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Educational Leadership and Self-Determination Theory

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Summary and Keywords

The nature of practices of educational leaders and their outcome in terms of productivity and teacher motivation are greatly shaped by the sociocultural norms that regulate them. The sociocultural norms proposed by Hofstede are widely considered as the benchmark for national cultural examination and comparison, which suggests that collectivist cultures are characterized by higher scores on power distance and uncertainty avoidance and lower on individualism, masculinity, long-term orientation, and indulgence. These dimensions may exert positive, negative, or mixed influence, especially on organizations such as schools that constitute intricate work structures with a variety of stakeholders influencing them from multiple directions.

Educational leadership for effective change in school requires the ability to integrate traditional sociocultural norms with the global principles for effective outcomes. Work settings in collectivists cultures are characterized by hierarchy based on age, seniority, or position, and authority, conformity, and compliance are some of the prevalent elements that influence Asian school leadership practices. The issue of developing leadership practices by merging Western principles with indigenous ways that encourages more democratic participation of teachers is always been critical to effective leadership practices.

In the context of work-organization, self-determination theory (SDT) has emerged as an effective motivational theory that proposes autonomy, competence, and relatedness as three universal psychological needs; satisfaction of these needs would predict optimal outcomes. Providing autonomous work environments has been widely found to be the most effective of these principles that lead to higher productivity and enhanced teacher motivation. We propose that just like their individualistic culture counterparts, it is possible for school leaders in predominantly collectivist cultures to function in a need-supporting way to provide autonomous work environment for their teachers to yield desired outcomes.

Keywords: collectivist culture, self-determination theory, educational leadership, teacher motivation

Introduction

The article begins with the idea that schools are widely considered as “learning organizations” and principal as “leaders” who serve as a motivating force for sustained actions by stakeholders toward achieving the shared vision of a school. The motivation of stakeholders, especially of teachers, is significantly contingent on the quality of leadership practices. We then introduce self-determination theory (SDT) and the three basic psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—in the context of work-organization and present empirical findings to support the fact that the leadership practices that facilitate satisfaction of the three needs, in a variety of workplace settings, facilitates employees motivation and produces optimal work-related outcomes. Further in the article we argue that the nature of educational leaders’ practices is greatly shaped by the sociocultural norms that regulate it. We then briefly discuss sociocultural norms proposed by Hofstede (2011) and present an empirical review of educational leadership practice in Asian school settings. Finally, in relation to that, we propose practical guidelines on how leaders in collectivist school setting can inform their leadership practices that would support the satisfaction of the three intrinsic psychological needs for teacher motivation and favorable outcomes.

Schools as Organizations and Principals as Leaders

Schools are widely considered as “learning organizations” whereby major stakeholders such as leaders, administrators, teachers, pupils, and parents come together and work toward achieving a common goal. School as a learning organization involves individual contribution, teamwork, collaboration, and organization-wide practices and culture in nurturing a learning climate that is impactful and has the potential to adapt to new environments (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2016). Among these expectations, the role of a school leader is central to school success. Since schools also operate like other organizations, parallels have been drawn between school leadership in business management or any other field (Bush, 1995). A school leader serves as a motivating force for sustained actions by its stakeholders toward achieving the shared vision of a school. According to Conger (1992), “Leaders are individuals who establish direction for a working group of individuals who gain commitment from this group of members to this direction and who then motivate these members to achieve the direction’s outcomes” (p. 18). Furthermore, the role of school leaders has been evolving consistently to meet the diverse demands of the 21st century. Traditionally, a school principal was responsible for providing administrative support for day-to-day activities, whereas now schools leaders are held accountable for students’ learning, assessment, and holistic development, innovation, teaching excellence, teacher motivation, and promoting a positive school learning climate (Lee, Walker, & Chui, 2012; Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi, 2010; Walker & Hallinger, 2015). For example, The Wallace Foundation (2012) highlighted five central practices that are commonly followed by successful school leaders: successful

