Abstract

An in depth review of literature shows there exists a pressing need to understand how and why the organizational leadership process affects differently organizational behavior in outcomes (e.g. job performance) various national culture settings. One approach may seek to unveil the mediation of cultural values on the relationship between preferred as well as exhibited styles of leadership and behavioral organizational outcomes. An alternative approach may explore how and why cultural values affect differently the relationship of the quality of leader – subordinate relationships (LMX) to behavioral organizational outcomes. Moreover, as we notice a constant growth of aged workers in the composition of work force in the Western World, these approaches should be addressed in relation to older managers and workers.

Our present paper attempts to reconcile these two diametrically opposed approaches by conceiving a theoretical model linking between organizational justice, organizational leadership styles, LMX and behavioral organizational outcomes (i.e., job performance, organizational citizenship) as mediated by organizational culture different national values settings and in relation to older employees.
Organizational perceptions, leadership, performance and organizational citizenship among older employees in work settings: Can they interrelate?

Values-based constructs such as work values and professional ethics, along with associated behaviors, have been ubiquitous engines of social change on a variety of levels. The effects of these constructs have been revealed in wide range of studies, which range from history to moral philosophy and across the social sciences (Bennett, 1996; Loftquist & Dawis, 1978; Nietzsche, 1887; Wood, 2007). The study of values is important to organizations because knowing about individual and group-level value structures can help managers understand and predict attitudes motivational processes, and other important organizational outcomes (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). Many types of connections between values and work-related behaviors have been documented (Dawis, 1990; Rokeach, 1973) and individual-level value constructs have played important roles in need-based theories of motivation such as Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2001). Also, values-based constructs are critical to theories of person-organization fit (Edwards, 2004; Kristof, 1996) and in explaining general congruence patterns between employee values and attitudes (Ostroff, Shin, & Kinicki, 2008; Tziner, 2006). In addition, there are numerous studies that examine values from a cross-cultural perspective, both from the level of individual value structures (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990) and in the collective sense of shared values, such as in Hofstede's studies of values-based elements of national culture (Farn, Hackett & Liang, 2007; Hofstede & Peterson, 200; Hofstede, 2001). Another example is the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) research program, which has identified different patterns of connections between shared value structures as revealed in national cultures and various leadership behaviors (House, Hanges, Javidan, & Dorfman, 2004; Javidan, & House, 2001). In a world that is increasingly interconnected across national, regional, and cultural boundaries, the understanding of values structures and how variability in value structures may affect organizational processes is gaining in importance.

Values may be defined as personal beliefs in the relative desirability of different modes of conduct and end states of existence (Rokeach, 1973). In addition to understanding values as beliefs, values can be considered as transformations of psychological need (Super, 1995). Thus, values may be defined in reference to
categories of needs, and as such may be considered "second-order needs" (Loftquist & Dawis, 1978). We feel that values are as best defined as belief structures that are also connected to particular categories of needs. (Elizur, 1984; Tziner; Tziner & Elizur, 1987). As such, values represent common elements in need dimensions and they serve as reference dimensions for the description of needs. Through their connection to needs, values can produce states of psychological tension, which lead to cognition, affect, and behavior. Also, particular values operate together as elements of individuals' value systems, which are collections of beliefs that together address the desirability of multiple modes of conduct and end states (Rokeach, 1973). Such value systems can be particularly effective at predicting important work-related behaviors (Maio & Olson, 1998; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990).

Values are related to traits and interest because each of these constructs are derived from needs (Super, 1995). Therefore, psychological needs serve as antecedents for traits (general patterns of behavior, affect, and cognition), interests (specific objects and associated behaviors), and values. Because values serve as a representations and transformation of needs, they are enduring, but because they address multiple modes of conduct or end states of existence, they are broader and more basic than interests.

Finally, based on this network of relationships – namely, connections between psychological needs, and antecedents traits, values, and interests – values are can be thought as of as standards that determine behavior across a wide range of situations.

