

## **The relationship between the school principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy**

### **Relația dintre stilul de leadership colaborativ al directorilor de școală și eficacitatea de sine a profesorilor**

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#### **Abstract**

*Background.* Collaborative leadership is one of the leadership styles which promote and develop organizations. Collaborative leadership is defined as the participation of employees in different levels in the organization to identify problems, analyze situations and achieve solutions, so that they can assist their managers and headquarters in solving problems.

*Aims.* The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the school principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy.

*Method.* In this study, the descriptive method was used. 196 subjects (82 female and 114 male) were selected by using Korjeki and Morgan's (1970) sample size table. Sampling was stratified and simple. The Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2002) self-efficacy questionnaire and Washington University Turning Point Collaborative Leadership Questionnaires (2012) were used to gather data. Frequency, mean, standard deviation, correlation and regression were used to analyze data.

*Results.* The findings showed a significant correlation between the school principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy. There was a significant correlation between other dimensions of collaborative leadership including training environment, clarity, reliance, power sharing and teachers' self-efficacy. The results also show that reliance has a positive and predictable effect on the teachers' self-efficacy; in fact increasing reliance leads to the teachers' self-efficacy increment.

*Conclusions.* The use of situations and leadership style preference is recommended to increase assessing the environment. It is recommended to broadcast the results to managers, because this is an important step to promote the quality of organization and managers' motivation toward consulting leadership.

**Keywords:** collaborative leadership, self-efficacy, teachers.

#### **Rezumat**

*Premize.* Colaborarea în leadership este unul dintre stilurile de conducere, care promovează și dezvoltă organizații. Acest stil de conducere este definit de către angajați ca fiind o modalitate de intervenție pe diferite niveluri pentru a identifica problemele și pentru a analiza situația dând anumite soluții, astfel încât angajații să-și poată ajuta managerii în vederea rezolvării de probleme.

*Obiective.* Scopul acestui studiu a fost de a determina relația dintre "stilul" de conducere al directorilor de școli și auto-eficacitatea cadrelor didactice.

*Metode.* În acest studiu a fost utilizată metoda descriptivă. Au fost selecționați 196 subiecți (82 femei și 114 bărbați), folosind Korjeki dimensiunea de masă (1970) și proba Morgan. Eșantionarea a fost stratificată și simplă. Chestionarul de auto-eficacitate Tschannen-Moran și Woolfolk Hoy (2002), de la Universitatea Washington Turning Point (2012) a fost folosit pentru a aduna datele. Pentru analiza datelor au fost utilizate: frecvența, abaterea medie standard, corelația și regresia.

*Rezultate.* Au arătat o corelație semnificativă între "stilul de conducere de colaborare a directorilor de școli și auto-eficacitatea cadrelor didactice. Nu s-a constatat o corelație semnificativă între alte dimensiuni ale leadership-ului de colaborare, inclusiv mediul de formare, claritatea, încrederea, împărțirea puterii și auto-eficacitatea profesorilor. De asemenea, rezultatele au arătat că dependența are un efect pozitiv și previzibil asupra auto-eficacității profesorilor, de fapt, creșterea dependenței duce la auto-eficacitatea profesorilor.

*Concluzii.* Se recomandă utilizarea situațiilor și preferințelor stilului de conducere pentru a crește evaluarea mediului. Se recomandă să se disemineze rezultatele managerilor, deoarece acesta este un pas important pentru a promova calitatea de organizare și motivația managerilor pentru o conducere consultativă.

**Cuvinte cheie:** conducere în colaborare, auto-eficacitate, profesori.

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## Introduction

Collaborative leadership is one of the leadership styles which promote and develop organizations. Collaborative leadership is defined as the participation of employees in different levels in the organization to identify problems, analyze situations and achieve solutions, so that they can assist their managers and headquarters in solving problems. In recent years, the human factor has become central in organizations. In the current world, traditional thought turns to new arenas and human collaboration is focused. Studies on organizational leadership show that organizations that move toward promoting human forces and human collaboration have a better development compared to other organizations. In addition, changes in the new world regardless of their nature are most important issues. On the other hand, society is increasingly changing, the increase of population, inventions, exploration, communication ways and individual knowledge lead to environmental evolution. Physical education and exercise lead to knowledge and science development and have created a lot of changes.