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school leaders (a) shape a vision for academic achievement for all students, (b) create a positive school climate for cooperation and interaction among the stakeholders and for the safety and well-being of the students, (c) nurture leadership among teachers and other members to achieve the shared goal, (d) improve instruction to equip teachers to teach at their best for enhanced outcomes, and (e) manage people and process for school improvement. Furthermore, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, and Hopkins(2008) propose four core practices of school leaders: (a) building vision and setting direction, (b) understanding and developing people, (c) redesigning the organization, and (d) managing the teaching and learning programs. These roles may not present a complete picture of a principal's roles in school, which are more complex in nature and may vary according to the context. However, among these discussed roles, the one that is central to leadership practices is the principal's ability to exert influence and motivate teachers to initiate and sustain their effort to accomplish the school goals. Studies have shown that leadership practices of school principals indirectly contribute toward students' academic achievement, attendance, and graduation rates through directly influencing teachers' motivation to perform efficiently in teaching students (see Eyal & Roth, 2011). Therefore, motivational practices of school leaders promote a clear vision, set high academic goals (Hallinger & Heck, 1996), support professional and personal development of teachers (Geijssel, Slegers, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2003), provide stimulating environments for teachers to innovate and teach (Yukl, 2006), encourage teachers to innovate through creative ways of teaching (Supovitz, Sirinides, & May, 2010), promote effort and persistence for effective teaching, and espouse educational reforms (Geijssel et al., 2003).

Most leaders across a variety of organizations, especially in school settings, draw their leaderships practices based upon a number of models and types of leadership available in the literature, including distributed leadership (shared and collective leadership practice; Gronn, 2002), instructional leadership (curriculum and instructional management by the leader) (Hallinger, 2005), and transformational leadership (leadership for change in individuals and society; Bass, 2005; Burns, 1978). However, for optimal outcomes through any of these leadership practices, motivation remains an important explanatory mechanism. These models guide school principals' behaviors, which are associated with motivational outcomes; for example, transformational leadership seeks to enhance employees' motivation through inspirational motivation and intellectual inspiration (Bass, 2005; Burns, 1978). Similarly, in terms of employees' motivation as a focus in workplace, self-determination theory (SDT) has made astounding contributions which indicate organizational leadership is synonymous with motivation. Amidst challenges of contemporary educational systems, issues related to teacher retention and turnover have become aggravated (Worth & Lazzari, 2017). Therefore, to retain teaching interest it is important for school leaders to create a work environment that promotes and sustains teacher motivation and psychological well-being. SDT proposes that the well-being and psychological of health of employees in an organization not only promote work-related outcomes but also indicate sustain organizational health (Deci & Ryan, 2014). The theory proposes specific behaviors for leaders, managers, teachers, and people in power positions to facilitate inner psychological processes and motivation in teachers for high-quality functioning in

school environments. According to the theory, employees, teachers in this case, should experience volition, empowerment, competence, and connectedness in school environments to be able to function productively. Later in the article we discuss SDT in more detail and its motivational outcomes in organizational outcomes.

Basic Need Satisfaction and Organizational Outcomes

SDT is a contemporary theory of human motivation which is widely used in a variety of domains to examine the interplay of socioenvironmental factors on motivational processes for effective outcomes. To review the application of SDT for organizational outcomes, we briefly discuss the main tenets of the theory that includes (a) the nature and types of motivation, (b) socioenvironmental factors and need satisfaction, and (c) evidence of optimal organizational outcomes.

SDT makes two major distinction in the types of motivation: intrinsic motivation refers to doing things for inherent reasons such as interest or enjoyment, and extrinsic motivation refers to doing something for extrinsic reasons such as a reward or to avoid punishment (Ryan & Deci, 2017). However, SDT also places major emphasis on the quality of motivation by intricately explaining the regulatory processes on a linear continuum whereby amotivation (at the extreme left), in reaction to suitable socioenvironmental factors, can be developed into intrinsic motivation (at the extreme right; see Deci & Ryan, 2000). Amotivation is characterized by complete absence of any type of motivation. Extrinsic motivation comprises four types of regulatory process: (a) external regulation is behavior regulated by pressuring contingencies and has an external perceived locus of causality, (b) introjected regulation is behavior regulated by internal impulse and pressures, (3) identified regulation is behavioral regulation occurring as a result of valuing something, (4) integrated regulation is the highest form of intrinsic motivation where reasons for behaving are consistent with an individual's personal values. In empirical studies, identified regulation, integrated regulation, and intrinsic motivation are considered autonomous motivation while external and introjected are considered controlled motivation (Vansteenkiste, Zhou, Lens, & Soenens, 2005). Furthermore, SDT specifies antecedents of internalization or intrinsic motivation as socioenvironmental factors which facilitate development of this form of motivation. SDT proposes satisfaction of three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness as universal in nature and which function as essential nutriments for autonomous motivation, optimal functioning, and high-quality performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

The need for autonomy refers to the extent to which individuals experience choice and act with the sense of volition, have internal perceived locus of causality, and stand behind their actions by feeling self-determined to pursue activities or goals. The need for competence refers to the sense of self-efficacy and belief in one's own abilities to successfully

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perform a task and make an impact. The need for relatedness refers to the extent to which one feels connected to others and experiences the sense of relatedness and safety.

