

A Study on the Evaluation Index System of Non-Authority Power of Kindergarten Directors

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Abstract: Economic development and social changes have been driving reforms in the field of preschool education, and people have realized that good leaders can enhance the quality of preschool education. The establishment of a non-authority power evaluation index system for kindergarten directors, as an aspect of the assessment of kindergarten directors, aims to provide a feasible practical basis for the improvement of kindergarten management. This study uses documentary study, interview method, open-ended questionnaire method, and expert evaluation methods to establish a non-authority power index system for kindergarten directors. The index system consists of four primary indicators including character, talent, knowledge and emotion, eight secondary indicators, and fourteen tertiary indicators of. Due to the diversified evaluation subjects and different evaluation standards, the evaluation behavior needs to remain dynamic and objective in order to maintain the continuous and stable development of preschool education quality.

1. Introduction

With the progress of society, the continuous development of technology and economy, the sense of democracy and independence of the managed is getting stronger and stronger, and people are no longer willing to passively obey and be managed. "People-oriented", "life education", "flexible leadership", etc. are widely recognized and have become research hotspots. For the managed, they need a manager who is ethical and competent and values and respect them; they want to have a say in the team and a common team spirit ^[1]. For the manager, relying only on power is no longer enough to guarantee the quality of management. This is why the effectiveness organized by managers in the same position and with the same administrative power is different. For the organization, managers need to influence the managed through their own charisma and get their trust to form a positive management climate.

Nowadays, scholars at home and abroad focus on the research of non-authority power in management and political science. However, there are not many studies on the non-authority power of kindergarten directors, and the level of research is still relatively superficial, mostly focusing on a brief introduction and summary of the work of the non-authority power of kindergarten directors. Though the importance of non-authority power for kindergarten management has been realized by people, no measurement tools have been seen on the non-authority power of kindergarten directors, which has not been scientifically validated and measured. This paper seeks to construct an evaluation system specifically for evaluating the non-authority power of kindergarten directors

according to the China's national condition, and to provide a scientific and objective practical basis for kindergartens to cultivate and enhance the non-power influence of kindergarten directors.

2. Interpretation of the Connotation of Non-Authority Power of Kindergarten Directors

2.1 The Meaning of Power

Power was first proposed by Robert B.Cialdini, it means the ability to change the thoughts and actions of others in a way that others are receptive to. ^[2] Wang Lei believes that power is the key for a leader to achieve effective leadership; otherwise, even if he or she relies on the authority imposed by the government and accomplishes the task, one's leadership cannot be considered as effective leadership. The key to the effectiveness of leadership lies in the power of the leader. ^[3]

According to the source of power, power is generally divided into coercive power (also called authority power) and natural power (also called non-authority power) ^[4]. In terms of the mechanism by which power occurs, one kind of power is exerted according to the leader's personal power and position characteristics; the other one kind of influence is exerted by using some behavioral strategies ^[5]. In terms of subjective and objective, leaders need to have the will to lead others subjectively; and objectively, leadership power is also constrained by factors such as industry background, communication skills, values, etc. ^[5]; from the perspective of social exchange, the motivation of social exchange is to get returns from others, including emotional exchange, benefit exchange, resource exchange and so on. The party who gives more in the exchange has more power and is the one who really evokes personal responsibility, trust and appreciation, etc. ^[5]

In general, the authority of leadership is more determined by the image formed in the minds of subordinates by the personal qualities of the leader. There are large and small powers of leadership. Positive power promotes subordinates to be positive while negative influence leads to resistance and negative psychology and behavior of subordinates. This paper discusses the issue from the perspective of the sources of power.

2.2 Interpretation of the Connotation of Non-Authority Power

Non-authority power, also called natural power, arises from the individual's own factors, not from outside ^[4]. Foreign research on "non-authority power" is different from that of Chinese scholars. Chinese scholars focus on the leader, while foreign scholars focus on the led. Chinese "non-authority power" is mainly developed based on charismatic and transformational leadership theories.

