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LEADERSHIP AS A PROCESS: THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN LEADERS, FOLLOWERS AND CONTEXT

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Leadership as a process: the interplay between leaders, followers and context[1]

Abstract

Leadership is a process occurring within a broad social system with followers in an organizational setting. However, leadership research has failed to deeply explore how leaders, followers and contexts combine to produce organizational outcomes. Aiming to contribute to the study of these overlooked questions, we developed four studies. The first study predicted that job autonomy buffers the relationship between abusive supervision, psychosomatic symptoms and deviance. The second study suggests that task characteristics moderate the association between abusive supervision, distributive justice and job satisfaction. The third study proposes that proactive personality acts as a leadership substitute in the relationship between ethical leadership, emotions and OCBs. Our fourth study showed that followership schema and top management openness determine the LMX quality, with consequences for employee behaviors. Our findings suggest that follower characteristics, organizational practices and contextual variables constitute important boundary conditions for the impact of leader behaviors on employee outcomes.

Keywords: abusive supervision, ethical leadership, followership.

PART I: INTRODUCTION

What is Leadership?

Leadership is a subject that has been investigated and debated for over hundred years among organizational researchers (Yukl, 2013). Consensus is easily reached if we argue that leadership is a complex and diverse topic and one of the social science's most examined phenomena, mainly because it is a universal activity in humankind and also because it is an evolving construct that reflects ongoing changes (Day & Antonakis, 2012). In fact, a wide range of leadership theories has been proposed, most of them emphasizing the successful leaders' traits of personality and leaders' behaviors, as indicators of leader influence and effectiveness.

A comprehensive review of the leadership literature reveals that "there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (Stogdill, 1974, p. 259). Given its complex nature, there is no universal agreement regarding its definition, in fact, "researchers define leadership according to their individual perspectives and the aspects of the phenomenon of most interest to them" (Yukl, 2013, p. 18). Hence, leadership has been defined in terms of personality attributes (Bernard, 1926), leader behaviors (Shartle, 1956), an instrument of goal achievement (Davis, 1942), a sociological phenomenon (Hollander, 1964), interaction patterns (Bass, 1990), a social influence process (Chemers, 2000; Day & Antonakis, 2012; Yukl, 2013), or a social dynamic for the achievement of common goals (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009; Pierce & Newstorm, 2011). Table 1 shows some representative definitions presented over the past 90 years.

Table 1

Definitions of Leadership

- "Any person who is more than ordinarily efficient in carrying psychosocial stimuli to others and is thus effective in conditioning collective responses may be called a leader" (Bernard, 1926).
- "The principal dynamic force that motivates and coordinates the organization in the accomplishment of its objectives" (Davis, 1942).
- "The act of leadership is one which results in others acting or responding in a shared direction" (Shartle, 1956).
- "A sociological phenomenon (a process) involving the intentional exercise of influence exercised by one person over one or more other individuals, in an effort to guide activities toward the attainment of some mutual goal, a goal that requires interdependent action among members of the group" (Hollander, 1964).
- "Leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions and expectations of the members" (Bass, 1990, p. 19).
- "Dyadic, shared, relational, strategic, global, and a complex social dynamic" (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009, p. 423).
- "A dynamic (fluid), interactive, working relationship between a leader and one or more followers, operating within the framework of a group context for the accomplishment of some collective goals" (Pierce & Newstorm, 2011, p 10).
- "An influencing process – and its resultants outcomes – that occurs between a leader and followers and how this influencing process is explained by the leader's dispositional characteristics and behaviors, follower perceptions and attributions of the leader, and the context in which the influencing process occurs" (Day and Antonakis, 2012, p. 5).
- "The process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared goals" (Yukl, 2013, p. 23).

As we can see, most definitions of leadership are heavily "leader centric", since they describe mainly one-way effects associated with the personal characteristics of a leader (Day and Antonakis, 2012). In fact, while we have learned much about leadership, the main part of the diverse approaches still remains largely leader centered (Pierce & Newstrom, 2011). Most leadership theories take for granted that leadership is an influence process: the leader is the person who takes charge and guides the

performance or activity and the follower(s) is the individual or group of people who perform under the guidance and instructions of a leader (Hunter, Bedell-Avers & Mumford, 2007).

However, these definitions also reveal the extent to which the leadership research has been closely influenced by different theoretical perspectives over the past 100 years. In order to better understand the evolution of the concept of leadership, we now offer a brief historical overview of leadership research.

A Brief Historical Overview

1. Trait approach

From the beginning of the 20th century to the late 1940s, the *great man theory of leadership* reflected the assumption that the successful leaders' traits of personality and character set them apart from ordinary followers (Carlyle, 1841-1907). The trait approach to leadership attempted to identify traits and skills that predict who will emerge as a leader (e.g. Judge, Piccolo & Kosalka, 2009, for a review on the leader trait paradigm). The assumption that *leaders are born not made* was widely accepted by scholars and practitioners and a set of traits, such as dominance, assertiveness, intelligence, self-confidence, power motivation or social sensitivity, was stereotypically associated with leadership (Chemers, 2000).

Stogdill (1948) reviewed 124 traits studies examining several characteristics that might distinguish leaders from followers and this author found that few traits (the most consistent trait was intelligence) were related to reliable differences between leaders and non-leaders. Therefore, Stogdill (1948) was not able to identify no single variable or even cluster of variables systematically associated with leadership across different situations. These findings led him to conclude that although some individual differences are important for effective leadership, it is unlikely that traits constitute universal

predictors, taking into account the great variability of situations that leaders have to face and deal with.

These disappointing results paved the way for a diametrically opposite avenue, i.e., the study of leaders' behaviors.

2. Behavioral approach

Given the impossibility of confirming the primacy of traits as predictors of leadership effectiveness, but unwilling to abandon individualistic explanations, researchers sought to identify universal leaders' behaviors (Chemers, 2000). Most theories and research on effective leadership behavior were strongly influenced by work at Ohio State University during the 1950s. Researchers developed a 150-item behavioral inventory, the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) (Hemphill, 1950), that revealed two major factors. The most prominent cluster was labeled *Consideration* and included behaviors such as showing concern for subordinates or being open to accept suggestions from subordinates (Yukl, 2013), what seemed to reflect leader's willingness to foster positive group morale and follower satisfaction (Chemers, 2000). The second set of behaviors was labeled *Initiation of Structure* and included behaviors such as assigning tasks to subordinates or criticizing poor performance, which focus on leader's desire to guarantee a solid structure for task accomplishment (Yukl, 2013).

Further studies showed that the LBDQ factors failed to predict follower satisfaction and leadership effectiveness across a wide range of settings (Fleishmann & Harris, 1962; Korman, 1966). Thus, the lack of consistent results supporting universal conceptions of effective leadership stimulated the researchers' interest in *contingency theories*, which aim to describe how situational factors can influence leader's effectiveness (Yukl, 2013).