SDT suggests that, in organizational settings, satisfaction of these needs affect organizational outcomes as well as the type of motivation people have for job-related tasks. Leadership practices, behaviour, and support through the environment can facilitate the three basic psychological needs of the employees and promote autonomous motivation. For example, autonomy supportive practices refer to promotion of choice and volition among individuals whereby individuals are autonomously motivated to undertake a task. Autonomously motivated employees do not feel coerced or controlled to engage in work-related activities (controlled motivation). Furthermore, positive outcomes of basic need satisfaction are numerous and widely reported—in a variety of domains such as education, health, work organization, and others—and show that if individuals experience satisfaction of basic psychological needs they are autonomously motivated to perform and produce favorable outcomes (Korthagen & Evelein, 2016; Ng et al., 2012; Olafsen, 2017). In case of need frustration, individuals feel controlled and behave with a sense of obligation and pressure, which, in turn, can affect their work outcomes and psychological well-being (Chen et al., 2015).

For workplace and managerial settings, SDT proposes ways to design social environments and conditions that can facilitate satisfaction of the three basic needs for optimal outcomes. Several empirical investigations in a variety of workplace settings have reported beneficial outcomes of basic need satisfaction in terms of work quality and productivity. For example, when employees experienced empowerment (need for autonomy) from managers and connectedness (need for relatedness) with coworkers, they reported higher autonomous motivation and creativity in their work (Hon, 2012). Similarly, Preenen, Oeij, Dhondt, Kraan, and Jansen(2016) reported that employees' experiences of autonomy at the workplace predicted profitability of the company. Roca and Gagné (2008) in their study at four United Nations affiliated international agencies found out that participant' experiences of need satisfaction of their e-learning courses predicted enjoyment for learning, usefulness of course, intention to continue taking other courses, and being able to easily put learning to use. Lynch, Plant, and Ryan (2005) in hospital settings found out that employees who experienced basic need satisfaction on the job displayed more positive attitudes toward the patients and were willing to deal with them in a less controlling way. Several experimental studies with intervention to support basic needs satisfaction in work settings have also yielded the similar results. For example, managers in branch offices of a Fortune 500 company who intervened as autonomy supportive managers found that their employees, in contrast with the employee in the control group, were more satisfied with their jobs and trusted the top management more (Deci, Connell, & Ryan, 1989).

Furthermore, studies have also confirmed that if the authorities at a workplace are autonomy supportive and acknowledge the feelings and perspectives of the subordinates, those subordinates display greater intrinsic motivations and also hold intrinsic value for work that leads toward enjoyment and satisfaction. For example, Andreassen, Hetland, and Pallesen(2010) revealed that when employees report satisfaction of basic psychological

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needs, they also report greater enjoyment of their work. Similarly, Hofer and Busch (2011) also found a strong relationship between satisfaction of the competence need and job satisfaction at the workplace.

In terms of psychological and physical well-being, satisfaction of three psychological needs offer similar results. For example, Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, and Ryan (1993), in manufacturing settings, confirmed that employees' experiencing satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs at work predicted greater job satisfaction, enhanced feelings of self-esteem, and lower levels of psychosomatic symptoms. Similarly, Trépanier, Fernet, and Austin (2013) reported a negative relationship between autonomous motivation of employees and stress for high job demands. Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, and Lens' (2008) findings of 17 Dutch work organizations suggested that employees, when provided with resourceful job characteristics, are more likely to experience autonomy, relatedness, and competence and in turn report less exhaustion and higher vigor in their jobs, whereas employees who experienced controlling work environments experienced need frustration and therefore burnout. Olafsen (2017) found that the work climates that are need supportive predict higher levels of state mindfulness among employees, which has positive implications for work-related outcomes and subjective well-being. Fernet, Austin, and Vallerand (2012) in an investigation of autonomous and controlled motivation of school principals reported that principals high in autonomous motivation experienced less work exhaustion but more work commitment. Finally, Van den Broeck, Ferris, Chang, and Rosen, (2016) in a meta-analysis of 119 studies highlighted the role of need frustration in work-related settings as a significant predictor of negative outcomes as compared to need satisfaction.

In summary, this macro theory of human motivation highlights the significance of satisfaction of three basic needs—for competence, autonomy, and relatedness—across several domains, including the workplace, for optimal outcomes.

