model in this study, the significance coefficients Z (t-values), coefficient of determination (R^2), prediction criteria, and redundancy

coefficient were used. The significance coefficients of Z (t-values) to confirm a hypothesis or meaningfulness of the relationship at 95%, 99%, and 99.9% are the least t values of: 1.96, 2.52, and 3.32, respectively. As shown in Table 4, all significance coefficients of relationships are higher than 3.32, which has been confirmed at 99% confidence level.

Table 4. T-Statistics Value

Hypothesis	T	$\sqrt{Z \alpha}$	α
Humble Leadership → PsyCap	38,39	3,32	0,001
Humble Leadership → innovation behavior	22,34	3,32	0,001
PsyCap → innovation behavior	4,24	3,32	0,001
Humble Leadership → PsyCap → innovation behavior	4,27	3,32	0,001

The basic criterion for evaluating is the coefficient of determination (R^2). The values of 0.67, 0.33 and 0.19 in the PLS route models for the given endogenous variables are described as significant, moderate and weak, respectively. The value for all the variables, as shown in Table 5, is strong, indicating a strong fit of the structural model. Another criterion for assessing the structural model is to examine the model's ability to predict. The dominant criterion for this prediction is the Stone and Geysers's Q^2 index.

The relative effect of predictive relation can be estimated by estimating Q^2 . The values of 0.2, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate the relationship between small, medium, and large predictors of a given variable, respectively. Table 5 shows the Q^2 values of the intrinsic structures, which indicate the strong predictive power of this model for all structures, and confirms the fit for the structural model.

Table 5. Values of R^2 , Index of Q^2 , and Redundancy Ratio

Total	Redundancy	R^2	Q^2
PsyCap	.037	0.70	0.369286
innovation behavior	.025	0.87	0.424502

In order to confirm or reject the hypotheses, standard coefficients and meaningful numbers have been used. The results from the conceptual model of research in two cases are shown by the significance coefficients and standard estimates in Table 6.

Testing the hypothesis in this study is by looking at the significance representing the hypothesized relationship between constructs or seeing the effect between variables on the path coefficients using the bootstrapping procedure. Next is the output of bootstrapping to see the amount of the T-statistic value (see Table 4).

Besides, to test the effect of the mediating variable in the fourth hypothesis, a statistic called VAF has been used; in fact, this value measures the ratio of indirect effect to total effect. The Sobel test

has also been used to test the significance of the mediating impact of one variable in the relationship between two variables. According to the results, all the research hypotheses have been confirmed.

Table 6. Hypothesis testing results

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	T	P value	Information
Humble Leadership → PsyCap	0.838	38,39	p< 0.001	Received
Humble Leadership → innovation behavior	0.785	22,34	p< 0.001	Received
PsyCap → innovation behavior	0.172	4,24	p< 0.001	Received
Humble Leadership → PsyCap → innovation behavior	0.155	4,27	p< 0.001	Received

In modeling with the least partial squares, for measuring the fitness of the model, three criteria are used: the quality of the model of measurement (external), the structural model (internal), and the Goodness of Fit (GOF). Communality is used to evaluate the quality of all the measurement models (external models). The redundancies average is the general criteria of the quality of the structural model (internal model), which is used for all the endogenous blocks. There are no criteria in the PLS path modeling to measure the whole model. Nevertheless, a general criterion for goodness of fit (GOF) is suggested by one of the experts.

This index takes both measurement and structural models into account, and serves as a criterion for predicting the overall performance of the model. This criterion is calculated as the geometric mean R^2 and the communality: three values of 0.1, 0.25 and 0.36 are introduced as weak, moderate and strong values for GOF respectively.

Table 7 shows the values for quality indexes for external, internal and overall models of research. With respect to the three values of 0.1, 0.25 and 0.36 as weak, moderate and strong values for GOF, the obtained value of 0.69 for GOF indicates a robust overall model fit for the present study.

Table 7. Quality indexes of the model

Model	index
(exterior) Model measure	0,58
Structural (internal) model	0,66
Goodness of Fit (GOF)	0,69

Discussion

This study explores how humble leadership influences employee innovation behavior. We find support for our hypotheses. First, based on social information processing theory, we have found the key role of Positive Psychological Capital in linking humble leadership and Employee innovation behavior. Findings show that humble leadership has a positive and significant effect on employees' innovative behavior. Various researches in this field have also confirmed the findings obtained in this research (e.g., Liu et al., 2017; Zhou and Wu, 2018; Mallén, et al., 2019).

The results of the study are consistent with the literature on humble leadership. Zhou & Wu (Zhou and Wu, 2018) found a positive impact of humble leadership and a partial mediating role of core self-evaluation on employee innovative behavior in fifteen companies based in three Chinese provinces. Wang et al. (2018) found that humble leader behavior positively influenced follower creativity in manufacturing companies based in South China. Additionally, it is also consistent with studies pertaining to leadership styles. Gil, Rodrigo-Moya, & Morcillo-Bellido (2018) found a positive effect of transformational leadership on innovative capacity in Spanish schools, while Ababneh, Kyung Bae, & Nusair (2012) found that a significant percentage of variation in employee innovative behavior was caused by transformational leadership in the Jordanian public sector. Keeping in view the call for empirical research on leader humility (Frostenson, 2016), the study also contributes to the existing literature by emphasizing the role of intrapreneurial personality as a moderator. According to our results, employees high in intrapreneurial personality show a high level of innovativeness at the individual level.

Our Research findings show that humble leader behaviors positively influence employee innovation behavior and that PsyCap mediates this influence, and hence the indirect effect of humble leader behaviors on employee innovation behavior via PsyCap. The findings are congruent with the notion of Wang et al. (2018) that leadership style plays a key role in positive psychological capital.