2.2.1 Charismatic Leadership Theory

The charismatic leadership theory originated at the beginning of the 20th century and was first proposed by the German sociologist Max Weber. Charismatic leadership is based on the love of a person's transcendent divine, heroic or exemplary qualities, and the normative form and the authority of the command promulgated and revealed by him ^[5]. To say it informally, charismatic leadership theory is the leadership process that achieves the satisfaction of the vision of the led through the leader's own charismatic and personalized leadership style.

2.2.2 Transformational Leadership Theory

The transformational leadership theory was developed by James Macgregor Burns, an American political sociologist. Leaders with transformational leadership promote the interaction of members in the organization through their own behavioral example and care for the needs of their

subordinates, and are the ones who develop and raise the consciousness of their subordinates by pursuing higher moral values and ideals (e.g., freedom, democracy, fairness, etc.)^[6]

2.3 The Relationship between Authority Power and Non-Authority Power

2.3.1 The Difference between Authority Power and Non-Authority Power

This paper summarizes the discussion of authority power and non-authority power about the difference between them according to Professor Li Qingjiang's "Power exploration of authority power and non-authority power " as follows^[7].

(1) Different Composition Elements

The main components of the authority power of kindergarten directors are traditional, positional, and qualification factors while the components of non-authority power of kindergarten directors is not unified. Most scholars believe that the components of non-authority power mainly include character, knowledge, competence and emotion. Character mainly includes morality, quality, and personality; knowledge mainly refers to the professional knowledge of the director and other knowledge reserves; competence mainly refers to the director's leadership, teaching, and management skills; and emotion mainly refers to the emotional relationship between the kindergarten director and his or her subordinates.

(2) Different Nature

Authority power is "legal" and mandatory, and the relationship between the kindergarten director and his or her subordinates is one of mandatory "management and obedience". Non-authority power is a natural influence, which is generated by the kindergarten director's own qualities and is not compulsory.

(3) Different Effects

The authority influence of the kindergarten director is a compulsory influence, and the effect is temporary, superficial and limited. In contrast, the non-authority power of the kindergarten director is an attractive, cohesive and appealing influence, which is far-reaching, lasting and heart-touched.^[7]

(4) Different Modes of Action

The authority power of the kindergarten director is expressed in the form of a formal request to the staff, either orally or in writing. The non-authority power of the kindergarten director is invisible and is expressed as an inspiration between the director and his or her subordinates, with the staff voluntarily following and accepting the director.

2.3.2. The Connection Between the Authority Power and Non-Authority Power of Kindergarten Directors

Although there are obvious differences between the authority power and non-authority power of kindergarten directors, there is also a very close connection. There are two main points: (1) the non-authority power of the kindergarten director exists objectively and is the basis and prerequisite for gaining power influence; (2) if the director does not have authority power, then the role of non-authority power will be limited and there is no platform or opportunity to display it.

All the two are also unified in that a certain amount of positional authority is required to extend one's non-authority power; in turn, non-authority power becomes an important condition for enhancing power-based influence.^[8]

3. The Construction Principles of Kindergarten Director Non-Authority Power Evaluation System

3.1 Professional

The index system of non-authority power is different from that of other fields and is specifically applicable to feature of kindergarten.

3.2 Scientific

The approach to research should be objective and scientific to ensure that the final developed scale for evaluating the non-authority power of kindergarten directors accurately reflects the level of non-authority power of kindergarten directors.

3.3 Representative

Representative evaluation indicators should be selected, concise and clear to improve evaluation efficiency and reduce the difficulty of data analysis and processing

3.4 Comprehensive

A comprehensive and systematic evaluation of the non-authority power of kindergarten directors should be constructed based on the characteristics of each aspect of the director.

4. The Construction of Non-Authority Power Evaluation Index System for Kindergarten Directors

4.1 The Method of Establishing the Index System

4.1.1. Establishment of Basic Framework

Based on the literature review method, open-ended questionnaire method, and in-depth interview method, the framework of non-authority power evaluation index system for kindergarten directors is initially formulated.