Leader-follower outcomes are a specific type of performance that has received extensive attention (Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2007; Schyns, Felfe, & Blank, 2007). Furthermore, within the leadership literature there are many studies that examine connections between traits and leader behaviors (De Hoogh, Den Hartog, & Koopman, 2005; Judge & Bono, 2000; Rubin, Munz, & Bommer, 2005; Zacarro, 1997). While there is no shortage of work that examines connections between leadership and traits, there is less work that considers the relationships between individual-level values and leadership behaviors (Szabo, Reber, Weibler, Brodbeck, & Wunderer, 2001). Also, when existing studies have examined connections between leadership behavior and value structures, these connections have frequently been examined from the perspective of shared values (Offermann, 1997; Schaubroeck, Lam, & Cha, 2007). An even smaller number of studies have
addressed connections between personal-level values and leadership from a cross cultural perspective. With exception of several recent studies (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007) there seems to be a need in the leadership literature to address the influence of personal values on leadership styles of managers.

Theories of leadership inhabit a large conceptual range and include theories focused on individual differences, situational characteristics, and combinations of both individual differences and situational elements. In recent years, the balance of development in leadership theory has focused on a broad range of behaviors, to include both transactional and transformational leadership behaviors, as well as the cross-cultural applicability of leadership behaviors (De Hoogh, Den Hartog, & Koopman, 2005; Judge & Bono, 2000; Offermann, & Hellmann, 1977; Tsui, Zhang, Wang, Xin, & Wu, 2006).

Also, there is an increasing amount of research that suggest that both transactional and transformational leadership behaviors are related to effective leadership (Antonakis & House, 2002; Dumdum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2002; Judge, Ilies, & Piccolo, 2004). Transactional leadership behaviors, which focus on clarifying employee role and task requirements, providing performance-based reinforcement, and assisting employee self-regulation though goal setting and feedback seeking behaviors, often result in successful leadership (Avolio & Bass, 1991). However, transformational leadership behaviors, which are primarily focused on creating developmental changes in followers' values, personal identity, and psychological needs, can offer a contribution above and beyond transactional leadership behavior (Antonakis & House, 2002). It is likely that this effect occurs through an emphasis on intrinsic motivation, which serves to augment the extrinsic elements within transactional leadership approaches.

Although the relationships of these two leadership styles and leadership effectiveness has attracted a substantial research interest much efforts have to be invested into the investigation of cultural values and exhibited leadership style.
This is, however, an alternative theoretical approach to understanding the leadership process. One of the theories seeking to explain the dynamics of this process is leader-member exchange (LMX), which holds that managers do not exhibit the same leadership styles (e.g., transactional, transformational) to all subordinates, but rather develop different types of exchange relationships with different employees. These may range from high-quality exchanges based on trust and liking, to low quality relations based on the formal job requirements and the employment contract (Sparrowe & Liden, 1997). Employees who enjoy high-quality LMX with their superiors typically receive more opportunities, emotional support, and cooperative interactions than those in low quality LMX relationships (Liden & Graen, 1980) and thus it has been shown to be related to several correlates at the individual and group level (Liden et al.; Tordera, González-Romá & Peiró & Rodríguez, 2008).

As LMX is premised on the notions of social exchange (Blau, 1964) and reciprocity (Adams, 1965), subordinates offered high quality LMX are expected to feel compelled to reciprocate for the preferential treatment they receive from their manager or supervisor. The positive affect, respect, loyalty, and perceived obligation characteristic of high-quality LMX should motivate better job performance and organizational citizenship behavior such as working overtime and offering extra help to coworkers and supervisors (Kamder & VanDyne, 2007). Empirical support for this prediction was provided by the meta-analysis of Gerstner and Day (1997), who reported a correlation of .31 between LMX and supervisory performance ratings. More recent studies have found further evidence of this link (Kacmar, Witt, Zivuska, & Gully, 2003; Wang, Law, Hacket, Wang & Chen, 2005). High-quality LMX have also been expected to be an important source to retain workers in their organization and, thus, to be negatively related to withdrawal behaviors. Empirical support has also been found for this relationship, indicating LMX to be negatively related to turnover intentions and behaviors (e.g. Gerstner & Day, 1997; Bauer, Erdogan, Liden & Wayne, 2006; Potocnik, Tordera, Peiro, & Gonzalez-Roma, 2007; Sparr & Sonnentag, 2008).

