Examining ethical leadership's effectiveness by a dual-path approach

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on value activation, we propose that experiencing ethical leadership will encourage an employee's altruistic motivation and inhibit their egoistic motivation for performing OCB. We further draw on the interactionist perspective to contend that psychological capital and dark triad personality will moderate the effects of experienced ethical leadership towards altruistic and egoistic motivation. A total of 339 participants took part in this study. The results confirm that ethical leadership affects altruistic and egoistic motivation in performing OCB and that psychological capital and dark triad personality were found to moderate the relationship between ethical leadership and motivations. Moreover, altruistic motivation was found to mediate the moderating effect of psychological capital on the relationship between experienced ethical leadership and employee OCB as well as egoistic motivation was also found to mediate the moderating effect of dark triad personality on the relationship between experienced ethical leadership and employee's OCB. This study complements the literature by showing how experienced EL work with psychological capital and dark triad personality to jointly influence altruistic and egoistic motivation that leads to employee OCB. This study explains the process of ethical leadership influencing subordinates' OCB through the perspective of value activation. It also points out the limitations of ethical leadership. If managers want to adopt ethical leadership, they must pay special attention to the working attitude of dark triad subordinates and appropriately remind them to improve their organizational citizenship behavior.

Keywords:

Ethical leadership, Motivation, Psychological capital, Dark triad, Organizational citizenship behavior.