3. Contingency theories

The traditional view of leadership, where followers were considered passive recipients of leaders' traits, skills and behaviors, began to change with contingency frameworks, which assume that there are no leaders' traits or behaviors that automatically guarantee effective leadership and describe how aspects of the situation can modify a leader's influence and effectiveness (Yukl, 2013). As such, effective leaders should analyze the different situations that they face and identify the behaviors that each situation requires (Howell et al., 1990). Examples of contingency theories include Fiedler's LPC Contingency Model, Hersey and Blanchard's model, Path-Goal Theory and Leadership Substitutes Theory, which are briefly described in the next sections:

a) *Fiedler's LPC contingency model*

Fiedler's LPC Contingency Model (1967; 1978) describes how situational favorability, which is jointly determined by task structure, position power, and the quality of leader-member relations, moderates the relationship between the leadership style or orientation, as measured by the Least Preferred Co-Worker Scale (LPC), and group performance (Yukl, 2013). High LPC leaders are viewed as being relationship oriented, whereas low LPC leaders are viewed as task oriented. According to this model, the situation is most favorable when the task is highly structured, the leader possesses significant position power and the quality of leader-member relations is good. Thus, leaders who score low on the LPC are more effective when the situation is either very favorable or very unfavorable, whereas leaders who score high on the LPC are more effective under moderate levels of situational favorability (Strube & Garcia, 1981).

b) **Situational leadership theory**

Hersey and Blanchard (1977) proposed the situational leadership theory that specifies the appropriate leadership style (ranging from task to people-oriented behaviors) according to the subordinate maturity, i.e. the person's ability and confidence to perform a particular task (Brown, 2012). Thus, the authors propose different types of appropriate leader styles according to the level of subordinate maturity: for example, very low subordinate maturity should correspond to leader´s low people-oriented behaviors and high task-oriented behaviors, moderate subordinate maturity should match leader's high people-oriented behaviors and moderate task-oriented behaviors, whereas high subordinate maturity should correspond to leader´s low people-oriented behaviors and low task-oriented behaviors. In cases where the leadership style matches the level of subordinate maturity (from very low to very high), leadership effectiveness is most likely to occur (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997).

c) **Path-Goal theory**

The path-goal theory (Evans, 1970; House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974) argues that the effect of leadership type (instrumental leadership, supportive leadership, participative leadership and achievement-oriented leadership) on subordinate satisfaction and effort depends on task and subordinate characteristics (e.g. skills and motivation). Consistent with the expectancy theory of motivation, the path-goal theory posits that leaders can motivate subordinates by enhancing subordinate expectancies, instrumentalities and valences (Wofford & Liska, 1993), with consequences for subordinate outcomes. So, the leader should provide the "coaching, guidance, support and rewards necessary for effective and satisfying performance that would otherwise be lacking in the environment" (House & Dessler, 1974, p. 4). Specifically, the

motivational functions of the leader "consist of increasing personal payoffs to subordinates for work-goal attainment and making the path to these payoffs easier to travel by clarifying it, reducing roadblocks and pitfalls that increasing the opportunities for personal satisfaction en route" (p. House, 1971, p. 324).

According to this theory, the impact of leader behavior on subordinate satisfaction and motivation is moderated by situational variables, including task and subordinate characteristics, which determine the behaviors that the leader must display to foster motivation or subordinate preferences for specific leadership behaviors.

d) *Substitutes for leadership theory*

Kerr and Jermier's (1978) substitutes for leadership theory identified a variety of situational variables that can substitute for, neutralize, or enhance the effects of a leader's behavior (Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Bommer, 1996). The situational variables include characteristics of the subordinates (e.g., abilities, experience or knowledge), task (e.g., feedback or intrinsically satisfying tasks) and the organization (e.g., organizational formalization or cohesiveness of work groups) that serve as substitutes by directly influencing subordinate criterion variables and, in effect, making the leader behavior redundant (Yukl, 2013). For example, when professionals already possess extensive experience or knowledge, little guidance is needed or when workers are intrinsically motivated to work harder they don't need to be encouraged to do a high-quality work (Yukl, 2013). In contrast, neutralizers "do not replace the leader's behavior and, as a result, may be said to produce an *influence vacuum*" (Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Bommer, 1996, p. 380). The meta-analytical results presented by Podsakoff et al. (1996) show that, on average, the substitutes for leadership accounted for more variance in employees' attitudes, role perceptions and behaviors than did leader behaviors (20.2% compared to 7.2% of the variance).

4. Contemporary Leadership Theories

In the next two sections, we will briefly explore two more recent theories of leadership, i.e., transformational leadership and leader-member exchange, which have developed into a significant area of scientific inquiry over the last decades, producing several empirical studies and reviews of literature (e.g. Bono & Judge, 2004; Dulebohn et al., 2012; Dumdum, Lowe & Avolio, 2002; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ilies. Nahrgang & Morgeson, 2007; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Rockstuhl et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2011).

a) *Transformational Leadership*

Bass (1985) based his theory of transformational leadership on Burns's (1978) best-selling book on political leadership. Transformational leadership is characterized by a set of interrelated behaviors, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Bass, 1985). The first transformational behavior, idealized influence, refers to leaders who set an example of commitment to high standards of moral and ethical conduct and make self-sacrifices to benefit followers and achieve the organization's vision, engendering loyalty from followers. The second transformational leadership behavior, inspirational motivation, refers to leaders who communicate an appealing and inspiring vision of the future based on values and ideals, using symbolic actions and persuasive language to focus follower effort. The third transformational leadership dimension, intellectual stimulation, refers to leaders who encourage followers to challenge the status quo, solve problems from a new perspective and develop innovative strategies. The fourth transformational dimension, individual consideration, refers to leader behaviors aimed at attending the individual needs of followers, by providing support, coaching and giving feedback (Bono & Judge, 2004; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Over the past 30 decades, transformational leadership has emerged as an important predictor of several outcome variables (i.e., satisfaction with the leader, motivation, leader job performance, and leader effectiveness) (Hiller, DeChurch, Murase, & Doty, 2011; Judge & Piccolo). However, transformational leadership theory has also assumed a leader-centric perspective by focusing solely on the direct linkages between leader transformational behaviors, ignoring the reciprocal influence of followers and leadership effectiveness (Valcea, Hamdani, Buckley & Novicevic, 2011).

b)   *Leader-Member Exchange Theory*

The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory offers another way to view followers, since it highlights the dyadic relationship established between the leader and the follower and the implications of this relationship for leader effectiveness (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), including the follower as an active part of the leadership process (Schyns, & Day, 2010). Therefore, LMX theory emphasizes the importance of the three domains (leader, follower and the context) by suggesting that followers' characteristics actively contribute to the quality of the leader-member relationship and by shifting the focus from the leadership domain to the relationship domain (Howell & Shamir, 2005) However, as pointed out by some authors (Crossman & Crossman, 2011; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), this theory still privileges the leader as the main driver of the relationship-building process and it fails to fully articulate the way followers impact the nature of the relationship (Shamir & Howell, 1999).