Culture, School Leadership, and Basic Need Satisfaction

According to SDT, satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs is central to leadership practices to promote employees motivation, optimal outcomes, and psychological well-being. However, the degree to which leadership practices can accommodate satisfaction of these three basic needs is significantly related to its cultural context. For example, in a school context a variety of leadership practices and models highlight principles or philosophies that guide those leadership practices (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood & Duke, 1998). Prominent scholars of education leadership studies have highlighted that individual traits, culture, societal norms, and beliefs exert a significant impact on the way educational leaders think, act, and lead (Cheng, 1995; Dimmock & Walker, 1998; Hallinger, 1995). Among several factors that account for antecedents of leadership style in any organization, cultural context is widely acknowledged (Hallinger & Walker, 2017; Walker, 2010). According to Walker (2004) "Culture relates to the shared norms, values

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and patterns of understanding that appear relatively common across a system or collectivity and influence individual and group behaviour at all levels" (p. 76).

In the 1960s, administrative theorists like Getzels, Lippman, and Campbell (1968) highlighted the impact of cultural values that influence leaders' thoughts, behaviors, and ultimately leadership style. To further understand the role of culture on organizational management and leadership, Hofstede through his seminal study in 1980 proposed four cultural dimensions which later evolved into five and then six cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 1980, 1991, 2011). Even though Hofstede's work has received significant criticism (Cray & Mallory, 1998; Smith, 2002), the dimensions are widely used by researchers around the world to compare national cultures and the impact they exert on organizational management. Hofstede's model originally proposed four cultural dimensions: "Power Distance," "Uncertainty Avoidance," "Individualism versus Collectivism," "Masculinity versus Femininity," and later two more, namely, "Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation," and "Indulgence versus Restraint." Given the relevance of the dimensions in terms of this article's scope, we focus on original four dimensions only.

Overview of the Four Dimensions

The first dimension of power distance refers to the power-based inequality between leaders and followers in an organization. Organizations with a high power distance observe hierarchical systems whereby the power is distributed unequally. The subordinates always expect to be told what to do. On the contrary, the organizations with low power distances have a linear organizational structure (Hofstede, 2011). The second dimension of uncertainty avoidance refers to individuals' tolerance toward ambiguity or avoidance of stress in unknown situations. The organizations with a high uncertainty avoidance context follow structured rules and regulations such as prescribed rules and rituals and behavioral codes to reduce uncertainty or ambiguity. On the other hand, the organizations with low uncertainty avoidance are characterized by more flexibility, novel, unusual, or surprising situations. The members in such environments have fewer written rules and rituals, and they do not feel stressed or threatened in unusual conditions (Hofstede, 2011). The third dimension of individualism-collectivism refers to the degree to which individuals value their groups and integrate within them. Individuals with collectivist orientation are assimilated with into strong in-groups and reinforce belongingness by following group norms that are usually predetermined by in-groups and protect each other in exchange for unquestionable loyalty. On the other hand, individuals with a low collectivist orientation tend to value their personal interest over the group or organizations and care about self-actualization and career progress. The fourth dimension (masculinity vs. femininity) in organisational culture defines the dominant values of a society or an organization based on gender roles. For example, masculine traits refer to assertiveness, competition, and material success, whereas feminine traits pertain to quality of life, modesty, interpersonal relationships, and concern for the weak. Organizations characterized by feminine values resolve conflicts by compromise and negotiation. Modesty, solidarity, and cooperation among employees are encouraged and rewards are based on equality. On the other hand, organizations with masculine traits conflicts are resolved by having the

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strongest win; individuals are assertive; materialistic wealth is preferred over social relations; and rewards are based on equity. However, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) highlight that both the poles, with optimal balance, are equally relevant for the success of an organization.

A workplace or an organization is a social system whereby the members think and behave in common ways, and it is highly likely that those behaviors and thoughts emanate or are influenced by the national culture. However, Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010) caution that organizational cultures may differ from the national culture in several aspects since they are a phenomenon by themselves. Overall, national cultures have contributed to an enhanced understanding of workplace cultures.

Educational Leadership Practices in Collectivist Societies

Collectivist societies are characterized by group cohesiveness, interdependence, respect, and harmony for others. It is important to note that cultural differences may exist within national and societal cultures, and all cultures in the East cannot be categorized under Confucian values. However, on the basis of a literature review and Hofstede's cultural dimensions, collectivist societies do share similar practices and influences. The following review of education leadership practices presents an overview of leadership practices in collectivist societies predominately in East Asia.