The dyadic perspective in the study of leadership is a specially adequate framework to investigate how the process of leadership affects the performance of workers with differentiated characteristics such as age. With regard to older workers it has been pointed out that the supervisor’s stereotypes and norms about aging might affect their relationship with subordinates and subsequently their engagement in their work role and their
level of productivity (Rosen and Jerdee, 1977; Henkens, 1999b; Beehr et al. 2006). However, research has not directly addressed how the quality of the relationship between leaders and older workers might influence their intentions to remain in the workforce or their working activities. Since LMX considers that leaders develop differentiated relationships with each subordinate, it is to be expected that high-quality relationships will evolve when leaders adapt their behaviors to the specific characteristics of workers, such as age.

Nowadays there is a special concern in western societies for the performance and retention of older workers in their work role. Older workers are in the spot for two combined reasons.

First, the process of ageing in OECD countries is creating a new composition of the population and the workforce and putting forward new questions and challenges. On one side, there is a growing importance of older people in the composition of OECD countries' population. For instance, in Europe the proportion of people older than 65 is nowadays the 17% to the total population (Eurostat, 2008). Future prospections point out that in the next years the growth of this segment of the population will increase and will reach the 30% of the population by the year 2050. On the other side, the average exit age in European Union has decreased from above 65 years of age half a century ago to be around 60.9 according to the Eurostat survey (Eurostat, 2008).

Second, there is a social concern about aged workers being able to maintain high levels of performance in work contexts characterized by constant change (Schalk et al., in press). Studies on performance and age have pointed out that the loss of some faculties could produce a worse performance in older workers. At the same time it is also suggested that other factors such as their work experience could contribute to a better performance of aged workers (Ilmarinen, 2006). Some researchers also suggest that the evaluation of poorer performance in older workers is more due to stereotypes and prejudices than to real (Forteza & Prieto 1994; Hedge, Borman, & Lammlein, 2006). A recent metanalysis about the relationship between age and performance (Nq & Feldman, 2008) found that although age was unrelated to core task performance other aspects of performance showed to have a curvilinear relationship with each. However, the authors also found that several sample characteristics and data collection characteristics moderate age-performance relationships. Thus, there is a field of research for potential factors that could be moderating that process.
In response to this situation, the European Union has adopted different strategies directed at achieving full employment in Europe by 2010, and fighting all types of discrimination such as the ones by age. These strategies are specified in the objectives marked by the Stockholm (2001) and Barcelona (2002) Summits: the achievement of an employment rate of 50% for older workers and to increase by 5 years the average retirement age in the European Union, by the year 2010.

In this sense, the greying of the workforce outlines the need to discover what aspects of organizational life tap better the potential specific needs of this segment of the population and which factors affect specially their engagement in the labour market and their performance. Research focusing on understanding early retirement has approached it from two main perspectives (Potonik, Tordera & Peiró, in press). One perspective considers early retirement as a process that mainly occurs as a result of the social policies and the agreements between organizations, administration and trade unions (e.g. pension schemes, laws and regulations, etc.). The other perspective considers early retirement as an individual decision process influenced by push and pull factors, such as economic incentives, health status or work conditions. However, research has mainly neglected the social and organizational context in which those decisions are being made. Less interest is being put in what makes aged people to be engaged with their role as workers or what factors specifically influence their productivity. Some studies have considered the role of flexible work arrangements and human resource practices (Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008; Claes & Heynes, 2008). However, other factors such related to the organizational culture, or leadership processes have been neglected.

In as much as high-quality LMX is likely to affect employees' and organizational citizenship, performance, fundamental elements in maintaining an organization's viability and competitive advantage, it is important to identify factors that are conducive to such interpersonal relations in the workplace. Recent research suggests that perceived fairness of leaders may be one such factor (Wayne, shore, Bommer & Tetrick, 2002). Use of the term "fairness" in this context appears in the literature of organizational justice (Bell, Wiechmann, & Ryan, 2006) and originated in the field of social interactions (Greenberg, 1990). Fairness might be especially important in a population prone to be discriminated by reasons of age.
As research has shown that justice perceptions influence a variety of outcomes (Cohen-Charash & Spector 2001), it seems reasonable to assume that when employees perceive their supervisors to be treating them fairly, they are likely to develop high-quality exchange relationships. Yet, this dynamic may not be as straightforward as it might appear. It has been suggested that the relationship between perceived organizational justice and LMX may be moderated by organizational culture (Erdogan, Liden, & Kraimer, 2006). For example, low perceived organizational justice might not lead to low-quality LMX if employees believe the inequity to be attributable to an organizational culture that doe not reward workers or praise them for good performance, rather than to deliberate unfair behavior of their managers. If the dominant organizational culture is perceived to perpetuate a reality of injustice, the employees may be more prone to excuse and be tolerant of inequity on the part of their superiors.