The basic premise that underlines this theory is that leaders develop an exchange relationship with each subordinate, which ranges on a continuum from high-exchange relationship (characterized by delegation of greater responsibility and authority, more sharing information, involvement in the decision-making process, tangible rewards, special benefits, and, empowerment of the follower to exercise more influence over the

leader) to low exchange relationship (characterized by less mutual influence, compliance with formal role requirements or standards benefits for the job) (Yukl, 2013). In return for receiving those benefits, the subordinate in a high-exchange relationship reciprocates with better performance, more time, energy, responsibility, loyalty and commitment to task objectives (Jensen, Olberding & Rodgers, 1997). These relationships form quickly and tend to remain stable over time (Colella & Varma, 2001). The quality of these emotional and resource-based exchanges is predictive of performance-related and attitudinal job outcomes, especially for employees (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ilies, Nahrgang & Morgeson, 2007).

c) *Emergent Topics*

The leadership theories that we summarized above provide us a broad overview of the leadership research over the past century, however, we consider that they fail to answer to some issues that have mainly risen in the XXI century. In recent times, the plethora of ethical scandals and management malfeasance has not only threatened the position of many senior corporate managers but also the financial survival of some of the companies over which they preside. The corporate scandals at Enron, National Irish Bank or Banco Espírito Santo, if we focus on the Portuguese context, have highlighted the beneficial impact ethical leadership has on reducing unethical practices. However, because it might be difficult for organizations to guarantee that all leaders operate at higher levels of integrity, it is crucial that organizations develop some strategies aimed at minimizing or overcoming the negative impact of low levels of leader ethicality.

Additionally, an emerging stream of organizational research focuses on behaviors that may be referred to as deviant and committed by those employed in a managerial capacity. Research findings have emphasized that the workplace is not immune to passive and verbal forms of violence and aggression by indicating that perceived

supervisory mistreatment impacts between 10% and 16% of employees and costs organizations about \$23.8 billion annually, only in the United States (Tepper, 2000; Tepper, 2007; Tepper, Duffy, Henle & Lambert, 2006). In fact, abusive supervision literature has primarily emphasized outcomes and, similarly to ethical leadership research, has directed less attention towards understanding what organizations can do to mitigate the deleterious effects of abusive supervision.

We hypothesize that such omission could be due to the fact that research tend to position leadership as a top-down and hierarchical process, where leader behaviors largely determine organizational (either positive or negative) outcomes. However, followership approaches conceptualize leadership as a broader, mutual influence process and emphasize that subordinate characteristics represent a key contextual variable in influencing leader behavior and in determining to what extent employees are affected by their leaders' actions. Moreover, followership theories stress that followers are co-producers of leadership and actively work to advance the mission of their organization. As we know, modern organizations are characterized by fast changes and, in order to compete in the global economy, they need employees who show flexibility and go beyond narrow task requirements.

Based on the aforementioned arguments, the present thesis focuses on the study of ethical leadership, abusive supervision and followership; specifically it seeks to contribute to the discussion of some emergent questions and challenges that these topics pose to modern organizations. Thus, in order to make our arguments clearer, before focusing our attention on our main topics, we describe the conceptualization of leadership that guides this thesis, i.e., we conceptualize leadership as a process.

Leadership as a Process

As already indicated, in the present thesis leadership is viewed as an inherently multi-level phenomenon with relationships occurring between leaders and subordinates, leaders and teams, leaders and other organizational leaders, as well as leaders and leaders of other organizations (Hunter, Bedell-Avers & Mumford, 2007). As leadership is a function of the whole situation and not something that rests in a person (i.e. the leader), we consider that leadership should be framed as a process, i.e. interplay between two or more actors (leaders and followers) rooted in a particular context, which may affect the type of leadership that emerges and whether it will be effective (Murphy, 1941). Thus, the leadership process can be envisioned as a complex and dynamic exchange that encompasses five key components and their interconnectedness (Pierce & Newstrom, 2011):

1. The leader, i.e. who can influence the combination of inputs to produce unit outputs, often by influencing the actions of others (Lord & Brown, 2004).

2. The follower(s), conceptualized here as active causal agents, who actively and explicitly influence leader perceptions, attitudes, behaviors or decisions (Oc & Bashshur, 2013).

3. The context is the situation surrounding a leader-follower relationship;

4. The process is multidimensional in nature and reflects what it is embedded in the act of leadership (e.g. leading and following, the provision of guidance toward goal attainment, exchanges, the building of relationships, etc.);

5. Outcomes include anything that arises from the interplay between the leader, follower and context (e.g. innovation, trust, group cohesion, affection or task performance).

Figure 1 provides a visual framework of the leadership process that includes the five elements previously described. According to this model, understanding of leadership and the leadership process must have always present that "leaders influence followers, followers influence leaders, and all parties are influenced by the context in which the exchange takes place" (Pierce & Newstrom, 2011, p. 6).
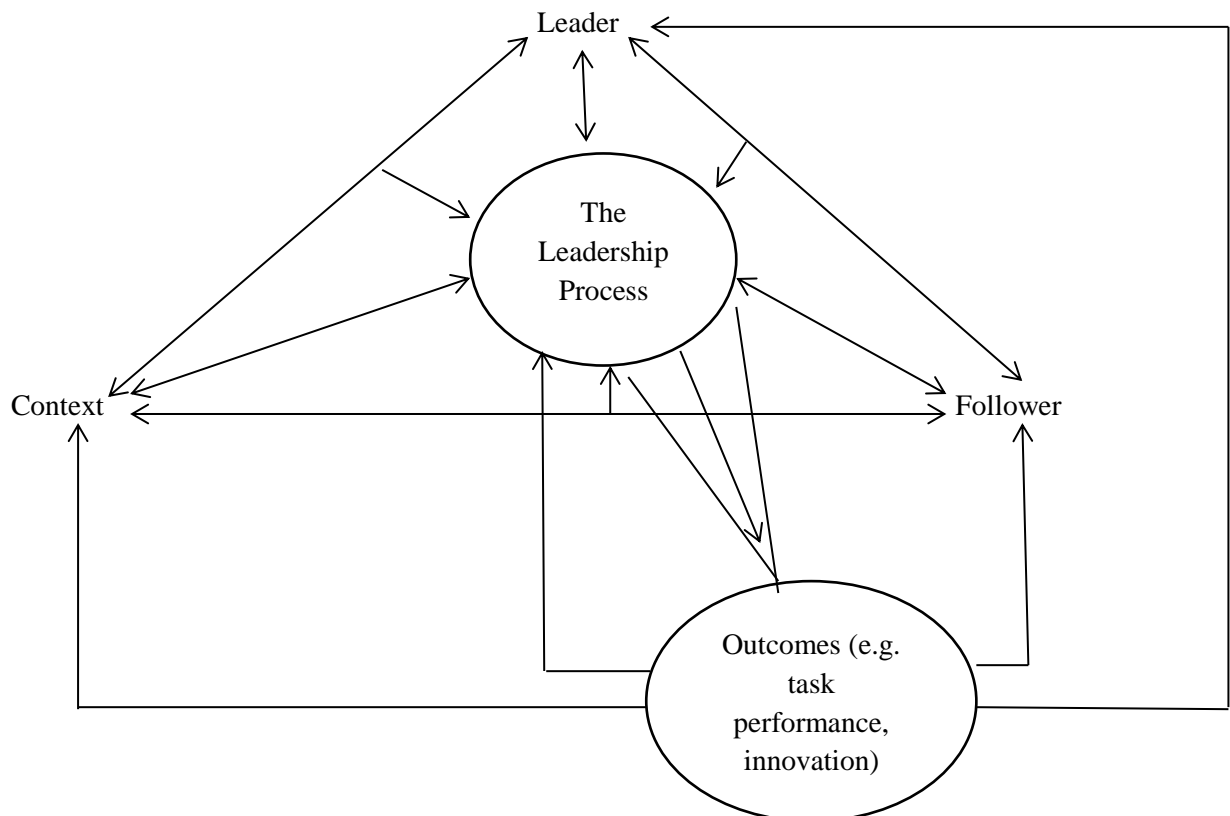
Figure 1. The Leadership Process (adapted from Dunham & Pierce, 1989, p. 556).