Eastern work settings are characterized by hierarchy based on age, seniority, or position, and these differences must be observed with sincerity in order to maintain cohesion and harmony in society. Therefore, authority, conformity, and compliance are some of the prevalent elements that influence Asian school leadership practices (Dimmock, 2000; Hallinger, 2004).

Given the presence of high power distance in the Eastern culture, the notion of democratic practices or teacher empowerment within a school system that calls for teachers to become autonomous in making decisions related to teaching and learning and express their views may appear ambiguous to educational leaders in the East (Walker, Hallinger, & Qian, 2007). It is highly unlikely for school leaders and followers to communicate and interact at the same level (Hallinger, Walker, & Bajunid, 2005). Furthermore, teachers or sometimes even principals suppress their opinions, personal needs, and ambitions for the benefit and welfare of the school (Walker, 2010).

Walker and Dimmok (2000) assert that Chinese teachers in the pursuit of harmony often comply with the superiors and would normally not voice their opinions even if they disagree for fear of damaging the relationship. This indicates the presence of the power distance between the leaders and the followers and shows that authority is centralized with the principal. For example, Qian and Walker (2013) through case studies in China on how school leaders promote and understand teacher development according to reforms high-

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lighted that the teacher development programs were designed in a top-down manner and lacked opportunities for teacher to voice their opinions on what and how they would like to learn. Hallinger and Kantamara (2000) articulated the similar fact in a Thai context as well.

The high power distance characterising Thai culture shapes the behaviour of administrators, teachers, student and parents to show unusually high deference (greng jai) towards those of senior status in all social relationships. This results in a pervasive, socially legitimated expectation that decisions should be made by those in positions of authority (i.e. Ministry administrators for principals, principals for teachers and parents, teachers for students. (p. 192)

Additionally, Hallinger (2010) stated that despite the reforms and initiatives, teachers' empowerment and their voice in decision-making remains a central issue in school development.

Given the variation in cultural values, Qian, Walker, and Li (2017) highlight the emerging tensions between traditional educational values (e.g., exam-based teaching) and new reforms initiatives that are predominantly Western in nature (e.g., inquiry-based teaching). This poses challenges for school leaders in prioritizing instructional strategies. The educational and curriculum reform policies in China seek to underline practices of neoliberal education such as inquiry-based and experiential teaching whereby students are at the center, actively involved in thinking critically and innovating (Tan & Chua, 2015). Therefore, to bring stipulated changes in teaching and learning through educational reforms, Chinese instructional leadership remains a challenge. Similarly, Hallinger & Walker (2017) in a comparative synthesis of school principals' instructional leadership in five East Asian societies, namely, China, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam, under common leadership challenges acknowledged the tension faced between traditional and new educational values in those school settings. According to them, the tension is caused as a consequence of prevailing hierarchical culture between the management and the teachers as well as the teachers and the students and a lack of flexibility in school working environments. Another significant challenge highlighted was the implementation of distributed leadership in some of these countries. The cultural factors (hierarchical educational systems) as well as national educational policies (centralize authority) do not allow enough flexibility for teachers and students to exercise autonomy. Teacher participation in distributed leadership remains very limited.

The tendency to avoid uncertainty in a collectivist society also contributes to structured work environments that lack flexibility. Teachers and staff often prefer structure and avoid novelty or conflict, which otherwise can lead to enhanced innovation and creativity in teaching and learning. Therefore, principals in these societies continue to face challenges in successful implementation of educational reforms that are contradictory to traditional values.

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These cultural elements also affect teacher development programs and teacher supervision practices, thus inhibiting development of a mindset for student-centered learning and innovative teaching methodologies among teachers. Qian and Walker (2013) stated that in Chinese culture, the principal has to be careful while providing feedback on teachers' performance since negative or direct feedback may disturb harmonious relationships. Furthermore, Walker and Dimmok (2000) on the influence of societal culture on teacher appraisal in Eastern settings highlight that generic principles of appraisal that concern purpose of appraisal is fairly universal in nature; however, the issue rises at the implementation level. For example, unlike their Western counterparts who believe that direct feedback from the supervisor would enhance performance, subordinates in the East believe that direct feedback may hurt the sentiments or disrupt harmony, thus leaving little or no room for teachers to receive any constructive feedback to improve their performance.