4.1.2. Expert Evaluation Method

Ten experts are invited to a small expert meeting. The selection criteria for the experts are to select knowledgeable and experienced experts from across the country. Among them, 4 teachers of preschool education in colleges and universities above associate senior level, 3 teachers of management above associate senior level, and 3 teachers of kindergarten above senior level.

The experts are first asked to discuss the weight set of the evaluation index system, and then asked to fill in the opinion form, and finally the statistics are conducted to calculate the arithmetic mean of the indicators given by the 15 experts, with the following equation:

$$\bar{w}_i = \frac{\sum_{t=1}^m w_{it}}{m} \quad (1)$$

Where \bar{w}_i denotes the arithmetic mean of the weight of the i^{th} indicator; w_{it} denotes the value of the weight of the t^{th} indicator given by the t^{th} expert. Next, normalization is performed on \bar{w}_i :

$$w_i = \frac{\bar{w}_i}{\sum_{i=1}^n \bar{w}_i} \quad (2)$$

Where n is the total number of indicators, and $\sum_{i=1}^n \bar{w}_i = 1$.

Based on the above-mentioned index system construction principle and method, the index system of non-authority power of kindergarten principals is established, which includes 4 first-level indicators, 8 second-level indicators and 14 third-level indicators, and the weight of all levels of indexes are determined. (See Table 1)

Table 1: Index Weight under Each Dimension.

Level I dimension	Weight	Secondary dimension	Weight	Total weight-Level II	Third-level dimension	Weight	Total weight-Level III
Character	0.417	Personal literacy	0.683	0.285	Justice	0.549	0.156
					Respect others	0.264	0.075
					Integrity	0.123	0.035
		Integrity	0.063	0.018			
		Professional literacy	0.317	0.132	Love and dedication	1.000	0.132
Talent	0.300	Interpersonal communication ability	0.677	0.203	Communication ability	0.711	0.144
					Cooperation and coordination capacity	0.289	0.059
		Management ability of kindergarten	0.323	0.097	Planning and coordinating capacity	0.769	0.074
					Decision-making and execution capability	0.231	0.022
Knowledge	0.180	Professional knowledge	0.665	0.120	Professional knowledge and skills of preschool education	1.000	0.120
		Other knowledge	0.335	0.060	Well-read	1.000	0.060
Emotion	0.102	People-oriented	0.722	0.074	Care for teaching staff	1.000	0.074
		Harmony and coordination	0.278	0.028	Empathy	0.791	0.022
					Cohesion power	0.209	0.006

4.1.3. Questionnaire Validation Survey

(1) Purpose of the Survey

The reliability of the questionnaire is tested to validate the evaluation index system of non-authority power of kindergarten directors.

(2) Survey Instrument Design

Based on the evaluation index system for the non-authority power of kindergarten directors, a set of questionnaires for measuring the non-authority power of kindergarten directors are developed. The body of the questionnaire is rated on a 5-point Likert scale: ①totally true; ②basically true; ③uncertain; ④basically true; ⑤completely true. Respondents are invited to “√” the serial numbers of the situations that they met according to their actual situation.

(3) Survey Respondents

A questionnaire survey is conducted with a combination of self-assessment and other-assessment methods, in which kindergarten directors are selected as respondents and invited to evaluate their non-authority power; and the people who keep close contacts with directors such as teachers, nursery governess, and support staff are selected as other-assessment participants around each

kindergarten director.

(4) Questionnaire Reliability Testing

A total of 110 questionnaires are distributed and all of them are validly returned, and the effective return rate is 100%. The reliability of the questionnaire is usually expressed by the Cronbach's coefficient α , which is generally considered to be between 0 and 1. The larger the value is, the better the reliability of the questionnaire is. When $\alpha > 0.7$, the reliability of the questionnaire is available. The total Cronbach's coefficient α of the non-authority power index of kindergarten directors is 0.96, and the half reliability is 0.98. This indicates that the reliability of the questionnaire is good and the results are stable and reliable.