An Example: The Toxic Triangle

The toxic triangle (Padilla, Hogan & Kaiser, 2007) constitutes a model that moves beyond leader-centric views by describing destructive leadership as "a process occurring within a broad social system with followers in an organizational setting and a larger contextual environment" (Mulvey & Padilla, 2010, p. 52).

These authors, based on the assumption that "leadership of any type springs from the interplay of an individual's motivation and ability to lead, subordinates' desire for direction and authority, and events calling for leadership" (Padilla et al., 2007, p.

179), used the concept of a "toxic triangle" to argue that destructive leadership should not be defined mainly in terms of leader traits and behaviors (Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter & Tate, 2012), but should focus on the confluence of leaders, followers and circumstances (Padilla, Hogan & Kaiser, 2007). The first component of the toxic triangle include the characteristics of destructive leaders, such as charisma, personalized need for power, narcissism, negative life themes, ideology of hate. These characteristics might be necessary for destructive leadership occurs, however they are not enough, as stated by the authors "in many contexts, and in conjunction with particular followers, potentially destructive leaders might not achieve power" (Padilla, Hogan & Kaiser, 2007, p. 182).

Susceptible followers include conformers (their vulnerability is based on unmet basic needs, negative self-core evaluations and psychology immaturity), who comply with destructive leaders out of fear, and colluders (ambitious, selfish and share the destructive leader's world views) who actively participate in a destructive leader's agenda. Thoroughgood, Padilla, Hunter and Tate (2012) expanded on Padilla, Hogan and Kaiser's (2007) toxic triangle by proposing a taxonomy of vulnerable followers, the susceptible circle, which includes three conformer sub-types (lost souls, authoritarians, and bystanders) and two colluder sub-types (acolytes and opportunists).

The third domain concerns the environmental factors that encompass leaders, followers and leader-follower interactions, i.e., instability, perceived threat, cultural values, and absence of checks and balances and institutionalization (Padilla, Hogan & Kaiser, 2007).

Despite being a model that views leadership as a process that should focus on the interplay between leaders, followers and environment (Padilla, Hogan & Kaiser, 2007), it outlines a conceptual model, thus, empirical studies are warranted to test the

confluence of these three domains in the leadership research, including the ethical leadership, followership and abusive supervision, as we can conclude from the literature reviews in these topics.

Abusive Supervision

Padilla et al. (2007) also called our attention to the fact the history of leadership research tends to regard destructive leadership as an oxymoron, since it appears to have been dominated largely by an attempt to understand "good" or "effective" leadership (Shaw, Erickson & Harvey, 2011). Thus far, research on leadership has largely focused on exemplary forms of leader behavior, such as transformational leadership (Burns, 1978), ethical leadership (Brown, Harrison, & Treviño, 2005) or authentic leadership (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008).

However, although being considered by some researchers as a low base-rate phenomenon (e.g. Aryee, Chen, Sun & Debrah, 2007; Aryee, Sun, Chen & Debrah, 2008) interest in destructive leadership (i.e. ''a process in which over a longer period of time the activities, experiences and/or relationships of an individual or the members of a group are repeatedly influenced by their supervisor in a way that is perceived as hostile and/or obstructive'', as defined by Schyns and Schilling, 2013, p. 141) has increased substantially in recent years (e.g. Aasland, Skogstad, Notelaers, Nielsen & Einarsen, 2010; Einarsen, Aasland & Skogstad, 2007; Padilla, Hogan & Kaiser; Schyns & Schilling, 2013; Tepper, 2000, 2007; Thoroughhood, Padilla, Hunter & Tate, 2012) mainly due to its detrimental effects for both individual workers and their employing organizations.

Within this domain, a growing body of research has explored abusive supervision, "subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact"

(Tepper, 2000, p. 178). Examples of these hostile acts include public ridicule, giving the silent treatment, invasion of privacy, taking undue credit, behaving rudely, lying, and breaking promises (Tepper, 2000).

Perception or Reality?

Although previous studies showed that subordinate individual differences, such as core self-evaluations (Wu & Hu, 2009), attribution style (Martinko et al., 2011), organization-based self-esteem (Kiazad et al., 2010) or social adaptability (Mackey et al., 2013) explain meaningful variance in abuse perceptions, destructive leadership has been defined and measured as a perception, so researchers appear to assume that subordinates' perceptions correspond to objective accounts of negative supervisory behaviors (Frieder et al., 2015; Martinko et al., 2013).

That is, there is empirical evidence suggesting that subordinate characteristics amplify or attenuate perceptions of supervisory mistreatment but destructive leadership assessment has been based entirely on self-reported perceptions from one source – subordinates (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). In fact, since destructive leadership has to be perceived by followers in order to have an effect, it includes an element of perception (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). In line with this, the definition of abusive supervision provided by Tepper (2000) highlights that it is a subjective assessment since it is based on subordinates' perceptions. Because it is a perceptual phenomenon, its assessment can be influenced by subordinate characteristics, such as personality and demographics, and by the context in which abuse occurs (Martinko, Sikora & Harvey, 2012). Therefore, the same individual could view a supervisor as abusive in one situation (e.g. if the supervisor tells the subordinate that he/she is incompetent because he/she made a typo in the first draft of a document) and no abusive in another situation (e.g. if the supervisor is rude to the subordinate because he/she made a serious mistake that puts

the reputation of the organization at stake), just because the characteristics of the situation have altered or, in alternative, the resources that this individual has at his/her disposal to deal with the situation have changed. Similarly, two individuals could interpret the same behavior, exhibited by the same supervisor, in completely different ways, an individual could interpret the same behavior as abusive and another individual could not describe it as abusive (Martinko, Harvey, Sikora & Douglas, 2011).

