

Communications

Session 1 - Management and Marketing I

Chair: Ana Pinto Borges

The Relationship between Responsible Leadership and Individual Creativity: The Role of Affective Commitment

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Abstract

Purpose: Leadership is one of the main topics in organizational behavior. Over the years, many researchers have studied the impact of different leadership styles on the attitudes and behaviors of employees. However, perhaps because it is a relatively recent construct, little research has been devoted to analyzing the effect that responsible leadership has at the individual level of analysis (Haque et al., 2019, 2020; Miska & Mendenhall, 2018). Starting from the identification of this gap, the present research adopted an employee-centered approach to analyze how responsible leadership is related to individual creativity within the scope of a model that proposes affective commitment as a potential mediating mechanism. Recent research has found empirical support for the existence of a direct positive relationship between the variables (Castro-González et al., 2019). Research has also established a positive relationship between responsible leadership and affective commitment (Haque et al. 2019, 2020; Mousa, 2017; Simões & Duarte, 2021). Several studies on positive leadership styles have established affective commitment as a relevant mediating variable between leadership and employees' attitudinal, emotional, and behavioral responses (Asif et al., 2019; Duarte et al., 2021). It is possible to theorize that responsible leadership, being also a positive leadership style, will find similar results, contributing to a greater employee

emotional attachment to the organization, which will lead to more individual creativity behaviors at work.

Methodology: To test the proposed research model, a quantitative, correlational, cross-sectional methodological approach was adopted, based on the distribution of an electronic survey to workers from different organizations (n=284). The survey included measures selected from the literature and sociodemographic questions, being the participation voluntary, confidential, and anonymous. To control common method variance, both Harman's single factor test and marker variable technique were used (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Results: Data were analyzed with both IBM SPSS 27 and PROCESS macro software. The main variables of the model were all significantly intercorrelated. Additionally, some sociodemographic variables (i.e., gender, type of contract with the organization) were found to be significantly correlated with the criterion variables and, therefore, they were entered as covariates in subsequent analyses. The model analysis revealed a positive and significant direct relationship between workers' perceptions of responsible leadership and their individual behaviors. In addition, the data revealed that affective commitment significantly mediates the relationship between responsible leadership and individual creativity. The results obtained are in agreement with the results found by Castro-González et al. (2019), finding evidence of a positive relationship between responsible leadership and creativity. The results also support studies that addressed the relationship between creativity and other positive leadership styles (Cheung & Wong, 2011; Ribeiro et al., 2019).

Research limitations: As with all investigations, the present study has some limitations. One of the limitations concerns the impossibility of ensuring that the common variance error is not present in the results, due to its cross-sectional correlational design (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Several techniques were used to prevent and evaluate its occurrence, including the marker variable technique, but since it proved to be significantly correlated, albeit with low intensity, with the main variables of the model, it was not possible to exclude its occurrence. This analysis was complemented with the Harman's single factor test, whose results suggest that the single-source bias does not constitute a strong threat to the validity of the model (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The fact that the study is correlational also imposes limitations on the analysis of the causal relationship between variables. It is not possible to firmly state the direction of the relationship between them, that is, although the hypotheses of this study have been theoretically framed and empirically confirmed, the opposite may also occur, for

example, individual creativity can be an antecedent of the perception of responsible leadership, as the model is recursive.

Originality: The results contribute to the literature on responsible leadership and individual creativity in different ways. The findings point out responsible leadership's significant role in sharing and promoting individual creativity, making this leadership style a predictor of those behaviors in an organization. The results also highlight this leadership style as one of the antecedents of individual creativity and the mechanisms that strengthen these behaviors. The main contribution and originality of the present study rest on the identification of affective commitment as a psychosocial mechanism that helps to explain the relationship between responsible leadership and individual creativity. No previous studies addressing these three variables in the same model were identified, the current study provides added value in terms of existing knowledge and helps fill the gaps currently in the literature.

Keywords: Responsible Leadership; Individual Creativity; Affective Commitment.

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