

On the Study of the Relationship of the Personality About Locus of Control, Coping Style and Work Management of the Headmasters in Primary and Middle Schools

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Received 16 October 2014; accepted 4 January 2015

Published online 26 February 2015

Abstract

The relationship study of the Personality about Locus of Control, coping style and work engagement of the headmasters in primary and middle schools is the basis of further promoting the work engagement of the primary and middle schools headmasters. **Method:** Do questionnaire surveys on 220 primary and middle schools headmasters by using the Personality about Locus of Control form, questionnaire on coping style and work engagement form. **Result:** There are distinct differences on locus of control personality between Han and Tibet headmasters; there are distinct differences on the coping styles of the primary and middle schools headmasters in different nationalities and different ages; the two dimensions of the locus of control and coping style and every dimension of the work engagement and the total scores are distinctively related to each other ($P < .05$); through the analysis of the multiple stepwise regressions, we can find that the predictive power of two factors namely the coping style and the locus of control on the work engagement is up to 16.4%. If the primary and middle schools headmasters can adopt the active pattern of coping style and internal control personality while facing difficulties and problems in work contribute more to work engagement.

Key words: Coping style; Management; Headmasters

Yu, S. P., & Xu, H. C. (2015). On the Study of the Relationship of the Personality About Locus of Control, Coping Style and Work Management of the Headmasters in Primary and Middle Schools. *Studies in Sociology of Science*, 6(1), 54-57. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/sss/article/view/6272> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/6272>

INTRODUCTION

With the arising of the positive psychology, the work engagement acting as a positive psychological ability are widely paid attention to and studied in the fields of the organizational behavior and human resource management, while the study on work engagement from the perspective of psychology is not common, especially the study on the work engagements of the headmasters group's current situation and the affecting factors are hardly empty. This paper is to study the relationship of the Personality about Locus of Control, coping style and work engagement of the headmasters in primary and middle schools. Aiming to offer some references and thoughts of improving the work engagements of the primary and middle schools and also offering further proper intervention measures.

1. OBJECTS AND METHODS

1.1 Objects

By randomly selecting 220 primary and middle schools headmasters to do the questionnaire survey, the valid questionnaires are 214 with 97.3 effective rates. Of them, the amount of headmasters above 50 years old is 9 (4.2%), between 40-49 is 106 (49.5%), the age between 30-39 is 83 (38.8%), the age below 30 is 16 (7.5%); the education background above master (included) is 3 (1.4%), bachelor 169 (79%), college 40 (18.7), technical school students(included) and below is 2(0.9%); the headmasters served for 1-5 years is 156 (72.9%), 5-10 years is 33 (15.4%), above 10 years is 25 (11.7%). The sample item distribution status is in Table 1.

1.2 Method

1.2.1 The Personality About Locus of Control Scale

On the basis of revising the original scale table made by a foreign learner Spector, this scale table is made out of revising it by Chinese learners Youli Huang, Yanyan and

Table 1
Sample Items Distribution Status Table (N=214)

	Gender		Nationality		School category		
	Male	Female	Han	Tibetan	Primary	Junior	Junior-senior elementary school
Number	172	42	158	56	88	102	24
percentage (%)	80.4	19.6	73.8	26.1	41.1	47.7	11.2

so on. This scale has good internal accordant reliability and validity. The results of the exploratory factor analysis have shown that the questionnaire of locus of control includes the internal and external factors, of which the external factor questions are marked by negative points. The higher the score is, the more internal personality the result is, otherwise, the external personality the result is. The scale explained by total square deviation is 59.04%. The results of testing the questionnaire internal validity show the two internal the Cronbach alpha coefficient are 0.844 and 0.752 respectively, the Cronbach alpha coefficient of inner consistency of the total scale is 0.780.

1.2.2 The Questionnaire of the Coping Style

This questionnaire planned and made by Jihua Xiao is used to test the strategy which the headmaster will use while facing the stressful event. The questionnaire has 62 items and 6 subscales (on problem solving, self-accusation, asking for help, illusions, delaying and rationalization problems). This questionnaire has good reliability and validity and the factor load value of each question above 0.35, and 6 problem solving factors retest relative coefficients respectively are : $r_1 = 0.72$, $r_2 = 0.62$, $r_3 = 0.69$, $r_4 = 0.72$, $r_5 = 0.67$, $r_6 = 0.72$ (Xiao & Xu, 1996).