Such changes have influenced organizational procedures regarding physical education and exercise. Therefore, under these circumstances, managers try to prepare organizations to deal with environmental reactions. Arranging goals and improving procedures are needed for the survival of organizations. Organizations cannot survive in the absence of change, so creativity and innovation are required. In 1947, Kurt Lewin was the first to apply the cooperative system as a scientific method to individual nutrition in the US. He encouraged people to actively work together to change the procedure, to overcome their resistance against changes and move toward a consistent way (quoted in Marrow, 1969). This study investigated effective resources of future teachers. Most of the organizations use a cooperative leadership style, employee-oriented methods and problem solving to protect productivity against changes. Jackson (1983) conducted a study entitled "Effect of cooperation on decision-making and decreasing job pressure" and showed that cooperation has a negative effect on confliction and individual participation in decision-making is determinant of job pressure. The results of Fine's study (1986) evidence that employee participation is one of the ways to deal with changes. Also, Miller & Mange (1986) show that cooperative leadership increases satisfaction, decision-making and performance improvement, but this is not common.

Hoy et al. (2006) maintain that employee engagement in cooperative decisions lead to an increase in the quality of decision acceptance. According to Rice (1995), cooperation plays an important role in accepting changes and technological evolution.

Mirkamali (1997) shows that teachers' cooperation in school decreases absence, ignoring work, and resistance against changes. Also, teachers' cooperation increases their motivation. Clark (1997) shows that acceptance capacity and resistance against change do not reflect each other and there is no correlation between acceptance and resistance against changes and organization efficiency. Taghvaei (1996) evidences a significant correlation between resistance against changes and organizational culture components such as encouragement and rewarding,

cooperation, coherence and control. According to Baker's results quoted by SarAbadani (2007), employee cooperation is important for the organization's work quality. In addition, supervision on programs by employees increases communication and is positive, so their motivation is also increased.

Roshandel (2003) reports that employee motivation is increased by the development of cooperative leadership in the organization. Habibi (2004) maintains that increasing cooperative leadership in the organization leads to higher organizational commitment and lower resistance against changes. Sheikhlo-Aghdam (2004) evidences a positive correlation between cooperative culture and strategic planning, so that by increasing employee's participation in strategic planning, coherent programs would be formed and individual commitment to these programs would increase. Nazari-Komishani (2005) shows that increasing cooperative leadership in the organization results in a decrease of decision-making focus and complexity in the organization.

According to Parnet (2006), cooperation plays an important role in the work environment and is related to consistency and adaptability. O'Brien (2002) shows in a study entitled "Key cooperation to successful changes" that employee cooperation and engagement play a key role in accepting changes. Based on available articles and study results, cooperative leadership is an approach that meets human needs regarding respect and equality. Human resource development is caused by a cooperation process. Increasing employee cooperation facilitates coping with environmental changes and improves decision-making; finally, human communication between employees and leaders is improved. The importance of training efficiency and its understanding by teachers should be studied.

Given the importance of self-efficacy for future teachers, this study investigated effective resources of future teachers. Starting from the four Bandura resources related to efficacy, including performance and skill, intentional experience, social and verbal satiation and physiological situation, the author studied other resources influencing teachers' efficacy. Ghasemi (2009) conducted a study in Melli Bank - Alborz to investigate the correlation between leadership style and employee efficacy. The results of the study show a significant correlation between all three leadership styles including evolutionary, exchange and cooperative style and self-efficacy, of level 0.01.

Nazari-Komishani (2005) shows that increasing cooperative leadership in the organization leads to decreasing decision-making focus, formality and complexity in the organization. In this regard, according to Habibi (2004), increasing cooperative leadership in the organization increases organizational commitment and decreases employee resistance against changes. Sheikhlo-Aghdam (2004) evidences a positive correlation between cooperative culture and strategic planning, so that increasing employee cooperation leads to an improvement of strategic planning. Mirkamali (1996) shows that teachers' cooperation in school decreases absence, ignoring work and resistance against changes. Also, teachers' cooperation in decision-making increases motivation. Fallahi (1995) studied informal and cooperative leadership

style in relation to mental health in employees working in an industrial institution in Shiraz. He concluded that employee participation in job related affairs increased employee motivation.

Hassani (1994) studied job relations, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, the tendency to stay in the job and job performance, concluding that teachers should be satisfied and increase their commitment to stay in their job. On the other hand, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and effective return in the job and education should be broadcasted by school decision-making, and financial reward and educational facilities should be provided. Rice (1995) studied the role of cooperation in accepting change in a textile company. Clark (1997) evidenced a significant correlation between acceptance of and resistance against change and organizational components such as rewarding, coherence, and cooperation and control (Taghvaei, 1996).

