








Original Article (Qualitative)

Designing a participatory leadership model in government departments

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Abstract

The aim of the present study is to design a collaborative leadership model in government offices in Kerman. The research population includes 21 managers and experts in the field of collaborative leadership, faculty members, managers and experts in government offices in Kerman, selected based on purposive sampling and using the data saturation technique. The data collection tool is a semi-structured in-depth interview. Thematic analysis method was used to analyze the data. The findings of the thematic network analysis showed that 10 themes (organizers) and 26 basic themes and 86 primary codes are components and categories of collaborative leadership. The themes (organizing) were presented in the form of 10 dimensions, which are: "organizational trust, organizational justice, organizational innovation and creativity, improving commitment and job satisfaction, promoting individual and organizational performance, responsible behavior with employees, emotional and psychological support, positive feedback and individual growth, strengthening group synergy, and administrative transparency." The theory of collaborative leadership is effective in creating and developing leaders' capabilities and pays special attention to social justice and the comprehensiveness of the personality of female leaders in the organization, and through it, basic leadership knowledge in the organization can be developed.

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

A study of the historical history of women's presence at the top level of organization management over recent decades shows that they have always been kept from advancement because they have held positions at lower levels of the organization that have forced them to perform repetitive tasks. Also, they often worked in staff positions and as assistants to line managers and rarely held the responsibilities of line managers (Syafri et al., 2025). Therefore, women have been less involved in line tasks in organizations, and since they have mainly worked in staff jobs, they have not been able to gain much power in organizations and interfere and influence organizational decision-making (Syafri et al., 2025). Thus, they have been assigned fewer high management levels in organizations. However, in order to survive and compete in uncertain environments, today's organizations must have more mature and sustainable human capital by creating growth, development, and equal opportunity for all human capital, including women, regardless of gender, using women's synergistic capacity, and by abandoning the traditional view and negative mentality regarding women's managerial role. This is because if there is a more supportive atmosphere in organizations regarding women's management and their organization at management levels, the level of maturity of employees' capabilities increases (Mokhtari & Rasek, 2024). The collaborative leader increases the level of maturity of employees by considering employees' needs, environmental requirements, pluralistic approaches, delegation, empowerment, multicultural, democratic, and nurturing approaches. Organizations with a collaborative or collaborative leader will have more mature employees, and this is a positive effect of increasing the presence of women at the management level that is worth considering (Ghaderi Sheikhiabadi et al., 2022). The limited opportunities and career fields for women and the difference in the rate of achievement in job positions, especially in high management levels, between women and men with similar education, indicate that our society has not created a suitable space and conditions for the active presence of women and has ignored their motivations, interests, and needs. This can also cause many problems and challenges for both working women and organizations. As a result, not paying attention to the demands and needs of employees, especially female employees in government organizations, can endanger the future of the country (Dabbaghi & Esmaeili, 2024). Therefore, given the newness of the issue of participatory leadership in Iranian society, and also considering the need for women to study and work on the one hand and the importance of paying attention to their needs and motivations to maintain and improve their physical and mental health, and on the other hand, which has a major contribution to the realization of family welfare, childrearing, job efficiency, and societal progress, the present study is considered to be on the list of very important research topics for specialists (Charkhab & Gholamifar, 2024). Also, by presenting a participatory leadership model, a basis for decision-making and judgment about the performance of women working in organizations to occupy managerial positions can be provided and a major step can be taken towards improving the quality level of government organizations in the country. Therefore, in this study, the researcher seeks to answer the question: What is the participatory leadership model in government offices in Kerman city?

Theoretical Framework of Consolidation Leadership

Consolidation is the infinitive of the word "to consolidate". and means narrowing, coming together, scarcity, and the like (Dekhoda Vocabulary Book). Among the range of leadership theories and methods derived from them, there is a theory called consolidation leadership theory and consolidation leadership style, the experiences and characteristics of female



leaders have been very effective in its formation and growth. Consolidation leadership is one of the new approaches in leadership literature that has received serious attention from researchers since the mid-2010s. This approach emphasizes the ability of the leader in the organization to simultaneously manage organizational conflicts such as control and independence, stability and change, or the intimacy and authority of women's leadership in the organization. Consolidation leadership is one of the new approaches in leadership studies that was first proposed by (Zhang et al., 2015).

Beigi Nasrabadi et al. (2025) conducted a study titled Women's Leadership in Future Organizations. The results of this study showed that women's leadership challenges stem from the characteristics of future organizations, such as facing difficult and contradictory expectations. Strategies were also found in two main categories: women's leadership enabling strategies, such as a supportive structure and culture, and women's growth strategies, including thinking big and setting big goals.

Ali Emran & Elhony (2025) conducted a study titled The Role of Inclusive Leaders in the Era of Digital Transformation. The results of this study confirmed a positive and strong relationship between the existence of inclusive leadership and the digital transformation process in universities. It also showed that the existence of regulations and laws governing digital transformation, as well as comprehensive strategic plans, will help promote this process and achieve significant successes. This research recommends increasing investment in digital infrastructure and modern technologies, increasing the technical capabilities of higher education institutions, improving the legislative and legal framework, and developing comprehensive strategic plans for digital transformation at the level of higher education institutions.

Research Methodology

The research community includes 21 managers and experts in the field of participatory leadership, faculty members, managers and experts from government departments in Kerman city, who were selected based on purposive sampling using the data saturation technique. The data collection tool is a semi-structured in-depth interview.

Research Findings

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. The findings of the thematic network analysis showed that 10 themes (organizers), 26 basic themes, and 86 primary codes are components and categories of participatory leadership. The themes (organizing) were presented in the form of 10 dimensions, which are: "Organizational trust, organizational justice, organizational innovation and creativity, improving commitment and job satisfaction, improving individual and organizational performance, responsible behavior with employees, emotional and psychological support, positive feedback and individual growth, strengthening group synergy, and administrative transparency." The theory of participatory leadership is effective in creating and growing leaders' capabilities and pays special attention to social justice and the comprehensiveness of the personality of female leaders in the organization, and through it, basic leadership knowledge in the organization can be developed.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the aim of designing a participatory leadership model in government offices in Kerman city. The results of this finding are consistent with the results of Soheili et al. (2024), Foladi & Fateh Elahi Nargese (2024), and Beigi Nasrabadi et al. (2025). In explaining and justifying this question, it can be said that future research on organizations and leadership has shown that the trends in women's role-playing are moving in



a direction where in the future, women will take over the leadership of organizations and society and be introduced as leaders of the 21st century. The course of developments in women's role-playing as leaders in organizations is such that although in the past they were mainly active at the operational levels of organizations, over time they have entered the levels of supervision and middle management. In the future, along with increasing influence at middle levels, we will witness their greater activity and influence at the highest levels of organizations and business leadership, even in developing countries.

According to the results of the research, the following suggestions were made:

According to the results of the research, it is suggested that one of the most important obstacles for women to managerial positions is women's limited access to informal spaces in the organization, and that senior managers of organizations can reduce these limitations by creating new and diverse informal spaces.