1.2.3 The Work Engagement Scale

This scale is revised by Yiwen Zhang, Yiqun Gan and other persons on the original scale (the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale) developed in 2002. This scale has three dimensions: energy (such as, when I work, I feel my energies will be burst out), devotions (such as, I have much enthusiasm for work) and concentration (such as, when I work I will forget myself and bury myself in work). The Cronbach alpha coefficient of each sub-scale is between 0.668 and 0.785, the inner homogeneity is favorable and the Cronbach alpha coefficient of the inner consistency in the total scale is 0.891. There exist correlation between each item and the total score of its corresponding dimension, with the level prominent and construct validity favorable. The work engagement is the agreement degree of his/her work psychology or the important degree of his/her work in his/her heart, which itself is an active experience and it embodies the high energy, strong sense of identity and concentration spirit.

1.2.4 The Questionnaire on the General Demography Material

This questionnaire includes general information such as gender, age, nationality and other information.

1.3 Statistic Analysis

By using the spss16.0 software to analyze the statistics, the comparison between multiple sets of quantitative data is usually analyzed by square deviation, and the relativity between quantitative data is analyzed by Pearson, the effecting factors of the work engagement of primary and middle schools headmasters are analyzed by linear regression.

2. RESULTS

2.1 The Variance Analysis of the Locus of Control of the Primary and Middle School Headmasters in Demographic Variables

From Table 2, there is outstanding difference between the locus of control of Han and Tibet primary and middle school headmasters ($P < .05$), the Han headmasters are more interval than the Tibet headmasters. While the locus of control of the primary and middle schools headmasters differ unclearly in other statistics variances.

Table 2
The Variance Analysis on the Locus of Control of Han and Tibet Primary and Middle Schools Headmasters ($\bar{x} \pm S$)

	Nationality		<i>t</i>
	Han (N=158)	Tibet (N=56)	
Locus of control	3.65±0.41	3.40±0.44	3.702*

Notes. * $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$ the same as below; Calculated by average points of each dimension.

2.2 The Variance Analysis of Coping Style Status of the Primary and Middle Schools Headmasters of the Demographic Variables

From Table 3, Han and Tibet primary and middle schools headmasters are quite different in solving problems and self-accusation ($P < .05$), while in the dimension of solving problems, the Han headmasters are higher than the Tibet headmasters. In the dimension of self-accusation, the Tibet headmasters are higher than the

Table 3
The Variance Analysis of Coping Style Status of the Primary and Middle Schools Headmasters the Demographic Variables ($\bar{x}\pm s$)

	Nationality		<i>t</i>	Age				<i>F</i>
	Han (N=158)	Tibet (N=56)		①above 50 years old (N=9)	②40-49 years old(N=106)	③30-39 years old(N=83)	④below 30 years old (N=16)	
Solving problems	10.11±1.75	9.32±1.66	2.998**	10.00±1.66	10.16±1.57	9.77±1.82	8.81±2.29	3.064*(②③)>④
Self-accusation	2.68±2.25	3.32±1.88	-2.068*	4.44±2.92	2.62±2.31	2.98±2.17	2.81±1.80	2.127
Asking for help	5.94±1.79	5.68±1.78	0.932	5.89±1.65	5.94±1.70	5.82±1.89	5.63±2.19	0.181
Illusions	4.21±2.00	4.46±2.12	-0.785	5.22±2.68	4.05±2.03	4.46±2.00	4.31±1.74	1.329
Retreating	4.76±1.89	5.02±1.69	-0.952	5.44±2.24	4.91±1.77	4.65±1.90	4.88±1.78	0.658
Personalization	4.80±2.04	5.21±2.12	-1.276	5.44±2.74	4.69±2.11	5.00±1.94	5.56±1.96	1.192

Note. Calculated by the total scores of each dimension.

Han headmasters; the headmasters in different ages have distinct differences in solving problems, the testing findings show the distinct differences of the headmasters between 40-49 years old, 30-39 years old and below 30 years old, of them the headmasters in the age of 40-49 have more distinct differences than those below 30 years old.

2.3 On Analyzing the Work Engagement Differences of the Primary and Middle Schools Headmasters

From the Table 4, the male and female headmasters differ a lot in devotion degrees of the work engagement with the male headmasters notably higher than those of the female headmasters ($P < 0.01$). There is no obvious difference in the primary and middle schools headmasters on work engagement status in nationalities, ages, educational background and serving schools levels.