Shin (1991) studied the job satisfaction and job commitment of teachers in the United States and concluded that job satisfaction and job commitment are different and job satisfaction prevails over job commitment. This study shows that managers should provide job satisfaction first and then create commitment in the organization for employees.

## Hypothesis

The purpose of this study is to determine the correlation between a cooperative leadership style in school principals and teacher efficacy to use instructional strategies, classroom management and student engagement. In this regard, there are some hypotheses.

- There is a significant correlation between the assessing the environment dimension of the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy (instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement).
- There is a significant correlation between the creating clarity dimension of the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy (instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement).
- There is a significant correlation between the building trust dimension of principals' collaborative leadership and teachers' self-efficacy (instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement).
- There is a significant correlation between the sharing power and influence dimension of the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy (instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement).
- There is a significant correlation between the developing people dimension of the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy (instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement).
- Principals' collaborative leadership styles can predict teachers' self-efficacy.

## Materials and methods

### The research protocol

#### a) Period and location of the research

The research was conducted between February and May 2014, among primary school teachers in Fenoj, Iran. We should mention that this research was formally approved by the Ethics Commission of the Department of Education. Also, for studies conducted on human subjects, the informed consent of each of the subjects involved in the research was obtained.

#### b) Subjects and groups

In this study, the descriptive method was used. The target population of this study was represented by primary school teachers in Fenoj, Iran. There were 360 teachers including 151 females and 209 males. Korjeki and Morgan tables (1970) were used to determine the sample size, so 196 subjects were selected, of which 82 female and 114 male. Simple sampling was used. Table I shows the teachers' status according to sex, age, academic degree, and job experience.

**Table I**  
Details of the sample (N=196)

Variable	Group	N
Sex	Male	114
	Female	82
Age	-35	80
	35 - 45	72
	+45	44
Academic degree	Associate degree	59
	Bachelor's degree	100
	Master's degree	37
Job experience	-10	107
	10-15	56
	+10	33

#### c) Tests applied

The Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk (2002) self-efficacy questionnaire and Washington University Turning Point Collaborative Leadership Questionnaires (2012) were used to gather data. The first section of the questionnaire includes general questions such as age, sex, work experience and education level. The first questionnaire includes 24 items in three components, using instructional strategies, classroom management and student engagement. The second questionnaire includes 64 items in six aspects: assessing the environment, creating clarity, building trust, sharing power and influence, developing people and self-reflection with items 10, 11, 11, 11, 11 and 10. They were arranged in five Likert points from very low = 1 to very high = 5. Cronbach's alpha results are presented in Table II.

**Table II**  
Reliability coefficient of research questionnaires.

Questionnaire	Dimension	$\alpha$
Teacher self-efficacy	Instructional Strategies	0.71
	Classroom Management	0.71
	Student Engagement	0.80
	Total	0.88
Cooperative leadership questionnaire	Assessing the Environment	0.70
	Creating Clarity	0.67
	Building Trust	0.78
	Sharing Power and Influence	0.83
	Developing People	0.79
	Self-Reflection	0.68
	Total	0.84

## d) Statistical processing

Frequency, average, standard error, the correlation coefficient test and regression were used to analyze data using SPSS software version 20.

## Results

Is there a correlation between the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy? (Table III).

The table III shows the correlation coefficient test and results evidence a significant correlation between the school principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy. Value  $r$  is ( $r = 0.248$ ) and is significant at alpha level 0.05. Also, the direction of the correlation is positive and direct. It means that a highly collaborative style leads to high teachers' self-efficacy.

**Table III**

Pearson correlative index test between the collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy (N=196).

Variables	Teachers' self-efficacy
Collaborative leadership	$r$ 0.248 Sig. .001

Is there a correlation between the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy using instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement? (Table IV).

The table IV shows the correlation coefficient test and results evidence a significant correlation between the school principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the assessing the environment dimension. Value  $r$  is significant at alpha level 0.05. Also, the direction of the correlation is positive and direct. It means that a highly collaborative style leads to high teachers' self-efficacy. However, there is no significant correlation between the school principals' collaborative leadership style in the assessing the environment dimension and the influence of instructional strategies (Table IV).

