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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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How responsible leadership fosters individual performance: affective commitment and individual creativity's sequential mediation.

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science

Research goals and why the work was worth doing : This study sought to answer the question “How employees’ perception of responsible leadership fosters their individual performance?”. It contributes to the literature on responsible leadership (RL), by identifying two mechanisms through which leaders’ behavior fosters employees performance at work, namely affective commitment (AC) and individual creativity (IC).

Theoretical background : RL is described as a way of building and maintaining positive relationships with internal and external stakeholders, as well as coordinating actions responsibly to achieve a shared and meaningful business vision that contributes to sustainable value creation and positive change (Maak & Pless, 2006). Few studies explored RL consequences at the individual level of analysis (Haque et al., 2021). Based on this gap, this research adopted an employee-centered approach to analyze how RL is related to individual performance (IP) in the work context, within the scope of a model that proposes AC and IC as potential mediating mechanisms.

Regarding the relationship between RL and IP, Lin et al. (2020) found a positive relationship between the constructs and asked for more investment in the identification of mechanisms that help explain how leaders’ responsible behavior positively impacts followers’ IP.

The relationship between RL and AC has been established as positive and significant (Haque et al. 2018, 2021; Mousa, 2017), as well as the relationship between RL and individual creativity (Castro-González et al., 2019; Zulfiqar et al., 2022). Responsible leaders are open to dialogue and present themselves as role models regarding the behaviors and attitudes expected by organizations. This allows employees and leaders to create a psychological bond that is transferred to the organization in terms of AC. This subsequently would lead employees to feel comfortable and safe to share their thoughts, feelings, and opinions, which is important to stimulate employees’ creativity at work (Buil et al., 2019; Maak & Pless, 2011).

Design/Methodology/Approach/Intervention : A quantitative correlational, survey-based study was developed with 260 workers. The survey included instruments selected from the relevant literature to measure the variables of interest and socio-professional characteristics.

Results obtained or expected : The results indicated a significant relationship between RL and IP. Furthermore, the indirect effect of AC on the relationship between RL and IP is significant, indicating that RL indirectly influences IP through the promotion of AC. However, the indirect effect of IC on the relationship between RL and IP is not significant, indicating that in this sample RL does not indirectly influence IP by increasing IC at work. As for the third indirect effect, referring to the sequential effect of AC and IC in the relationship between RL and IP, it was significant. This indicates that RL contributes to strengthening the subordinates’ AC to the organization, which increases their IC at work, which, in turn, reinforces their IP. The direct effect of RL on IP is no longer significant when the mediators are present, so there is a full mediation effect.

Limitations : The main limitations are: the risk of single source bias; the non-probabilistic sample that limits the results' generalizability; and, the correlational design that assesses correlations rather than causal relationships.

Conclusions : Literature had previously confirmed the relationship between the different constructs under analysis, but by combining them into a single sequential mediation model the current study offered a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between them. It is important to note, that the sequential mediating effect emerges as the stronger indirect effect. This means AC and creativity combined are important variables that need to be considered by a responsible leader in order to influence positive outcomes on their employees such as IP.

Relevance to the Congress Theme : Corporate social responsibility has been gaining increasing prominence in the business world. Socially responsible organizations work towards their business goals in harmony with ethical values, respect for different stakeholders, protection of the environment, and the general well-being of society. This form of action is undoubtedly necessary to maximize the creation of value and achieve the SDGs. RL recognizes the importance of sustainability and CSR. This type of leadership calls attention to the need for leaders to be attentive to both organizations' inside and outside, and try to provide answers to the challenges that the world currently faces.

Keywords: Responsible leadership, Individual work behaviors, Individual work attitudes