Transformational Leadership, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Citizenship Behaviors; Does Communication Apprehension mediate these relationships?

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Abstract & Literature Highlights

Transformational leaders help transform followers into leaders by empowering followers according to their individual needs and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leaders, the group and the larger organization (Bass, 2005). Generally considered an effective way to lead, transformational leadership (TL) has been found to be associated with positive individual and organization outcomes (Nielsen, 2008), including job satisfaction (Madlock, 2008) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Rose Su-Jung Lin, Hung-Hui Li and Jui-Kuo Hsiao, 2012). However, less is known about potential factors that may mediate these relationships. Communication apprehension (CA) is defined as an individual’s level of fear or anxiety with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons (McCroskey, 1977). Because CA has been directly related to job satisfaction (Macksey and Lewis, 1982), it is possible that the previously documented direct relationship between TL and positive outcomes may be different for individuals with high CA, i.e., individuals with high levels of CA may be less satisfied with their jobs and less likely to display OCBs even when lead by a TL. Using a survey distributed to full-time professional employees in the Midwest region, this study examined CA as a mediating variable between TL, job satisfaction and OCB.

Methods

Participants

69 full-time employees surveyed using Qualtrics through e-mail distribution.

- 32% age 35 or younger
- 46% age 45 or older
- 32% at organization for 16 or more years
- 44% at organization for five years or less

Instruments

Job Satisfaction Scale (Smith, Kendall & Hulin, 1969)

Sample Question: “Think of your job in general. All in all, what is it like most of the time?: Good”

Yes, No, *

Personal Report of Communication Apprehension Scale (McCroskey, 1978)

Sample Question: “I dislike participating in group discussion.”

5 Point Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree

Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (Williams & Anderson, 1991)

Sample Question OCBI: “I help others who have who have been absent.”

Sample Question OCBO: “I give advance notice when unable to come to work.”

5 Point Likert Scale from Never True to Always True

RQ1: Is the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction mediated by communication apprehension?

RQ2: Is the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors mediated by communication apprehension?

Using a Sobel Test for indirect effects, CA mediated the relationship between TL and OCBO (bs dropped from 0.42 to 0.30; Sobel = 2.34, s.e. = 0.13, n = 67, p < .01).

The relationship between Transformational Leadership and OCB is not mediated by Communication Apprehension.

Linear regression analysis showed:

Transformational Leadership and Communication Apprehension account for 27% of the variance in OCBO F(2,65) = 11.91, p < .001.

Implications & Discussion

Contrary to previous research, CA was not related to Job Satisfaction in this sample; however, participants were generally long-term employees. This may mean that CA decreases as length of employment increases, suggesting that employers may need to address CA for new employees.

Additional research on the relationship between CA and Job Satisfaction that examines length of employment is needed.

Transformational Leaders can work to reduce CA as a way to improve OCB. Results suggest that it may be possible to recognize employees with high CA based on their simultaneous display of high OCBO and low OCB.

Research Questions & Results

Table 1 Pearson Correlations of the Constructs

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Constructs</th>
<th>TL</th>
<th>OCBI</th>
<th>OCBO</th>
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<td>TL Pearson Correlation</td>
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** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

References