In order to provide a more holistic understanding of abusive supervision, we provide now a review of empirical studies that have investigated the antecedents, boundary conditions and consequences of abusive supervision.

Antecedents

Previous research on abusive supervision has mainly focused on consequences for employees and the entire organization while there is less research on its antecedents (Martinko, Harvey, Brees & Mackey, 2013; Tepper 2007). The existent research on abusive supervision has mainly identified supervisor-level factors as antecedents to abusive supervision (Martinko et al., 2013), which main findings we summarize below:

Supervisor-level antecedents

The three first studies that investigated the antecedents of abusive supervision have drawn on displaced aggression (i.e. "redirection of a [person's] harmdoing behavior from a primary to a secondary target or victim", Tedeschi & Norman, 1985, p. 30) and organizational justice literature. Tepper et al. (2006) found that supervisors' procedural injustice perceptions translate into depression, which results in greater incidences of abusive behaviors (as reported by subordinates). Specifically, the authors argued that the mediating effects of supervisors' depression emerged only when subordinates were high in negative affectivity, i.e., supervisors will express their resentment against vulnerable and unwilling to defend themselves targets.

In another study that provides support for a displaced aggression explanation, Hoobler and Brass (2006) suggested that supervisors who experienced psychological contract breach were more prone to engage in behaviors indicative of abusive supervision (against supervisors' direct reports) and that hostile attributions bias exacerbated the psychological contract violation–abusive supervision relationship. In the same vein, Aryee, Chen, Sun and Debrah (2007) examined the main and interactive effects of supervisors' perceptions of interactional injustice and authoritarian leadership style on abusive supervision. That is, the researchers found that the relationship between supervisors' interactional justice and abusive behaviors against more vulnerable and weak targets (i.e. subordinates) was stronger when supervisors were high in authoritarianism.

In a more recent study, Hoobler and Hu (2013) also proposed supervisors' perceptions of interactional justice as an antecedent of abusive behaviors. Moreover, these authors posited supervisor negative affect as the explanatory mechanism for how supervisors' perceptions of interactional injustice are related to perceptions of abuse and for how abusive supervision is associated with subordinates' performance and their family members' perceptions of work-family conflict (Hoobler & Hu, 2013). In addition to these studies, Rafferty, Restubog and Jimmieson (2010) developed a ''trickle-down model'' to propose that supervisors' perceptions of distributive and interactional injustice trigger abusive behaviors against their subordinates, while Harris, Harvey and Kacmar (2011) argued that supervisors' relationship conflicts can "trickle down" to subordinates in the form of abusive behaviors, arguing that supervisors will generally choose low quality subordinates as targets of abuse.

Recently, research has started to explore alternative lens (e.g. non-work related experiences) by which to examine the factors that influence abusive supervision. For

example, Garcia et al. (2014) proposed that a history of family aggression predisposes supervisors to engage in abusive supervision, as a form of learned aggressive behavior. In a later study, Courtright et al. (2015) invoked resource drain theory to propose that supervisors who experience family-to-work conflict are more likely to engage in abusive behaviors toward subordinates, since family-to-work conflict depletes finite self-regulatory resources. Finally, Lin, Ma and Johnson (2016) examined the detrimental effects of ethical leader behavior stemming from ego depletion and moral licensing. Based on this logic, abusive leader behaviors may be more likely to occur following displays of ethical leader behavior because leaders may feel mentally fatigued from the added effort needed to display ethical leader behaviors over and above formal leader role requirements, leaving actors depleted and with insufficient willpower to control subsequent abusive behaviors (Lin, Ma & Johnson, 2016).

Subordinate-level antecedents

The importance of distinguishing between perceptions of abuse and actual abusive behaviors is emphasized by several studies that suggest that subordinates' characteristics affect their perceptions of abusive supervision (Martinko et al., 2013). Neves (2014) suggested that less submissive subordinates (i.e., with high core self-evaluations) tend to demonstrate a positive self-image and to show confidence about their abilities and skills at work, so are less likely to be chosen as a target of abuse and, consequently, to perceive abusive supervisory behaviors (Wu & Hu, 2009). Bridging traditional (that only consider potential internal or external causes) and recent perspectives on attribution theory (that also incorporate the context of one's dyadic relationships), Burton, Taylor and Barber (2014) demonstrated that internal attributions were positively related to interactional justice perceptions and external attributions are negatively related to interactional justice perceptions, which in turn were positively

associated with citizenship behaviors and negatively associated with direct and indirect expressions of aggression. Also building on attribution theory, Martinko et al. (2011) found that subordinates who present hostile attribution styles tend to rate their supervisors as abusive.

In another study, Tepper, Moss and Duffy (2011) invoked the moral exclusion theory (Opotow, 1990, 1995) to propose that supervisors tend to experience relationship conflict and assign lower performance evaluations to subordinates who are morally excluded from the supervisors' scope of justice (Opotow, 1995), i.e., who are reported "deep-level dissimilarity" (i.e., the perception that the focal subordinate's values and attitudes differ from the supervisor's).

Harvey et al. (2014) argued that psychological entitlement might promote abusive supervision perceptions since entitled employees feel that they deserve high levels of praise and rewards, however, not commensurate with their actual ability and effort levels. Drawing on victim precipitation theory, which posits that some personality traits may encourage victimization, Henle and Gross (2014) suggested that some employees are more susceptible to abusive supervision than others because of the personality traits they exhibit. Therefore, the authors focus on low emotional stability, conscientiousness, and agreeableness to suggest that employees lower on those traits are more prone to be provocative victims (who often show aggressive or frustrating cognitions, emotions or behaviors) and more likely targets of abusive supervisory behaviors (Henle & Gross, 2014).

Consequences

The first published study of abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000) shed light on several negative outcomes, such as actual turnover, decreased organizational commitment, lower job and life satisfaction and increased work-family conflict and

psychological distress. Following Tepper's (2000) seminal work, a multitude of studies examined additional negative consequences of abuse. In fact, outcomes of perceptions of abusive supervision receive the vast majority of research attention (Martinko et al, 2013; Tepper, 2007) and most of the outcomes of abusive supervision are assessed from a followers' point of view. Both Tepper's (2007) and Martinko and colleagues' reviews concluded that research in this domain still focus on the same basic set of outcomes, i.e., work-related attitudes, resistance behavior, deviant behavior, performance consequences (including both in-role performance contributions and extra-role or citizenship performance), psychological well-being, and family well-being.