By examining and confirming positive psychological capital as a mediator linking humble leader behaviors to employee innovation behavior, our research provides an important theoretical perspective for explaining why followers under humble leader behaviors are more likely to engage in creative activities and develop more new solutions.

Regarding the hypothesis of the effect of humble leadership on employees' innovative behaviors, considering the mediating role of positive psychological capital, no similar research was found on this hypothesis among previous studies. Given the subject matter of the present study, it is noteworthy that little research has been done simultaneously on the concepts of humble leadership, innovative employee behaviors, and positive psychological capital.

Zhou and Wu (2018) found that the supportive leadership behaviors of humble leaders (such as learning with an open mind and being inclusive and fully empowering) create an inclusive organizational learning climate within the organization. With an open attitude toward new knowledge and advice, encouraging employee innovation behavior and tolerating risk provides great psychological freedom and work autonomy for employees and fosters employee innovation behavior. Therefore, they are ideas for teaching (Rodriguez-Lopez, 2004), promoting creativity (Conchaloz et al., 2016) and innovation (Owens et al, 2013), getting advice from others (Owens and Hekman, 2012), and arriving at new information, or dissenting views (Rodriguez-Lopez, 2004); they are also keen on criticism (Rego et al., 2017).

CONCLUSION AND SUGESTION

Conclusion

To be specific, this study achieved the following. First, this study offered evidence for the positive impact of humble leadership on employee innovation behavior. This study argued that the

supportive leadership behaviors of humble leaders (such as learning with an open mind and being inclusive and fully empowering) create an inclusive organizational learning climate within the organization. With an open attitude toward new knowledge and advice, encouraging employee innovation behavior and tolerating risk provides great psychological freedom and work autonomy for employees and fosters employee innovation behavior. This study also provided some insights for organizations in implementing humble leadership and motivating employee innovation behavior. First, in this age of the knowledge economy, humble leadership has a significant effect on stimulating employee intrinsic motivation and forming subordinates' followership and self-expansion with the enhancement of individual self-consciousness. Compared with other leadership styles, humble leadership is an independent charismatic leadership style distinctly characterized by self-learning, appreciating others' merits, and maintaining an open mind (Ou et al., 2018).

This study sought to contribute to the body of knowledge on humble leadership, positive psychological capital and employee innovation. This study is a first attempt to integrate the three variables of research that have not been connected previously. Humble leaders admit their mistakes, are open to new ideas and suggestions, actively seek for feedback, tend to develop high quality leader-follower relationships, and appreciate followers' strengths and contributions. According to social information processing theory, the behavioral modeling in the humble leadership process shapes followers' shared perceptions about their work environment that it is safe and even expected to speak up and express new ideas without fear of negative consequences. By allowing humble managers to express their opinions to subordinates, they have created an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence in the organization. In this way, it has increased the attachment and interest in work among employees, which increases the resilience capacity of employees to withstand failures and decreases organizational conflict while preparing the individuals to better face obstacles and accept responsibilities. Through their words and actions, humble leaders demonstrate to their employees the principles such as being open to new paradigms and focusing on dynamism, learning from others, the desire to understand individual limitations and failures, correcting past mistakes, the desire to be advised and to follow it, respect for experienced people, leadership, and avoiding complacency (vera & Rodriguez, 2004). This confidence becomes a platform for optimism and positive thinking for the future, which in turn increases resilience, hope, optimism and self-efficacy, followed by a positive level of psychological capital in employees. As a result, it empowers people and help them to use all their abilities to perform the assigned tasks. Taken together, these actions may lead to greater satisfaction, emotional commitment and enthusiasm, individual and collective effort to seek consistent compliance, better team cohesion, greater innovation, and enhanced group productivity (Ou, 2011; Owens & Hekman, 2015). Humble leadership supports innovation so that team members feel safe in taking risks and experiencing new ideas (Owens & Hekman, 2015).

Sugestion

Therefore, according to the findings of the present study, the proposed strategies to improve the level of positive psychological capital and also to improve the innovative behaviors of the employees of public libraries in Hamadan province are:

Humility in leadership has several potential functions. First, humility may influence leaders to behave in a way that focuses primarily on promoting others rather than promoting themselves.

Second, being humble may protect managers from the need to receive general flattery, and may cause them to avoid this attention. Humility as a leadership characteristic may play a role in improving organizational performance through its impact on organizational learning and organizational flexibility. It is suggested that managers, instead of showing off and showing a charismatic face, take responsibility for serving others as their top priority.

Humility means that one not only care about oneself, but also about others, and cares about the abilities and talents of others. Swindel believes that humility does not mean that one does not respect oneself, but humility means that one sees neither oneself superior nor inferior to others. Humble leaders demonstrate this quality by paying attention to others and prioritizing the needs of their followers. Therefore, it is suggested that managers and leaders strengthen this feature.

Humble leaders can show their growth patterns to their followers. Instead of just talking about the importance of continuous learning or supporting programs for the development and growth of followers, humble leaders show transparency, for example by thinking about how to be honest in the areas of improvement (i.e., acknowledging mistakes and limitations), encouraging social learning by highlighting the strengths of those around them (the strengths of prominent followers) and reinforcing listening, observation, and learning in themselves and their followers.

Our study emphasizes that humility is pivotal, increasing subordinate's individual innovation behavior in the workplace and allowing the effect of professional will to unfold. Thus, leaders on different levels and hierarchical structures should take those insights into account and improve their understanding of individual strengths and weaknesses, openness and teachability towards new ideas. Further, recognition and appreciation of others and their contribution is central for humble leader behavior.

Leaders should therefore embrace humility trainings to work on their interpersonal and social skills while at the same time act as role models in a professional manner.

Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest is reported by the authors.

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