

The Effectiveness of the Future Leadership Program in Developing Transformational Leadership Behavior among 7th Gifted Female Students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Muna A. Al-Turief *

Emad A. Alzeghoul

Fatima A. Aljasim

Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of the Future leadership Program in developing transformational leadership skills among 7th grade gifted female students in Saudi Arabia. The sample consisted of (16) gifted female students who were intentionally chosen from public schools in Riyadh City, and randomly divided into two groups each containing (8) gifted female students; the experimental and the control group. Both groups were subjected to the Multifactor Leadership Short-Answer Questionnaire (MLQ5X) to measure their transformational leadership skills. The experimental group was trained by using the Future Leadership Program, whereas the control group did not receive any training. The results indicated that the Program had a moderate effect in developing transformational leadership skills among the experimental group members comparison to control group. Their performance on the (MLQ5X) test was better than that for the control group members. The results are discussed and some recommendations were presented.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Future Leadership Program, Gifted, Training Program, Leadership Behavior.

• جامعة الخليج العربي.

تاريخ قبول البحث: 2018/3/20م.

تاريخ تقديم البحث: 2017/9/28م.

© جميع حقوق النشر محفوظة لجامعة مؤتة، الكرك، المملكة الأردنية الهاشمية، 2018.

فاعلية برنامج "قيادة المستقبل" في تنمية القيادة التحويلية لدى الطالبات الموهوبات في الصف الأول متوسط

منى حمد عبدالله الطريف

عماد عبدالرحيم الزغول

فاطمه أحمد الجاسم

ملخص

هدفت الدراسة إلى التعرف على فعالية برنامج قيادة المستقبل في تنمية سلوك القيادة التحويلية لدى طالبات الصف السابع الموهوبات في المملكة العربية السعودية. تكونت عينة الدراسة من (16) طالبة موهوبة من طالبات الصف السابع، تم اختيارهن بطريقة قصدية من إحدى مدارس الشراكة مع موهبة في مدينة الرياض، وتم تقسيمهن عشوائياً إلى مجموعتين ضابطة وتجريبية وبواقع (8) طالبات في كل مجموعة، وخضع أفراد المجموعتين إلى مقياس القيادة متعددة العوامل (MLQ5x) النسخة المختصرة كاختبار قبلي لتحديد مستوى مهارات القيادة التحويلية لدى أفراد مجموعتي الدراسة قبل تطبيق البرنامج. تلقت الطالبات في المجموعة التجريبية إلى التدريب على برنامج قيادة المستقبل بعد تعديله وتطويره للبيئة السعودية لمدة (8) أسابيع، بواقع (24) جلسة تدريبية، مدة كل منها (60) دقيقة، ولم تتلقى المجموعة الضابطة أي تدريب، وبعد الانتهاء من التدريب خضعت الطالبات في المجموعتين إلى مقياس (MLQ5x) مرة أخرى كاختبار بعدي وذلك لقياس أثر البرنامج. أظهرت النتائج أن متوسط الرتب المئينية لدرجات الطالبات في المجموعة التجريبية على مستوى الدرجة الكلية لمقياس القيادة وأبعاده كان أعلى وبدلالة إحصائية من متوسط درجات طالبات المجموعة الضابطة، حيث أظهرت طالبات المجموعة التجريبية تقيماً أعلى في ممارسة مهارات القيادة التحويلية مقارنة بطالبات المجموعة الضابطة. تم تفسير النتائج وتقديم التوصيات المناسبة بشأنها.

الكلمات الدالة: القيادة التحويلية، برنامج قيادة المستقبل، الموهبة، برنامج التدريب، سلوك القيادة.

Introduction:

The ability to lead is one of the personal traits that distinguish gifted students from others (Clark, 2014). Gifted students have mental and social abilities and skills, which enable them to learn easily, process information, think creatively, express their ideas and solve problems. They can think independently and analyze things critically so that they can easily influence others and lead them (Al-Suliman, 2006). Gifted students traits in all personal aspects should be optimized and utilized for the benefit of their societies. This implies that it is important to provide them with special learning opportunities, caring and training programs in order to improve their abilities and skills in all domains: cognitively, emotionally, socially and ethically, which enable them to be the leaders of the future (Clark, 2014).