LMX theory has also been criticized for paying little attention to possible moderators of the relationship between LMX, job performance and organizational citizenship (Schriesheim, Castro, & Yammarino, 2000; Erdogan & Liden, 2002). Several moderators have been proposed, including perceived organizational support (Erdogan & Enders, 2007) and the employees' personality, i.e. extraversion (Bauer, Erdogan, Liden, & Wayne, 2006).

Organizational culture influences behavior in organizations and may be suggested as a potential moderator. Indeed a proximal concept to culture, organizational climate, has been found to moderate the relationship between LMX and individual level results such as perceptions of role overload and well-being (Tordera, Peiró, González-Romá, Fortes-Ferreira y Mañas, 2006; Tordera, González-Romá, & Peiró, 2008). However, the relationship between organizational culture and leadership has received little attention in the literature (Bloc, 2003; Xenikou & Simosi, 2006). Some studies have shown that specific leadership behaviors are associated with distinct organizational cultural characteristics (Lok & Crawford, 1999). Moreover, organizational culture might be a contextual factor leading to the emergence of a specific leadership style (Pillai, 1995 & Meindl, 1998). Schein (1992) claims that organizational culture controls the manager more than the manager controls the culture through the automatic filters that bias the manager's perceptions, thoughts and feelings. Therefore, although LMX is based on the dyadic employee-manager interaction, it also is likely to be affected by cultural dimensions. Literature has suggested organizational culture to play an
important role in the maintenance or early exit of older workers. More concretely, it has been suggested that early retirement practices evolve in the context of discriminatory ‘ageism’ in labour markets and the development of so called ‘early exit-cultures’ (Esser, 2005). In a similar way Hedge, et al. (2006) differentiate between two different ways for organizations to consider their older workforce, the maintenance model and the depreciation model. While the first, maintenance model is related to a culture that sees older workers as important assets, the later, depreciation models, reflects a culture that considers older workers as costs. In this sense, organizational culture and the perception of fairness related to different organizational practices might be related to the involvement of older managers in work and organizational life.

Culture is viewed in the literature as a multifaceted abstraction with several dimensions of organizational culture which have varying degrees and direction of effect on both employees' behavior (e.g., Sheridan, 1992) and organizational performance (e.g., Denison, 1984, 19909). In this study we used O'Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell's (1991) classification of organization culture was used.

In view of these suggestions in the literature, a research program should be conducted to examine the mediating role of organizational culture on the links between organizational justice, leadership style, (e.g., transformational vs. transactional) LMX, job performance and organizational citizenship in various national cultural contexts. The countries to be chosen should provide for a consolidated view on Mediterranean countries and to possibly differentiate as to European transition countries. Moreover, a future research project should target understanding how perceptions of organizational justice, leadership and organizational culture contribute to the performance and organizational citizenship of older managers in organizational and work settings. These issues are specially important with regard to management positions in organizations. Management positions compared to other positions have shown to be frequently affected by early retirement practices (Dorn & Sousa-Poza, 2005). Moreover, the age at which workers enter management positions has decreased in the last decades. However, recent research shows that within ten years one third of applicants for executive and senior manager roles will be over 50 (Schneider & Stein, 2006).
The cumulated body of knowledge shows that cultural values differences preclude automatic transfer of findings from one culture to another. Therefore, it is essential to explore how organizational fairness, justice, leadership behaviors and organizational culture link to job performance and organizational citizenship in different national cultural contexts while using both quantitative and qualitative methods. On the practical ground, such knowledge will enhance functioning of international companies establishing in culturally different economic spaces.

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