Table 5
The Relative Analysis of the Locus of Control, Coping Style and Work Engagement of the Primary and Middle Schools Headmasters (*r* Value, $n=214$)

	Locus of control	Solving problem	Self-accusation	Asking for help	Illusion	Retreating	Rationalization
Energy	0.340**	0.336**	-0.128	0.084	-0.098	-0.130	-0.029
Devotion	0.281**	0.323**	-0.030	0.102	-0.079	-0.110	-0.046
Concentration	0.268**	0.314**	-0.051	0.125	-0.069	-0.014	-0.070
Work engagement	0.324**	0.356**	-0.073	0.114	-0.089	-0.092	-0.054

From Table 5, we can know each dimension of the locus of control, coping style, work engagement and the total scores are positively related ($P < 0.01$).

2.5 On Analyzing the Effecting Factors of the Work Engagement of the Primary and Middle Schools Headmasters

From Table 6, we can know in the process of stepwise regression, the external control should first go in to the

Table 4
On Analyzing the Gender Differences of the Work Engagement of the Primary and Middle Schools Headmasters ($\bar{x}\pm s$)

	Gender		<i>t</i>
	Male (N=172)	Female (N=42)	
Energy	4.64±0.64	4.58±0.66	0.530
Devotion	4.25±0.76	3.84±0.76	3.105**
Concentration	4.40±0.71	4.24±0.76	1.237
The total average points of work engagement	4.43±0.65	4.22±0.64	1.887

Note. Calculated by the total average points of each dimension.

2.4 The Relative Analysis of the Locus of Control, Coping Style and Work Engagement of the Primary and Middle Schools Headmasters

regression equation model 1, which shows that the external control is tightly related to the work engagement. The second is the solving problems; the multiple-correlation coefficient of the dependent variables and 2 independent variables in the second model is 0.415, which reflects the obvious linear relation of the work engagement, the self purpose setting obvious and the work internal awarding. 2 factors involving the regression equation the predictable power of the work engagement up to 16.4%.

Table 6
The Regression Analysis of the Locus of Control, Coping Style and Work Engagement of the Primary and Middle Schools Headmasters (Stepwise Method, N=214)

Model	Independent variable	B value	Beta value	T value	F value	R value	R ²	ΔR ²
1	Solving problem	0.396	0.356	5.518	30.452	0.356	0.127	0.122
2	Solving problem	0.309	0.277	4.131	21.710	0.415	0.172	0.164
	Locus of control	1.037	0.227	3.384				

DISCUSSION

The Han and Tibet primary and middle schools headmasters differ obviously in locus of control, the so called internal controllers are those who tend to attribute the causes and results of the ongoing events to themselves, while tend to attribute the causes and results of the current events to fate, luck and something uncontrollable. The Han headmasters are more interval control in personalities than the Tibet headmasters which may be related to the religion beliefs.

The Han and Tibet primary and middle schools headmasters differ obviously in coping style of the dimensions of solving problems and self-accusation. In the dimension of solving problems, the Han headmasters are higher than the Tibet headmasters while in the dimension of self-accusation, the Tibet headmasters are higher than Han headmasters. This result explains when they are in the face of problems of the Han headmasters will try more efforts to find solutions to the problems while the Tibet headmasters tend to blame themselves, which reflects the responsibilities of the Tibet headmasters. But over self-accusation will increase their work pressure. The headmasters in different ages differ a lot in solving problem dimension, the testing findings show the distinct differences of the headmasters between 40-49 years old, 30-39 years old and below 30 years old. With the years passing by and increasing experience, it is possible for the headmasters that they tend to choose the active coping style namely they will straightly face the problems and solve them right away.

Judging from some relative analysis and regression analysis, there is obvious positive correlation of the dimensions in solving problems, locus of control, work engagement and total scores. The two factors of solving problems and locus of control have the 16.4% predictive

power of the work engagement in the regression equation. Of the two factors, the solving problem dimension contributes a lot with the biggest contribution rate (12.2%). In conclusion, when faced with problems and difficulties, the primary and middle schools headmasters tends to adopt the active coping style “solving problems” and the internal control personality which will benefit more for the work engagement. This finding also reminds of setting more psychological courses in the future headmasters’ career training to improve their confidences, which make them believe that the confidence and success are closely linked. When in the face of difficulties and problems, the headmasters can face them directly and solve them positively so that they can improve their work engagement.

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