Work-related attitudes

Work-related attitudes are a set of evaluations of one's job and can assume different forms. Researchers have utilized several theoretical frameworks to better understand the linkages between abusive supervision and work attitudes; however the most evoked theoretical model is justice theory (e.g. Aryee et al., 2007; Tepper, 2000). Justice theory posits that abusive supervisor leads to individuals' evaluative assessment of unfairness of the decision making process (procedural injustice), decision making outcomes (distributive injustice), and interpersonal treatment received during the decision making process (interactional injustice), which, in turn, affects, subordinates' work attitudes.

These theories helped to support the empirical evidence that abusive supervision is negatively related to job satisfaction (e.g., Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler, & Ensley, 2004; Frieder et al., 2015; Hobman et al., 2009; Mackey et al., 2013, 2014; Tepper, 2000; Tepper, Breaux et al., 2008) and organizational commitment (Aryee et al., 2007; Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler, & Ensley, 2004) and positively related to turnover intentions

(Farh & Chen, 2014; Frieder et al., 2015; Harvey et al., 2007; Palanski, Avey & Jirapon, 2014; Tepper, 2000).

Resistance behavior

The first study to suggest that subordinates show dysfunctional resistance (i.e., subordinates' refusal to perform supervisors' requests) toward abusive supervisors was developed by Tepper, Duffy and Shaw (2001). Additionally, Bamberger and Bacharach (2006) propose that workers employed in work units characterized by high levels of abusive supervision may adopt problematic modes of alcohol consumption as a form of worker resistance to symbolically revolt against the employer or to show frustration and anger due to abuse experiences.

Deviant behavior

Deviant behaviors describe negative behaviors in organizations that include a wide range of actions that violate organizational norms and have the potential to harm the organization, its employees, or both (Giacalone & Greenberg, 1996). Several studies have focused on retaliatory behaviors by subordinates as a consequence of abusive supervisory behaviors. For example, Mitchell and Ambrose (2007) used work on direct (targeted against the supervisor) and displaced aggression (targeted against the organization or individuals other than the supervisor for fear of retaliation) to examine the relationship between abusive supervision and employee deviance. In the same vein, Tepper et al. (2008) also departed from the displaced aggression explanation to explain the positive association between abusive supervision and subordinate deviant behaviors, as did other researchers (e.g. Biron, 2010; Harvey et al., 2014).

Additional studies based their findings on alternative theoretical explanations. For example, Bowling and Michel (2011) evoked the principle of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) to predict that employees target by abusive behaviors will respond by engaging in

reciprocating behavior toward at the original perpetrator. Burton and colleagues (2014) drew on organizational justice theory to propose that external and relational attributions for abusive supervision trigger feelings of interactional justice, leading to employee aggression. In other study, Chi and Liang (2013) builds on conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 1998) to hypothesize that when exhausted subordinates are unable to minimize further resource loss (as a consequence of abusive supervision), they may engage in withdrawal behaviors to cope with the depletion of valued resources. In a recent study, Garcia and colleagues also explored the relationship between abusive supervision and workplace deviance using the general aggression model (Anderson & Bushman, 2002) to conceptualize abusive supervision as a source of frustration that triggers a retaliatory response from the subordinate in the form of workplace deviance.

In turn, Shoss et al. (2013) drew on the organizational support theory (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Shore & Shore, 1995) and suggest that low perceived organization support (the extent to which individuals believe that their employing organization values their contributions and cares for their well-being) evoke revenge feelings and, consequently, increased counterproductive work behavior. Thau and Mitchell (2010) presented a self-regulation impairment view to explain that distributive justice should strengthen the relationship between abusive supervision and deviant behaviors, as the inconsistent information about employees' organizational utility would drain the self-resources necessary to maintain appropriate behavior. Finally, Thau et al. (2009), applying uncertainty management theory (Lind & Van den Bos, 2002), argued that employees' perceptions of abusive supervision will be more salient when they work under a management style characterized by low levels of authoritarianism, what makes employees more prone to engage in deviant behaviors.

Performance

Several studies have investigated relationships between abusive supervision and subordinates' performance contributions and consistently found negative relationships (Martinko et al, 2013). Previous studies also support the notion that abusive supervision is negatively related to self-rated (Harris, Kacmar & Zivnuska, 2007) and leader-rated job performance (e.g. Hoobler & Hu, 2013), contextual performance (Aryee et al., 2008), in-role performance (Neves, 2014; Shoss et al., 2013), work effort (Frieder, Wayne, Hochwarter & DeOrtentiis, 2015; Harris, Harvey & Kacmar 2011; Mackey et al., 2013; Mackey et al. 2014), creative performance (Han, Harms & Bai, 2015). With respect to subordinates' organizational citizenship behaviors (i.e., discretionary actions that benefit the organization), extant research corroborate the negative relationship between abusive supervision and performance contributions that benefit the organization but that fall outside the employee's job description and are not formally rewarded (e.g. Aryee et al., 2007; Burton, Taylor & Barber, 2014; Harris, Harvey & Kacmar 2011; Rafferty & Restubog, 2011; Shao, Resick & Hargis, 2011; Shoss et al., 2013; Zellars, Tepper & Duffy, 2002)

Psychological distress/well-being

Abusive supervision has consistently been linked with employee detrimental psychological consequences, including burnout (Yagil, 2006), job strain (Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter & Kacmar, 2007), depression (Tepper, Moss, Lockhart & Carr, 2007), emotional exhaustion (Aryee et al., 2008; Breaux et al., 2008; Chi & Liang, 2013; Frieder, Wayne, Hochwarter & DeOrtentiis, 2015; Loi & Lam, 2015; Mackey et al. 2013; Mackey et al., 2014; Wheeler, Halbesleben & Whitman, 2013; Wu & Hu, 2009; Xu, Loi & Lam, 2015), job tension (Breaux et al., 2008; Mackey et al., 2013; Mackey et al., 2014), anxiety (Hobman et al., 2009), diminished psychological well-

being (Bowling & Michel, 2011; Hobman et al., 2009; Lin, Wang & Chen, 2013), insomnia (Rafferty, Restubog & Jimmieson, 2010) and negative affectivity (Hoobler and Hu, 2013).

Family well-being

Three studies advocated that a more realistic study of abusive supervision phenomenon should include homelife connections. Hence, Hoobler and Brass (2006) suggested that abused subordinates may negatively affect family life (family undermining) as perceived by family members. In a similar finding, Carlson et al. (2011) proposed that perceptions of abusive supervision affect the family domain through two forms of strain: work-to-family conflict and relationship tension. Hoobler and Hu (2013) suggested an explanatory mechanism (i.e. subordinate negative affect) for how abusive supervision is associated with family members' perceptions of work-family conflict.