To achieve these goals, the existing curricula need to be revised and reorganized to satisfy the gifted needs. In fact, the existing curricula were designed to serve the non-gifted or normal students, and they lack learning opportunities and activities that satisfy the personal needs of gifted students, in particular in the field of leadership. Therefore, these curricula are supposed to be enriched by different types of experiences, learning activities, and training programs to enhance leadership skills among gifted students (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2006). It is important to utilize the personal traits of gifted students early, especially their leadership abilities because they will engage vital roles and responsibilities in the future that would positively affect their societies (VanTassel- Baska & Stambaugh, 2006). Curricula should be adjusted and oriented to serve this issue though implying different experiences such as models, stories, programs, situations etc... that enhance the students abilities to lead.

The concerned literature reveals diverse training programs that have been developed about leadership, and they differ from each other in their philosophy, assumptions about behavior, objectives, procedures, and actions depending on the theoretical background that they rely on (AL-Rusan & Maayta, 2008). One of the recent and significant theoretical approaches is known as the Transformational Leadership Theory, postulated by Burns (1978 in Arayda, 2011). This theory was first constructed to serve political issues, but because of its implications, its principles were generalized to different sciences and knowledge areas (Arayda, 2011).

Mainly, this theory advocates several human principles and values to influence human being behavior and the work environment. It focuses on ethical commitment, the value of human and the role of motivation in optimizing the others' behavior. (Bass 1985 in AL-Russan & Maaytia, 2008) reviewed and introduced new principles to this theory (e.g. inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration and the idealized effect), in order to increase the leaders awareness of problems and optimize their effect in motivating the performance of others and leading them (Al-Rusan & Maayta, 2008). This trend of leadership establishes human norms and values that control the work environment in order to enhance the performance level of the group, to change the culture and beliefs, to change work styles, and to encourage the workers to adopt the organization's vision.

A great bulk of the research (in general) indicated that leadership skills among the gifted could be improved through using specific training programs (Al-Daa'y, 2004; Roberts, 1997; Chan, 2000; & Coon, 2013). The training programs provide experiences and opportunities that motivate the gifted to practice leadership skills (Chan, 2000; Milligan, 2004; & Gonsoulin, Ward & Figg, 2010). Other research examined the trainees' perceptions and attitudes towards the concept of transformational leadership (Aulicino, 2006) and some research evaluated the quality of training (Trindade, 2007), and other research investigated the teachers' perceptions about the leadership behaviors among the gifted students (Cooper, 2011). Despite these research efforts, little concern was given to investigate the effect of training programs based on the transformational leadership concepts in developing gifted skills in this type of leadership. Therefore, the current study examines this issue. In particular, this study aims at detecting the effectiveness of the Future Leadership Program in developing transformational leadership behavior among the gifted female students in the 7th grade in Saudi Arabia.

Purpose of the Study

The gifted students are an important component in any society, due to their significant personal traits that should be developed and utilized for the benefit of their societies. Most societies employ their educational systems to

achieve these goals through the instructional curricula. In fact, most curricula are designed to fit the cognitive, social and emotional needs of average learners, and rarely take into consideration the individual differences in these issues, especially for gifted students (Bass & Riggio, 2008).

In the Arabic world including Saudi Arabia, the attention given to gifted students is still modest, and the efforts that are directed to this target are still insufficient and not well-organized. Furthermore, these efforts are not integrated and often represent an individual effort either at the personal or organizational level. Mainly, most of these efforts in some Arabic countries in particular Saudi Arabia are directed towards gifted male students and there is less concern about gifted females because of the cultural heritage. Gifted female students can contribute to developing their societies, as males can, if they get the appropriate opportunities of learning, training and sharing in innovations and decision making.