**Table IV**

Pearson correlative index test between the collaborative leadership style in assessing the environment dimension and teachers' self-efficacy (N=196).

Effect on self-efficacy (total)	Student engagement	Classroom management	Instructional strategies	Variable
0.194	0.142	0.175	0.113	$r$ Assessing the Environment
0.007	0.047	0.014	0.116	Sig.

**Table V**

Pearson correlative index test between the collaborative leadership style in the creating clarity dimension and teachers' self-efficacy (N=196)

Effect on self-efficacy (total)	Student engagement	Classroom management	Instructional strategies	Variable
0.172	0.144	0.117	0.117	$r$ Creating Clarity
0.016	0.044	0.102	0.102	Sig.

**Table VI**

Pearson correlative index test between the collaborative leadership style in the building trust dimension and teachers' self-efficacy (N=196)

Effect on self-efficacy (total)	Student engagement	Classroom management	Instructional strategies	Variable
0.224	0.205	0.199	0.100	$r$ Building Trust
0.002	0.004	0.005	0.161	Sig.

Is there a correlation between the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the creating clarity dimension using instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement? (Table V).

The table V shows the correlation coefficient test and results evidence a significant correlation between the school principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the creating clarity dimension. Value  $r$  is 0.144 and is significant at alpha level 0.05. Also, the direction of the correlation is positive and direct. It means that a highly collaborative style leads to high teachers' self-efficacy in the creating clarity dimension.

Is there a correlation between the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the reliance dimension using instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement? (Table VI)

The table VI shows the correlation coefficient test and results evidence a significant correlation between the school principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the building trust dimension. Value  $r$  is significant at alpha level 0.05. Also, the direction of the correlation is positive and direct. It means that a highly collaborative style leads to high teachers' self-efficacy in the building trust dimension. However, there is no correlation with the influence of instructional strategies.

Is there a correlation between the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the power sharing dimension using instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement? (Table VII)

The table VII shows the correlation coefficient test and results evidence a significant correlation between the school principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the sharing power and influence dimension. Value  $r$  is significant at alpha level 0.05. Also, the direction of the correlation is positive and direct. It means that a highly collaborative style leads to high



teachers' self-efficacy in the sharing power and influence dimension. However, there is no correlation with the influence of classroom management.

Is there a correlation between the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the professional development dimension using instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement? (Table VIII)

The table VIII shows the correlation coefficient test and results evidence no significant correlation between the school principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the developing people dimension. Value  $r$  is not significant at alpha level 0.05.

Is there a correlation between the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the self-reflection dimension using instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement? (Table IX)

The table IX shows the correlation coefficient test and results evidence no significant correlation between the school principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the self-reflection dimension. Value  $r$  is not significant at alpha level 0.05. In conclusion, there is no correlation between the principals' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-efficacy in the self-reflection dimension using instructional strategies,

classroom management, and student engagement.

Which one of the principals' collaborative leadership styles can predict teachers' self-efficacy? (Table X)

The beta table X shows the final results of regression and using the table, a regression line equation is drawn: (Building Trust),  $85.60 + 0.379 =$  teachers' self efficacy.

The results of the above table show that building trust has a predictable and significant effect on teachers' self-efficacy. Also, based on the beta value, by increasing building trust by one unit, teachers' self-efficacy is increased by 0.224. So, it is concluded that the effect on teachers' self-efficacy is high, while other dimensions have a low effect and were removed from the regression model (Tables X, XI).

Teachers' self-efficacy =  $85.60 + 0.379$  (Building Trust)

## Discussions

The results of the study show a significant positive correlation between the collaborative leadership style of school principals and teachers' self-efficacy. This means that a highly collaborative style leads to an improvement of teachers' self-efficacy. This study is consistent with the studies of Ghasemi (2009), Moran and Hoy (2001), Mirkamali (1996), Hoy et al. (2006) and Fallahi (1995).

In fact, self-effective teachers have a high power to manage the classroom, they have creative skills to teach

**Table VII**  
Pearson correlative index test between the collaborative leadership style in the sharing power and influence dimension and teachers' self-efficacy (N=196)

Effect on self-efficacy (total)	Student engagement	Classroom management	Instructional strategies	Variable
0.198	0.167	0.134	0.148	Sharing Power and Influence
0.005	0.019	0.060	0.039	
				$r$
				Sig.

