

Impact of unethical leadership on follower outcomes – An empirical investigation

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Abstract

Exploring the perspectives of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Conservation of Resource Theory (COR), this study aims to empirically examine the indirect association of unethical leadership with negative follower outcomes, such as, employee silence, supervisor directed gossip and turnover intentions via moral disengagement as mediator. The study also explores the direct association of unethical leadership with negative follower outcomes. Further, the study investigates the moderating influence of subordinates' proactive personality and political skills. Study was carried out in two time frames in a large organization with 478 final respondents. Results reveal that both indirect and direct association of unethical leadership with silence, gossip and turnover intentions are significant. The results further revealed followers' proactive personality and political skill weakens the relationship such that followers with higher proactive personality and political skill displayed lower supervisor directed gossip, silence and turnover intentions. The study examines the practical consequences for managers and identifies areas for future research.

Key words: unethical leadership, moral disengagement, gossip, silence, turnover intention

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ABBREVIATIONS

M	Marker variable
UL	Unethical leadership
MD	Moral disengagement
PP	Proactive personality
PS	Political skill
S	Silence
G	Gossip
TOI	Turnover intention
CMIN	'Chi-Square value'
GFI	'Goodness of fit index'
CFI	'Comparative fit Index'
TLI	'Tucker Lewis Index'
RMSEA	'Root mean square error of approximation'
SRMR	'Standardized Root Mean Square Residual'
SET	Social exchange theory
COR	Conservation of resource theory

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