The study invites 10 experts to assess the content validity of the designed non-authority power questionnaire for kindergarten directors, and obtains a content validity index of 0.6-1 based on the entry level and a content validity of 0.85 based on the scale level, which indicates that the content efficiency is good.

4.2 Basic Ideas for Data Processing Assessment

Due to the social nature, diversity and complexity of the non-authority power of kindergarten directors, the boundaries of their indicator classification are relatively ambiguous, it is impossible to find accurate answers from a definite mathematical model, and it is not scientific to express them with precise numerical information. Therefore, this study uses the direct evaluation method to describe the qualitative natural language quantitatively.

In this study, the "direct evaluation method" is used, in which a group of experts discuss the values of the evaluation levels.^[9] "Very good" is assigned a value of 95, "good" a value of 80, "fair" a value of 70, "worse 60 points and "poor" 40 points. At the same time, the experts discuss and stipulate that in the final total score, the self-assessment accounts for 30% and other assessment 70%. The final score is calculated according to the equation.

$$F = Z \times 0.3 + T \times 0.7 \quad (3)$$

Where F is the total score, Z is the self-assessment score, and T is the other- assessment score.

5. Interpretation of the Connotation of Non-Authority Power Indicators for Kindergarten Directors

5.1. Character

The character of the kindergarten director mainly includes personal and professional qualities, specifically justice, respect for others, integrity, honesty, love and dedication. But after all, kindergartens are different from other educational organizations. In addition to personal integrity, honesty, fairness, and respect for others, kindergarten directors, as leaders of preschool education, should fully understand the character they should adhere to in their work.

5.1.1 Take the Lead and Develop an Open and Generous Character

Good character is a necessary condition for the director to be able to lead all staff members to work together in unity. Open and generous character can be cultivated by adhering to the following aspects: learn to manage emotions, listen to different opinions and ideas, learn to appreciate and not discuss the shortcomings of others.

5.1.2 Protect Children's Rights, Be Patient to and Care for the Young Children

Children are a dependent, unprotected, and voiceless group in today's society, and it is adults' duty as to protect children's rights. The director, as the leader of preschool education, should be at the forefront of that duty. The responsibility of the director is to be the guardian and advocate for the welfare and rights of children and for the profession of early childhood education. Therefore, as a kindergarten leader, love and responsibility are the basic requirements, and it is only by pouring one's heart and soul into the work and the children that one can truly respect each child, parent and staff member and lead them to provide quality and affordable services to the community and families. At the same time, the patience and care of the director serves as an example for every kindergarten staff.

5.1.3 Improve Professional Quality and Enhance Self-Discipline

Good professionalism is the basic elements of the reasonable exercise of power of the director, one should not focus on personal performance, seek for achievements or profits during the management, be tempted to accept bribes, and ignore the good character. The above factors are of importance for one's power cultivation. Therefore, a good kindergarten director needs to improve the quality of the profession and enhance self-discipline.

5.2 Talent

The talents of a kindergarten director include interpersonal skills and kindergarten management skills, specifically communication skills, cooperation and coordination skills, planning and coordination skills, and decision-making and implementation skills. The director's talents reflect his or her competence as a leader and his or her ability to manage the kindergarten, enabling the director to achieve the behaviors and abilities necessary for excellent management effectiveness.

5.2.1 Take Effective Communication and Cultivate Good Interpersonal Skills

In the field of preschool education, a field of service nature, harmonious interpersonal relationships are the basis for ensuring the quality of services. Within the kindergarten community, the director shapes the overall atmosphere of the kindergarten and plays a decisive role in motivating the staff to be able to work together to achieve common goals. The most direct way to promote this overall positive climate is to establish good interpersonal relationships and effective communication among the staff, which requires the director to be highly sensitive to the understanding and needs of others.

5.2.2 Think Far Ahead and Develop Problem-Solving Skills

The reason why an organization needs a leader is to be able to identify problems and solve them quickly to keep the organization running properly. Without the ability to solve problems, a leader is no different from an average employee.