Boundary Conditions

Previous studies identified several variables that make the abusive supervision-outcomes relationship vary on the basis of their levels. Thus, in this section, we summarize the moderating factors observed in the empirical literature, including subordinate characteristics and behaviors, supervisor characteristics and behaviors, and work context

Subordinate characteristics and behaviors

The Big Five framework is a hierarchical model of personality with five bipolar factors that summarize several prototypical characteristics (Costa & McCrae, 1992): conscientiousness (defined as thoughtfulness, goal-direction, organization and planning), agreeableness (it includes characteristics such as trust, altruism, kindness),

and neuroticism (describing someone who is emotional instable, anxious, moody or vulnerable), extraversion (it encompasses characteristics such as sociability, talkativeness and assertiveness) and openness to experience (intellectual, imaginative, independent-minded). Tepper, Duffy and Shaw (2001) explored the moderating effect of two dimensions of the Big Five model of personality, conscientiousness and agreeableness, on the relationship between abusive supervision and subordinates' resistance, concluding that this effect was attenuated when subordinates were high in both traits. Thus, highly conscientious individuals tend to use strategies that preserve their self and social image and highly agreeable individuals are motivated to use strategies that avoid further conflict, instead of engaging in resistant behaviors.

These findings suggest that abusive supervision does not affect all subordinates in the same way and that we should take into account dispositional factors when exploring subordinates' responses to abusive supervision (Tepper, Duffy & Shaw, 2001). Extending these findings, several studies looked at subordinate individual characteristics and abilities as moderators, including Garcia et al. (2015) who analyzed the moderating role of subordinates' neuroticism in the relationship between abusive supervision and workplace deviance, since individuals high in neuroticism are more prone to overreact and experience stronger negative affect in response to supervisory abuse. Similarly, Bamberger and Bacharach (2006) found that the relationship between abusive supervision and problem drinking is minimized among employees high in both conscientiousness and agreeableness.

Additionally, Rafferty, Restubog and Jimmieson (2010) focused on the moderating role of subordinates' self-esteem in the relationship between abusive supervision and subordinate psychological distress and insomnia. The authors argued that individuals with high self-esteem are less vulnerable to the deleterious effects of

abusive supervision since they are less dependent on others and have less susceptibility to be influenced by negative feedback and generalize to broader conceptualization of themselves (Rafferty, Restubog & Jimmieson, 2010). Lian et al. (2014) suggested that the impulse to engage in hostile behaviors toward an abusive supervisor can be mitigated by subordinates' self-control capacity (i.e. the ability to restrain impulses to retaliate). Mackey and colleagues (2013, 2014) observed that social adaptability represents a personal characteristic that buffers against the negative consequences of abusive supervision perceptions and hypothesize that higher levels of social adaptability would buffer the potentially debilitating cognitive (i.e., job tension, job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion) and behavioral (i.e., work effort) reactions to perceptions of abusive supervision.

Wheeler, Halbesleben and Whitman (2013) set out to explore how employee psychological entitlement affects self-regulation, by investigating its moderating effect on subordinate responses to perceiving supervisory abuse. Finally, Frieder, Wayne, Hochwarter and DeOrtentiis (2015) suggested that individuals who report high levels of proactive voice behavior and resource management ability will experience fewer negative reactions (i.e., dissatisfaction, emotional exhaustion, turnover intentions, reduced work effort) when faced with perceived supervisory abuse than those less adept and less vocal.

Several other subordinate emotional experiences, perceptions and attitudes were also found to moderate the impact of abuse perceptions. Tepper et al. (2006), for instance, proposed that the mediating effect of supervisors' depression on the relationship between supervisors' procedural justice and subordinates' perceived abuse is stronger when subordinates are higher in negative affectivity. Conversely, Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter and Kacmar (2007) hypothesized that subordinates higher in

positive affectivity are better able to effectively use ingratiation tactics to reduce the negative influence of abusive supervision on job strain and turnover intentions. Wu and Hu (2009) examined the moderating role that subordinates' susceptibility to emotional contagion presents in the relationship between abusive supervision and employee emotional exhaustion. Additionally, Chi and Liang (2013) suggested that the impact of abusive supervision on subordinates' emotional exhaustion varies with subordinates' emotion-regulation tendencies (cognitive reappraisal or expressive suppression).

Harris, Kacmar and Zivnuska (2007) argued that the meaning of work moderates the abusive supervision-job performance relationship. Because employees for whom work holds more meaning are more connected to and invested in their work, high levels of meaning of work will intensify the negative impact of abusive supervision (Harris, Kacmar & Zivnuska, 2007). Mitchell and Ambrose (2007) proposed that subordinates' negative reciprocity beliefs should strengthen the impact of abusive supervision on deviant behavior directed at the supervisor. According to Tepper, Moss, Lockhart and Carr, (2007), the subordinates' use of direct maintenance communication confrontational tactics (as opposed to regulatory maintenance or avoidance tactics) weakens the relationship between abusive supervision and psychological distress.

In a similar vein, Bowling and Mitchell (2011) examined the moderating effect of subordinates' causal attributions in the abusive supervision-well-being relationship, suggesting that this relationship is stronger among subordinates who make self-directed attributions than among subordinates who do not make self-directed attributions. Tepper et al. (2009) found that abusive supervision is more strongly associated with retaliatory deviance when subordinates have stronger intentions to quit their jobs. In turn, Decoster et al. (2013) explored the buffering role of subordinates' organizational identification in

the relationship between abusive supervision and subordinates' perceived cohesion and tendency to gossip.

A number of studies have also examined the moderating impact of cultural variables, which have most focused on the power distance dimension (Martinko et al., 2013). For example, Lin, Wang and Chen (2013) examined the moderating effect of power distance orientation on the relationship between abusive supervision and employee well-being. In a similar vein, Lian et al. (2012) argued that subordinates with higher power distance levels viewed abusive behaviors as less unfair than those with low power distance levels, for instance. Similarly, Wang et al. (2012) found that low power distance subordinates reported higher levels of interactional injustice than high power distance employees. Another study of a cultural moderator was conducted by Liu et al. (2010), who argued that traditional values (characterized by respect for authority, status quo maintenance and concealment of discontent for the sake of harmony) moderate the relationship between abusive supervision and supervisor-directed deviance.

Supervisor characteristics and behaviors

Though to a lesser extent, researchers have also investigated several supervisor characteristics and behaviors that moderate the relationships between abusive supervision and outcomes. Hoobler and Brass (2006) found that the relationship between supervisors' perceptions of psychological contract violations and abusive behaviors was stronger among supervisors who held a hostile attribution bias (i.e. the dispositional tendency to interpret frustrating events as purposeful).