Thus, the current study seeks to examine the effectiveness of the Future Leadership Program in developing transformational leadership behavior among the 7th grade gifted female students in Saudi Arabia. In particular, the study seeks to answer the following question, "Does the training on the Future Leadership Program improve the transformational leadership skills among the 7th grade gifted female students in Saudi Arabia?"

Significance of the Study

This study gains its importance from its topic (transformational leadership), its training material (the Future Leadership Program) and its sample (gifted female students from Saudi Arabia). The concept of transformational leadership is a new topic which has recently been introduced to the science of management and leadership. This type of leadership advocates human values and interests, the interactions between leaders and followers, the importance of spiritual motivation, intellectual stimulation, the cooperative decision making process and personal considerations.

The related literature indicated that this type of leadership and its effect on leadership did not receive enough research, especially in the field of training programs on leadership skills among gifted students (see Clark, 2014; Bass & Riggio, 2008). So it is important to investigate this issue

among gifted students). In addition, the sample of this study is composed of gifted female students who were chosen from Saudi Arabia. Because of some social beliefs and habits that still dominate in Saudi Arabia, less interest is directed towards women, so they lack opportunities of empowerment and their contributions in the process of decision making and other aspects of acting. Thus, researching the leadership practice among female students, especially the gifted ones would have a lot of theoretical and practical implications which in turn increase the importance of conducting this study. This study may provide the educators and decision takers with research data beneficial to develop curricula and training programs. In addition, the findings of this study may encourage researchers to conduct further research in this issue.

The current study provides with a training program that might be utilized in further studies, and developed to be applied to samples of both gender and different ages, mental abilities, attitudes, cultural backgrounds, and personal traits. Furthermore, it provides with a developed Arabic version test that could be used to measure the transformational leadership skills, and used in different research sittings.

Concepts of the Study

Gifted Students

The Educational American Office defines gifted students as those who have significant performance in one domain or more fields of (mental, creativity, special academic, leadership, and arts) and they need special educational services and programs that are not involved in the intermediate curricula (Alzaghoul & Alsumadi, 2015).

According to the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia (2010), gifted students are those who have predispositions, high abilities, and significant performance compared to their peers in one domain or more of the following domains (mental ability, creative thinking, achievement, and psychomotor skills) and those need special instructional caring services, which are not available in the intermediate programs and curricula. In this study, the female gifted students those who were classified by Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia as gifted with accordance to some criterion (e.g.

intelligence, creativity, and academic achievement) and they subjected to special educational practices and services.

Transformational Leadership

It is a cooperative process between leaders and their followers to create enthusiasm among group members, and motivate them to behave and be directed by a set of ethical values for the purpose of achieving common utility for the whole group. It can be viewed as an organized and systematic behavioral process to cause change and maximize productivity, and it involves four dimensions (Bass & Bass, 2008):

1. Idealized influence.
2. Intellectual stimulation.
3. Inspirational motivation.
4. Individualized consideration.

In this study, it will be defined in terms of the score that would be obtained on the (MLQ5X) test used.

Method of the Study

Study Members

The members of the study consisted of (16), 1st intermediate grade gifted female students who were intentionally chosen from the partnership schools in Riyadh City during the scholastic year 2014/ 2015. Those members were randomly divided into two groups; the experimental and the control group, and each contains (8) gifted female students. The experimental group were subjected to the (the Future Leadership Program), while the control group did not receive any kind of training treatment. Both groups were subjected to the Multi Factor Leadership questionnaire (MLQ5X) as a pretest before training sessions to ensure that the groups are equivalent on the transformational leadership skills. The Man Whitney test was used to examine the difference between the performance of the experimental and control group, and its results indicated that both groups were equivalent, and both groups again were subjected to this test as post test to measure the effectiveness of the training program.