5.3. Knowledge

The knowledge structure of the director consists of the following main components:

- (1) Ontological knowledge: it mainly refers to the knowledge of educational management. It is the prerequisite and guarantee of whether the director, as the kindergarten manager, can effectively and scientifically manage the kindergarten in the management process;
- (2) Conditional knowledge: it mainly refers to the knowledge that can help the director solve

problems encountered in the work and ensure the quality of education. The conditional knowledge generally refers to educational expertise, such as preschool education theory, pedagogy, educational psychology and other knowledge;

(3) Practical knowledge: it mainly refers to the wisdom and knowledge of the director on the basis of theory, and combined with their own practical experience. This type of knowledge mainly comes from the director's personal practice work experience;

(4) Profound scientific and cultural knowledge: it mainly includes knowledge of humanities and social sciences, natural sciences, technical sciences, literature and arts, and instrumental knowledge.

5.4. Emotion

The emotional factor of the kindergarten director mainly refers to the kindergarten director's ability to maintain close relationships with subordinates on a regular basis. The two main aspects of the index system are people-oriented and harmonious coordination, which include the following aspects.

5.4.1 Establish a Common Vision and Foster Team Cohesion

In management activities, members need to be organized into planned and purposeful activities in order to achieve a common goal. But internalizing organizational goals into the daily work of members requires convincing all members to be able to accept the values and beliefs set by the organization. Therefore, the first task as a leader in a team is to create a common vision in the team that serves to unite and inspire morale.

5.4.2 Be Empathetic and Give Sincere Care to Faculty and Staff

Psychologists define empathy as a description of emotional intelligence, which refers to the ability to mentally be able to think differently and understand the emotions and perceptions of others. ^[10] In the process of management, empathy is conducive to foster effective communication between leaders and subordinates and bring leaders and employees closer together.

6. Conclusions

With reference to the theory of non-authority power proposed by related scholars, the non-authority power scale for kindergarten principals is constructed through the expert evaluation method, with character, talent, knowledge, and emotion as the evaluation indexes respectively. The evaluation of the non-authority power of kindergarten directors is characterized by differences in the evaluation subjects and evaluation criteria.

6.1 Diversification of Evaluation Subjects

In the evaluation of the director's influence, the director's influential behavior has an interactive relationship with the specific situation of the kindergarten and the members of the organization, as well as a direct or indirect influence relationship with people at all levels of society. Therefore, from this perspective, the subjects of the evaluation of the director's non-authority power should include the evaluation of supervisors, all staff, and parents, other members of society, the media, and relevant educational institutions. Therefore, the generation of non-authority power of the director is closely related to various factors around him/her, and has direct or indirect influence on people and things around him/her, leading to the generation of diversity of evaluation subjects. However, considering that in the actual measurement, the kindergarten staff is the group that interacts most

closely with the director and can get the most intuitive findings, the combination of the director's self-evaluation and the kindergarten staff's other evaluation is used.

6.2 Inconsistent Evaluation Criteria

Due to the diversity of evaluation subjects and the complexity of team composition, in the evaluation process, some focus on competence performance, some pay attention to professional formation, some pay attention to the degree of attention to themselves, some take self-interest in the evaluation process, and some others focus on the leadership ability of the director, etc. Due to the different evaluation subjects, the standards for the non-authority power of the garden director are inconsistent.

It is because of the above two characteristics of the evaluation of the director's non-authority, so the establishment of a practical evaluation system of the director's non-authority power has its necessity and effectiveness. However, it is not enough to build a quantitative evaluation system for objective and scientific evaluation of the director's non-authority power. The evaluation behavior needs to remain dynamic. As preschool education is in a constant state of change, the internal and external environment and team composition of the director are also in a constant process of change. In this process of constant change, not only the director's leadership behavior will change, the evaluation criteria of the evaluation body, the standard of expectations of the director, the standard of management effectiveness will also change. Therefore, new adjustments need to be taken according the new environment to ensure the objectivity of the non-authority power of the garden director, meet the needs of society and people in different periods, and maintain the continuous and stable development of the non-authority power of the kindergarten directors.

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