In the similar context, Walker and Dimmok (2000) underline that the way traditional appraisal works is a school principal singularly observes classes and makes a judgment. For example, Hallinger and Walker (2017) discussed the extreme practice of principal leadership which, in some countries, mandated principals to conduct tight supervision by walking around the school and the classrooms for a stipulated number of times. For example, a "daily walkaround check" is a mandatory practice to be undertaken by Malaysian principals. Similarly, Law, Walker, and Dimmok (2003) in their analysis of principals' values on their problem-solving abilities in Hong Kong revealed that along with the value of pacifism, which promotes tolerance and harmony, on the other extreme the value of cluster supervision was characterized by strict supervision and autocratic decision-making. These controlled forms of supervision not only contribute toward rigid work environments but also put pressure on teachers.

The literature also explains how teacher mentoring practices are influenced by cultural values. Since teachers in collectivist cultures perceive themselves as a part of a bigger group, principals in Hong Kong and Chinese prefer mentoring teachers in small groups. However, the groups are formed carefully on the basis of seniority and hierarchy to facilitate reciprocity among the members and increase effectiveness (Walker & Qian, 2006). Furthermore, in a culture where conflict and confrontation is avoided, one-on-one appraisals may sometimes remain at a surface level. Additionally, the hierarchy at work and the respect for seniority and position may inhibit teachers from interacting actively and openly with their supervisors. However, Walker and Dimmok (2000) also highlight that peer appraisals also do not yield effective results in collectivist societies due to the risk of disrupting personal relationships and group cohesiveness.

In conclusion, power distance is still evident in school leadership in collectivist societies. Respect for seniority and hierarchy greatly influence the work culture. Thus, teacher participation in important matters remains limited. Principals place heavy emphasis on maintaining and nurturing harmonious relationships yet function in a controlled and autocratic way, which poses challenges in teacher appraisal, mentoring, and supervision. These concerns are not new to the area of culturally compatible educational leadership practice.

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A number of scholars have consistently raised this issue and have recommended ways to develop leadership practices by merging Western principles with indigenous ways (Bajunid, 1996; Cheng, 1995; Dimmock & Walker, 1998; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). In a similar effort we propose that tenets of self-determination that are widely applied in organizational cultures with successful outcomes can be a potential way forward for educational leadership development in Asian settings.

What Educational Leader Can Do and Say to Support Needs in Collectivist Societies

McGregor in 1960 and Herzberg in 1968 were among some of the early management scientists who placed emphasis on the humanistic aspect for employees' motivation and engagement by providing environments that were consistent with facilitating intrinsic motivation. The applied nature of studies in SDT theory has produced numerous behavioral guidelines that individuals in authority such as parents, teachers, leaders, or supervisors can adopt to create social and contextual environments that support provision of basic needs and avoid conditions that would generate controlling environments and lead to need frustration. Deci and Ryan (2014) believe that managerial functions such as goal setting, decision-making, performance appraisal, and supervision can be enacted in a way that facilitates autonomous motivation and satisfaction of needs among employees. Furthermore, in the education domain, Reeve (2006) and Reeve and Jang (2006) have provided explicit guidelines on becoming autonomy supportive teachers. Following those and other inputs from the SDT literature on supporting autonomous motivation through need satisfaction, it is possible to conceive a set a behavioral guidelines for an educational leader to enact in the context of cultural dimensions.

The review of studies of education leadership practices in collectivist settings distinctly highlights the presence of hierarchy and power distances that limit the successful implementation of educational leadership models and restrain school leaders in introducing change. Evidence suggests that teacher empowerment, teacher voice, and participation in decisions are still lacking, and in SDT's context indicates that the need for autonomy may not be fulfilled. On the other hand, respect for hierarchy is a key cultural value of collectivist cultures that regulates the behavioral norms of society (Hofstede, 2011); therefore, it must be maintained and observed. However, this observance should not widen the power distance and leave teachers feeling controlled and nonautonomous. Empirical evidence within SDT has demonstrated that need for autonomy is universal for effective functioning across all cultures (Chirkov, 2009). SDT warns against the definitional confusion over the construct of autonomy as it does not suggest independence, detachment, or individualism (see Chirkov, Ryan, Kim, & Kaplan, 2003). Therefore, education leaders, while maintaining respect for hierarchy in collective cultures, can encourage self-initiation and ownership to minimize the distance between their position as a leader and teachers as followers. We propose that a leader, by creating a flexible work environment, offering choices to teachers to approach a task, inviting their opinion in important

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matters, and acknowledging their suggestion (Deci, Olafsen, & Ryan, 2017; Deci & Ryan, 2014) would in fact supplicate more respect and adoration in collectivist cultures since these cultures value sensitivity, warmth, and care and hence would not harm the traditional culture of respect for hierarchy.