The Study Instrument

To collect the needed data to answer the question of the study, the Multifactor Leadership Short-Answer Questionnaire (MLQ5X) which was designed by (Bass & Avolio, 1995) was used. This questionnaire is a self-estimation scale which measures the transformational leadership behavior, and it consists of two parts; the first part contains demographic information while the second involves (20) short answer items divided into four dimensions:

The Idealized Influence: This dimension measures the leader's personal aspects and behavior, ethical values, readiness to take risks, decision making ability, willingness to work with others, and his ability to be a model for his followers and earn their respect.

Intellectual Stimulation: This dimension measures the leader's ability to create cognitive curiosity among others, motivate them to rethink problems, stimulate them to create new ideas and solutions, and encourage them to take all alternatives into consideration.

Inspirational Motivation: This dimension measures the leader's ability to inspire followers, and create the spirit of challenge among them. It also measures the ability to motivate them to raise expectations, adopt the organization's vision, and to work as a team.

Individualized Consideration: This dimension measures the leader's ability to detect individual differences among followers, and to satisfy these differences by providing support, consultations, and training opportunities.

For the purpose of this study, new ten items were added to the questionnaire to become (30) items instead of (20). These ten items related to some cultural aspects of Saudi Arabia, and they reflect the transformational leadership practices. Psychometric properties (validity and reliability) were ensured, and it was used as a pre and post test.

The Study Material

The Changing Tomorrow Program, prepared by Van Tassel-Baska & Avery (2013) was modified and used in this study. This program was designed to develop the skills of transformational leadership and managing

change among the trainees. It contains a variety of activities, biographies of famous persons, instructional projects and products, and training situations.

It consists of seven dimensions to cover lessons about the concepts of transformational leadership, the skills needed to practice this type of leadership, models, training situations and learning activities. The dimensions of the program are:

- Concept of leadership.
- Vision.
- Individualized consideration.
- Inspirational motivation.
- Intellectual stimulation.
- Interview with a local leader.

For the purposes of this study this program was subjected to some changes and modifications in its content, activities, biographies, training situations, and (3) dimensions were deleted from the program including the concept of leadership, vision, and an interview with a local leader. Two biographies for famous Saudi persons were added and some other situations from Saudi and Arabic heritage were also added to the program. These changes were made to this program in order to make the program appropriate for Saudi Arabia, and to focus only on the main issues of transformational leadership as suggested by the committee of referees and renamed to become the Future Leadership Program.

The training on this program lasted for (8) weeks, included (24) training sessions, (3) sessions a week, each lasted for (60) minutes. The first researcher presented all the training sessions, and in each he used to inform the trainees with the goals, activities, situation or the story, then ask questions, listen to answers, build a dialogue and discussion, provide feedback and encouragement, summarize the main ideas, direct them to additional learning situations, and give them home assignments.

The Study Results

To answer the question of the study, the Mann Whitney test was used to examine the differences between means ranks of the performance level of both groups on the total score of the "MLQ5X" questionnaire and its dimensions. Table (1) shows these results.

Table (1): The results of the Mann Whitney test for the differences between the ranks of performance of both groups on the "MLQ5X" questionnaire and its dimensions (as post test)

Dimension	Experimental Group		Control Group		Test U	Sig.
	Total	Ranks Mean	Total	Ranks Mean		
Idealized Influence	73.50	9.19	62.5	7.18	26.50	0.57
Intellectual Stimulation	84.00	10.50	52.00	6.50	10.60	0.10
Inspirational Motivation	70.00	8.75	66.00	8.25	30.00	0.87
Individualized Consideration	85.00	10.63	51.00	6.38	15.00	0.083
Total	78.00	9.75	58.00	7.25	32.00	0.32

The results of table (1) show that, the performance ranks for the experimental group on the total score of "MLQ5X" and scores on its dimensions were greater than those for the control group, but these differences were not significant ($\alpha = 0.05$).

For further investigation, the Wilkison test for related samples was used to examine the differences between ranks performance of both groups on the "MLQ5X" questionnaire as a pre and post test. Table (2) Shows the results.

