

Contributions to Political Leadership in Organizations: Antecedents, Consequences, Mediators and Moderators Variables

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Abstract

Although leadership investigation has become for the last years an election topic with major relevance on organizational studies and accepting peacefully the general idea that organizations are freeland for politics and power maneuvers, knowing that decisions that came abroad from that “boiling can” are not always pursuing the common welfare, all these acceptances run against a kind of “fear” from the academy scholars on approaching the political leaderships singularities on organizations. Indeed, when we cross over both phenomena we verify that, surprisingly, a prior investigation century left a richfull heritage of outcomes and valid conclusions, fact that has turned bigger and bigger as we watch the multiplicity of studies based under rationality standards, consented silences, the absence and weaknesses towards the unique characteristics of politic leadership on work scenarios are becoming sharpened regarding to their predictors, their workers and their organizations, even if we left aside its moderator and mediator variables.

Having said this, and guided, mainly for these questions: What’s the profile and singularities of today’s political leaders on organizations? What’s the real impact of political leadership on workers organizational attitudes? Which organizational and individual variables could act as moderators’ agents between political behaviours from leaders and its effects on their workers? This present work of investigation tries to contribute and make an approach to the political leadership on organizations. For such, and listening the literature “callings” on this matter, has been established a theoretical integrated model which joins a number of variables neglected so far such as the backgrounds of the leader’s political behaviours (power motives and machiavelism) and leaders politic behaviours (soft and hard political behaviours and tactics) to the leaders’ political behaviour’s consequences towards the attitude of workers on organizations (organizational satisfaction, organizational commitment: affective, continuous and normative; organizational trust: affective and cognitive; organizational cynicism: pessimism, individual attribution and situational attributions) and verifying the intromissions of mediating variables (leaders political ability and variables moderator of the relationships drawned (leaders personal reputation and political clime/environment. To set forward the field work, we used a multi-method logical approach triangulated, having enquired 1992 subjects from, various organizational backgrounds (public and private organizations and non-profit organizations) interviewed eight direct supervisors and adding to these interviews eleven critical politic incidents reports.

Generally, the outcomes brought by the structural equations, showed that this model's adjustment is quite suitable to explain the variables relations and also said that power motives and machiavelism predict leader's politic behaviour (on soft and hard version) if its relation is subject of mediation on leader's politic ability – although this effect is stronger amongst power motives and politic behaviours (soft and hard). Towards the leader's politic activity consequences, data show us that, excepting organizational cynicism, all of tactics and politic behaviours of leaders associate positively and in a significance way with organizational satisfaction, organizational trust and organizational commitment, showing us that harder version of the politic behaviour is the one who contributes less to the called organizational attitudes, tendency that inverts when we analyse the organizational cynicism. We found, at the same time, that leader's personal reputation sets an important moderator effect in the relationships that leader's politic behaviours established within organizational cynicism (pessimism and individual attribution) in the same way that present political environment on organization moderates the relationship between tactics and soft politic behaviours of leadership and workers affective commitment.