A school leader wanting to instill autonomous motivation among teachers must be willing to negotiate his or her role in a power position and adopt practices that support autonomy. However, one may argue that such behaviors that require interactive and collaborative work relationships between the school leaders and teachers and promote teachers working at the same level may not be received well by the teachers who are accustomed to working in traditional environments. Nevertheless, given the culture of obedience to authority, teachers would eventually reciprocate to leaders' invitations to participate actively in autonomy supportive practices. Hence, if educational leaders in these cultures would develop an autonomy supportive orientation and intrinsic aspirations (Van den Broeck et al., 2016), their practices will lead to satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs.

Educational leaders committed to creating flexible work environments that are not so structured and controlled but allow freedom, choice, and innovation would see teachers experience ownership for their tasks, which will promote efficiency, dedication, and creativity in their teaching. For example, teaching- and learning-related tasks regarding what to teach (curriculum) and how to teach (delivery) are at the heart of educational leaders' job responsibilities (Dimmok & Walker, 2005). Need-supportive leaders would be inclined to bring empowerment among the staff by decentralizing the power structure in schools by inviting teacher participation in decision-making and allowing them to make choices regarding teaching and learning matters (Gagné & Vansteenkiste, 2013), which in turn would show the leaders trust their staff's capabilities to perform and feel competent.

Setting up school goals and a mission is one of the primary roles of school principals. However, Hallinger and Walker (2017) reported that in countries in Asia such as Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia, China (except Taiwan), the school mission is determined by the ministry or top management. A need-supportive leader would encourage participation from teachers so they would feel valued and would instill ownership toward the shared goal. In order for employees to develop intrinsic motivation or internalize work-related values, it is important they understand the aims and rationale behind work activities (Guntert, 2017). Therefore, when faced with an unpleasant situation while accomplishing those goals, need-supportive leaders would provide rationale and meaningful information to their staff so that they do not feel coerced into doing something they do not like (Deci et al., 2017).

Regular supervision and appraisal are an integral part of educational leaders' job profiles. Cultural dimensions suggest that individuals in collectivist cultures do not give straightforward feedback in order to avoid tensions and seek harmony. For example, Qian and Walker (2013) stated that school principals in the Chinese culture refrain from providing negative feedback on teachers' performance. However, in that practice there is

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rarely any critical or productive discussion for enhanced performance or creativity (Hallinger & Walker, 2017). We believe that SDT's recommendation to support the competency need is consistent with this cultural norm. The theory emphasizes the use of "non-controlling language" and "competence-affirming utterances" to inform an individual on his or her performance of progress (Reeve, 2006, p. 229). SDT also highlights the importance of meaningful feedback given in a positive and constructive way. Therefore, open feedback like that in a Western setting that is incongruent with Asian values (Dimmock & Walker, 2005) can be made culturally sensitive using the principles of SDT. The theory also advocates minimal use of environmental controls such as coercion or pressure to comply without any option or provision of autonomy in planning and doing a certain task which may hamper the experiences of autonomy and competence among the workers. However, in practicality, these behaviors may appear more appropriate for students' learning context since, in the work context, meeting deadlines and complying with work rules may be necessary. Nevertheless, principals can closely communicate with employees to align work demands with their inner motivation resources.

In SDT, supporting the need for competence concerns "feelings of mastery and effectiveness, which originate from opportunities to apply and expand one's capabilities" (Kovjanic, Schun, Jonas, Quaquebeke, & Dick, 2012, p. 1034). Therefore, Asian workplaces setting that are characterized by power distance and lack of empowerment among employees may hamper employees' satisfaction of the need for competence. Teaching evaluation is another significant task of a school leader. Hallinger and Walker (2017) while reviewing educational leadership practices in an Asian country expressed their concern over mandatory classroom observation practices for teaching evaluation purposes. From SDT's perspective, such practices of continuous evaluative surveillance can be perceived as controlling by the teachers. Since they put pressure on individuals to act and think in a certain way, they diminish their sense of autonomy and competence (feeling of mistrust) and result in decreased intrinsic instructional goals (Cheon, Reeve, Lee, & Lee, 2018). While evaluation of teaching practice is critical for school improvement, principals can adopt practices that are more informal, nonthreatening, and less controlling in nature. Leaders can make themselves visible to teachers in a variety of ways and give feedback is informational and makes teachers feel competent. SDT advocates that creating environments that are not rigid, that encourage two-way interaction and a free flow of ideas, that provide positive and meaningful feedback, and that offer optimal challenges to employees to perform will support employees' needs for competence (Ryan & Deci, 2008).