Table (2) Shows the results of Wilkinson test for the differences between ranks performance of the experimental group as a pre and post test

Dimension	Ranks	NO	Sum of Ranks	Ranks Mean	Z	Sig.
Idealized Influence	Negative	0	0	0	-2.52	0.010
	Positive	8	36	4.50		
	Equivalent	0				
Intellectual Stimulation	Negative	1	2	2	-2.03	0.04
	Positive	6	26	4.33		
	Equivalent	1				
Inspirational Motivation	Negative	1	1.50	1.5	-2.12	0.03
	Positive	6	26.50	4.24		
	Equivalent	1				
Individualized Consideration	Negative	0	0	0	-2.53	0.01
	Positive	8	36	4.5		
	Equivalent	0				
Total Score	Negative	0	0	0	-2.53	0.01
	Positive	8	36	4.5		
	Equivalent	0				

Table (2) shows that the total scores on the MLQ5X questionnaire for all experimental group members were increased, so the mean for the positive ranks was (4.50), meanwhile, it was (0) for the negative ranks. The results also indicate that the means for the positive ranks for all dimensions were significantly greater than those for the negative ranks ($\alpha=0.05$).

To measure the size effect of the training program on the performance of the experimental group on the MLQ5X questionnaire and its dimensions, the following equation was used $d = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{n}}$ and table (3) shows the results.

Table (3): The size effect of the training program on. transformational leadership dimensions

Dimension	Size Effect
Idealized Influence	0.36
Intellectual Stimulation	0.50
Inspirational Motivation	0.53
Individualized Consideration	0.63
Total	0.63

The results in table (3) indicate that, the values of size effect of the training program are ranging between (0.50 -0.63), and its value for the total score was (0.63), which implies that the effect of this program was moderate on developing the transformational skills among the experimental group.

Results Discussion

Despite the fact that the scores of the experimental group on the "MLQ5X" and on its dimensions were greater than those for the control group, the differences between these scores were not significant ($\alpha=0.05$) as revealed by the Mann Whitney test. However, the Wilcoxon test showed significant differences among these scores.

According to the results of the Wilcoxon test for related samples, the Future Leadership Program was effective in developing transformational leadership skills among the experimental group members. In general, the size effect of that program was moderate, and opposed the expected hypothesis. This result might be explained in terms of the program's sessions and procedures. It could be that the numbers of training sessions were not enough and their procedures were not organized well enough to deepen understanding of transformational leadership skills among the trainees.

Clark, (2014); Renzulli, (2005); Davis & Rimm (2004) suggested that any training programs for the gifted should involve enough time, clear procedures and organized activities in order to be effective in improving personal traits.

In general, the performance of the experimental group on practicing transformational leadership skills was better than that for the control group.

This implies that training by the Future Leadership Program to some extent enhanced the experimental group practices for the skills needed for this type of leadership. The results of this study agreed in general with other research findings regarding the importance of training programs in developing leadership abilities (Milligan, 2004; Coon, 2013; Al-Mana'y, 2010; Gonsoulin, Ward & Figg, 2010; Trindade, 2007).

According to this study, the Future Leadership Program might provide gifted female trainees in the experimental group with some information about the skills of transformational leadership, its concepts, importance and how to practice its skills, which could enhance the practice of this kind of leadership among them.

Ideas about the concepts of transformational leadership and its dimensions may form additional knowledge for the gifted female students in the experimental group that enriched their skills to practice this kind of new knowledge.

Generally, the results of this study demonstrated the importance of training on transformational leadership skills, which positively reflected in the trainees practice and behavior. Therefore, these results recommend introducing some activities and experiences related to transformational leadership to the gifted curricula, and recommend conducting further related research on numerous samples of both sexes from different ages, intellectual abilities, and personality types. In addition, investigating the effect of other factors on this type of leadership such as socialization process, methods of teaching, learning and cognitive styles etc... to achieve further understanding to this type of leadership.