**Table VIII**  
Pearson correlative index test between the collaborative leadership style in the developing people dimension and teachers' self-efficacy (N=196)

Effect on self-efficacy (total)	Student engagement	Classroom management	Instructional strategies	Variable
-0.053	-0.033	0.021	-0.0116	Developing People
0.462	0.643	0.072	0.011	
				$r$
				Sig.

**Table IX**  
Pearson correlative index test between the collaborative leadership style in the self-reflection dimension and teachers' self-efficacy (N=196)

Effect on self-efficacy (total)	Student engagement	Classroom management	Instructional strategies	Variable
0.111	0.095	0.030	0.0101	Self-reflection
0.122	0.185	0.677	0.157	
				$r$
				Sig.

**Table X**  
Multiple correlation coefficient (N=196)

Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	df	F	Sig.
Building Trust	.224	.050	.045	1, 194	10.251	.002

**Table XI**  
Standard and non-standard coefficients. Self-efficacy predicted by predictor variables in a stepwise manner (N=196)

Sig	t	Standard beta	Abnormal beta	B	Regression model
0.001	15.81	Beta	Standard error		
		-	5.41	85.60	Building Trust
0.002	3.20	0.225	0.118	0.379	

and in other words, such teachers increase education promotion among students. According to the studies of Poddell & Soodak (1993), Wolters & Daugherty (2007), the teacher plays an important role in successful education promotion in students. Martin & Marsh (2006) believe that motivation increases the energy level and activities in individuals, so they move toward a specific purpose and carry out specific activities. In fact, identifying the motivation concept and different incentives as well as their effects on the learning process helps teachers to apply better strategies and styles in their teaching. The results of studies performed by Anderson and Betz in 2001 show that teachers' confidence and power influence teachers' efficacy and increase self-efficacy beliefs. In fact, teachers who have decision-making power to achieve solutions and consult with their managers are highly effective (quoted by Tovvins, 2007). Based on studies, teachers' self-efficacy is correlated with performance results. Teachers who have a high self-efficacy provide reactive techniques in their classroom (Smylie, 1989) and achieve new ideas and innovations (Stein & Wang, 1988). Teachers with a higher self-efficacy communicate with students using all kinds of models (individual, group and team models) to respond to the students' requirements. Increasing self-efficacy improves performance and productivity (Bandura, 1997).

It seems that self-efficacy is directly related to the image in the individual's mind and reinforcing this image increases self-efficacy. Ashton & Webb (1986) report that teachers with a high self-efficacy have good skills to organize training, questioning, explanation, appropriate feedback to students, shortly, to improve student education promotion. The self-efficacy theory is useful for work environment. Based on this theory, individual motivation and performance could be increased by increasing teachers' self-efficacy. Bandura (1994) discussed about self-efficacy and increasing it from easy to difficult. Schools could apply this system to increase self-efficacy. Successful experience of teachers improves self-efficacy.

## Conclusions

1. Today, schools need managers who provide training goals to increase motivation. Leadership includes change and effect, and this means how leaders can influence their followers. Effect is a critical component of leadership and schools are responsible for creating humans. Education of students who are society's future should be done by schools. Therefore, understanding self-efficacy and leadership and using a cooperative leadership style dramatically increase the teachers' self-efficacy as well as performance. Teachers' cooperation to control and supervise organizational affairs allows to inform teachers about weaknesses and to solve them, if changing is needed. When teachers participate in value determination, they could refer key and sensitive matters and accept changing.

2. Team work and cooperative leadership implementation allows to explore talents and decrease autocratic leadership. This leadership system is an effective and desirable system in theoretical and practical terms and at the moment has an appropriate situation in developing countries. Cooperative leadership plays a positive role, so

it is necessary to implement it in organizations in order to solve problems and dysfunctions and continuously improve organizational activities. Since teachers' self-efficacy plays an important role in education, increasing motivation and education promotion in students, self-efficacy assessment when employing teachers is required. Given the teacher's role in managing the classroom, self-efficacy training courses for teachers need to be designed. The cooperative leadership style is useful, so it is necessary to employ managers who have good decision-making power and determine preference. The kind of leadership style is also assessed.

3. The use of situations and leadership style preference is recommended to increase assessing the environment. It is recommended to broadcast the results to managers, because this is an important step to promote the quality of organization and managers' motivation toward consulting leadership.

## Conflicts of interests.

Nothing to declare

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