The dimension of individualism-collectivism (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) suggests that individuals in collectivist cultures reinforce belongingness by group cohesion whereby they prefer to work in groups, follow social norms, and remain loyal to each other. For example, Dimmock and Walker (2005) suggested that teachers like to work in groups and put group needs over individual needs. This pattern suggests that the need for relatedness and belongingness are relatively fulfilled in collectivist cultures. However, according to SDT, relatedness need fulfillment only from the coworkers may not be a sufficient condition to produce optimal results; the employees need to experience autonomy from the

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leader to feel autonomous and connected with the workplace (Hon, 2012). The element of care and support from leader is evident in collectivist settings, but work-related competency beliefs are hampered as a result of power distance when teachers' involvement is limited, feedback is ambiguous, and supervision practices are controlling. These practices may cause teachers to feel incompetent and frustrated. Therefore, a significant way for a school leader to promote relatedness in a collectivist culture would be listening to teachers' perspectives and acknowledging them by taking those into consideration. The educational leaders aiming to provide relatedness need satisfaction would also openly listen to teachers' emotional experiences about events or school-related tasks and acknowledge their weakness, challenges, and issues surrounding work. Such leaders in general would use positive emotions to influence employees' motivation. Furthermore, flexible work environments that allow teachers to be creative and innovative, make mistakes, and try new things would not only support their need for relatedness but make them feel competent and autonomous. Collectivist societies are group oriented and thrive on the principles of interpersonal harmonious relationships (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Such behaviors may prove detrimental when relationships are valued over tasks (Dimmock & Walker, 2005); however, SDT highlights a positive and strong correlation between quality of relationships with coworkers and work motivation (e.g., Fernet, Gagné, & Austin, 2010). Here educational leaders in collectivist societies can benefit from group-based professional development such as professional learning communities and a community of learners (Qian et al., 2017). The nature of these leadership practices is well aligned with the collectivist dimension of working with-in groups and fulfillment of the need for relatedness. They also promote collegiality and teamwork among staff by establishing connectivity and healthy competitions (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009).

Conclusion

The article builds on the premise that leadership practices of a school principal are central to teachers' work-related motivation, which in turn produces favorable outcomes for school success. SDT is a contemporary theory of human motivation that has documented successful outcomes for employees' motivation in organizational settings. The theory explicitly provides behavioral guidelines for individuals in power positions to act in certain ways that would lead to satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs for motivating followers. In this context, we discuss school leadership practices in an Eastern context to highlight the fact that leadership practices of school principals are significantly informed by their cultural norms and discuss how school principals in Asia can shape their leadership practices to support satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs to enhance teachers' motivation. These recommendations are practical and achievable as SDT suggests that managerial behaviors that lead to satisfaction of these needs are trainable (Gagné & Vansteenkiste, 2013). Furthermore, we believe that with the technological, economical, and political advancements, Eastern cultures are constantly changing and so will the leadership practices (Wang & Gagné, 2013). Therefore, cultural norms for leaders in Asia would no longer be a barrier to adopting managerial practices that encourage giving autonomy and flexibility in workplaces. However, as we mentioned earlier, the roles of

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school principals are very complex in nature and could be highly demanding in certain contexts; therefore, leadership practices aligned with SDT principles may not suffice for each task. Nevertheless, adopting those practices will certainly enhance teachers' motivation. School principal training programs may take these recommendations into consideration for developing suitable content and training programs so school principals learn need-supportive leadership practices.

Future Directions

Given the significance of the construct of autonomy in collectivist cultures (Markus & Kityama, 1991) and the evidence that hierarchy and power distance are deep-seated in Asian work cultures (Dimmock, 2000; Hallinger, 2004), a detailed inquiry in the nature of workplace tasks in Asian school settings and how the school principals can support autonomy in relation to those tasks is deemed important.

The SDT literature is full of information on how teachers can support autonomy for students, but less is known about clear behavioral guidelines for school principals, especially in Asian settings, and how to nurture autonomy among teachers. Furthermore, there are several other areas within SDT that deserve investigation in Asian cultural settings. For example, the cultural information that Asians value effort more than achievement (Dimmock & Walker, 2005) and SDT's preposition that extrinsic reward can hamper intrinsic motivation (Olafsen, 2017) opens up yet another area of inquiry to assess how reward or compensation operates in Asian work settings.

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