References:

- AL-Daa'y, A. A. (2004). The effectiveness of Carner and Shofen Program in developing leadership skills among secondary stage students in Kuwait. Unpublished master thesis. University of Kuwait.
- AL-Mana'y, S. (2010). The effect of leadership based program on the leadership skills and creative abilities among the talented students in Bahrain, *Psychological Studies*, Vol 20 (4), pp 645-664.
- AL-Rusan, M., & Maa'ya, R. (2008). Transformational leadership. *Teacher Message*, Vol 4 (4), PP 59-63.
- Al-Suliman, N. (2006). Mental excellency, talent and creativity. Al-Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, National King Fahed Library.
- Alzaghoul, E., & Alsumadi, A. (2015). Twice exceptional. Amman, Jordan, Al shorok for Publishing and Distribution.
- Arayda, M. M. (2011). The theory of transformational leadership in educational leadership. *Teacher Message*, Vol 49 (3), pp 38-41.
- Aulicino, C. W. (2006). Educating girls for transformative leadership (Doctoral Dissertation) Union Institute and University. US. Available from Pro Quest Dissertations and Thesis database. (UMI No.3235789).
- Bass, B. & Bass, R. (2008). *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, research and managerial applications* (4th ed.). Available in http://books.google.com.sa/books?id=UTZ2npL2HHgC&Cpg=PA48&redir_esc=y
- Bass, B. & Riggio, R. (2008). *Transformational leadership* (2nd ed.). Taylor and Francis library, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc, Mahwah, New Jersey. Master e-book.
- Bass, B.; Avolio, M. (1995). *The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire*. Retrieved from <http://www.mindgarden.com/products/mIq.thm>.

- Chan, D. W. (2000). Developing the creative leadership training program for gifted and talented students in Hong Kong. *Roeper Review*, 22 (2), 94-97.
- Clarck, B. (2014). *Growing up giftedness*. MacMillan Publishing Company, NY.
- Coon, P. A. (2013). The impact of service learning on leadership skills of students who are gifted and talented in the middle school (Doctorial Dissertation) West Virginia University. US. Available in Pro Quest Dissertations and Thesis database. (UMINO. 3605810).
- Cooper, S. (2011). A multiple case study of teacher perceptions of gifted and talented students' transformational leadership behaviors (Doctorial Dissertation) Walden University. US. Available in Pro Quest Dissertations and Thesis database (UMINO. 3449864).
- Davis, G. A., & Rimm, S. B. (2004). *Education of the gifted and talented* (4th ed.). Boston, Allyn & Bacon.
- Gonsoulin, W. Jr, Ward, R. & Figg, C. (2006). Learning by leading: Using best practices to develop leadership skills in at-risk and gifted populations. *Education*, 126(4), 690-701.
- Milligan, J. (2004). Leadership skills of gifted students in a rural setting: Promising programs for leadership development. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 23(1), 16-21.
- Ministry of Education. (2010). *The school gaudiness for students*. Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education.
- Renzulli, J. S. (2005). The three rings conception of giftedness. In R.L. Sternberg and J. E. Davidson (eds.) *Conceptions of giftedness* (pp 246-779). Cambridge University Press, NY.
- Roberts, J. B. (1997). The impact of leadership training on ninth grade students' academic achievement, disciplinary referral, extracurricular activities participation, and leadership skills (Doctorial Dissertation) University of Florida. US. Available in ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis database . (UMI No. 9824141).

The Effectiveness of Future Leadership Program in Developing Transformational ...

Muna A. Al-Turief , Emad A. Alzaghoul, Fatima A. Aljasim

Trindade, N., Jr. (2007). Transformative learning for transformational leadership: An evaluation of the international leadership institute training program (Doctorial Dissertation). Asbury theological seminary. US. Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis database. (UMI No. 3270244).

Van Tassel- Baska, J. & Avery, L. (2013). Changing tomorrow: Leadership curriculum for high-ability students. Waco, TX. Prufrock Press inc.

Van Tassel- Baska, J; & Sgtambaugh, T. (2006). Comprehensive curriculum for gifted learners. Pearson Education, Inc.