Thau et al. (2009) found that supervisors' authoritarian leadership style reinforces the relationship between perceptions of abusive supervision and subordinates' retaliatory behaviors. Shoss et al. (2013) suggested that supervisor's

organizational embodiment (i.e. when employees identify the supervisor with the organization) strengthens the negative relationship between abusive supervision and perceived organizational support. In a recent study, Eschleman et al. (2014) examined the moderating effect of the perceived intent of abusive behaviors (i.e. hostile or motivational intent), with distinct consequences for counterproductive work behaviors. Therefore, abusive supervision was more strongly related to counterproductive work behaviors when perceived hostile and motivational intent were high because both perceived intents could lead to a violation of the psychological contract between the supervisor and subordinate (Eschleman et al., 2014).

Hobman et al. (2009) examined the moderating role of social support on the relationship between abusive supervision and anxiety, psychological well-being, satisfaction, and self-esteem. This study suggests that social support from the same source as the stressor (i.e. thesis advisor) serves to exacerbated the negative effects of the stressor due to the unexpected nature of abusive behavior in the context of an otherwise supporting relationship In a similar vein, Xu, Loi and Lam (2015) proposed that abusive supervision presents a greater negative impact on those employees who have a good relationship with their supervisor (high-quality LMX), i.e., when high-LMX subordinates perceive both abuse and support coming from the same person, they would feel confused about how the supervisor really feels and would need more resources to solve this dissonance (Martinko et al., 2013).

Contextual factors

Acknowledging that the organizational context in which the supervisor-subordinate relationships occurs has a major impact on the occurrence of abusive supervision, some authors have examined contextual variables as moderating factors.

Aryee et al. (2008) suggested that the work unit structure moderates the influence of abusive supervision on both psychological and behavioral strain symptoms. Thus, mechanistic structures, characterized by authority and control, might facilitate abusive supervisory behaviors. Contrarily, mechanistic structures, characterized by empowerment through decentralized decision-making, might constitute a constraining context for abusive supervision (Aryee et al., 2008).

Highlighting the importance of organizational norms toward organizational deviance and the role of coworkers as guides to what does and does not constitute appropriate behavior, Tepper et al. (2008) found the abusive supervision-workplace deviance relationship to be stronger when subordinates perceive that their coworkers approve and engage themselves in deviant behaviors. In a more recent study, Neves (2014) argued that organizations dealing with downsizing situations, which imply major organizational change situations and, consequently, result in high uncertainty and stress, provide a good opportunity to trigger abusive supervision.

Ethical Leadership

As we previously noted, most of the work in the destructive leadership research has focused on abusive supervision. Another important stream of research has given increased attention to the concept of ethical leadership since recent ethical scandals in business, sports, government, and even religious organizations have raised the importance society places on ethical behaviors in organizations (Treviño, Weaver & Reynolds, 2006). Thus, this thesis aims to investigate these two leadership constructs because in some ways they represent ''important, but conceptually opposite leadership styles, as ethical leadership emphasizes normatively appropriate behavior which has been shown to have positive outcomes, while abusive supervision emphasizes

normatively inappropriate behavior which has been shown to have negative outcomes" (Palanski, Avey & Jiraporn, 2014, p. 136).

Philosophers from ancient times have emphasized the importance of ethical conduct for leaders, if they are to develop and sustain ethical cultures and ethical conduct (Grojean et al., 2004). Most research in the domain of ethical leadership builds on Brown et al.'s (2005) definition of ethical leadership as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (p. 120). Accordingly, examples of behaviors that define an ethical leader include "doing the right thing, being a good, open communicator and receptive listener, sticking to principles and standards, holding followers accountable to standards, and not tolerating ethical lapses" (Trevino et al., 2003, p.18).

The qualitative research conducted by Treviño and colleagues (Trevino et al., 2000, 2003) suggested that ethical leaders were best described along two related dimensions: moral person and moral manager. The moral person dimension refers to individual traits, such as honesty, trustworthiness, and integrity (Treviño et al., 2000). Strong moral persons are perceived as fair and principled decision-makers who demonstrate concern for people and the broader society, and who behave ethically in their personal and professional lives (Brown et al., 2005). The moral manager dimension refers how the leader uses the tools of the position of leadership to promote ethical conduct at work. Strong moral managers make ethics an explicit part of their leadership agenda by communicating an ethics and values message, by visibly and intentionally role modeling ethical behavior, and by using the reward system (rewards

and discipline) to hold followers accountable for ethical conduct (Brown et al., 2005; Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Treviño, 2000).

After providing a definition of ethical leadership and its dimensions, we now seek to summarize the findings from the body of empirical research regarding ethical leadership, grouped by its antecedents, boundary conditions, linking mechanisms and consequences. Most research on ethical leadership relies on social learning (Bandura, 1977a, 1986) and social exchanges (Blau, 1964) theories to explain the antecedents and outcomes of ethical leadership. The social learning perspective (Bandura, 1977a, 1986) posits that leaders influence the ethical conduct of followers via role modeling (Brown, Treviño & Harrison, 2005). According to this theory, employees can learn how they should behave (i.e., in an ethical and positive manner) merely by observing and emulating attractive and credible models' behaviors (i.e. ethical leaders) and its consequences. In addition, social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) presupposes a generalized norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), i.e., when followers receive ethical and fair treatment, they are likely to reciprocate by contributing to positive organizational outcomes (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005).

Antecedents

Despite the assumed importance and prominence of ethical leadership in organizations, there are still many questions relating to its antecedents (Brown Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). Recent research has started to explore why some leaders engage in the spectrum of ethical leadership behaviors or are perceived as ethical among subordinates, and others do not. Some studies have assumed that ethical leadership could be predicted by leader personality characteristics. For example, Walumbwa and Schaubroeck (2009) posited that personality characteristics of leaders are also associated with ethical leadership, by proposing that supervisors high on

conscientiousness (since conscientious individuals experience a high degree of moral obligation), high on agreeableness (more concerned about proper and humane treatment of people), and low on neuroticism (who tend to be hostile towards others and less prone to be considered effective role models) are more likely perceived to be ethical leaders.

Drawing on social learning (Bandura, 1977a, 1986) and social exchanges (Blau, 1964) theories, Mayer et al. (2009) and Ruiz, Ruiz and Martínez (2011) tested a trickle-down model to examine how top management ethical leadership flows to supervisors and, after to low-level employees, affecting employee outcomes. From a social learning perspective, the basic argument is that followers tend to role-model their leaders' behaviors. Jordan, Brown, Treviño and Finkelstein (2013) proposed that cognitive moral development constitutes an individual-difference antecedent of followers' perceptions of ethical leadership. Hence, leaders who reason at a higher level of ethical reasoning are perceived to care about employees' well-being and interest, value employees' opinions and make fair and balanced decisions, all components that describe the ethical leadership construct.

Similarly, Mayer, Aquino, Greenbaum and Kuenzi (2012) posited that moral identity acts as an antecedent of ethical leadership by motivating leaders to demonstrate some responsiveness to the needs and interests of others. Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara & Suárez-Acosta (2013) found that employees who observe acts of interactional injustice (treating employees with no respect or consideration) toward peers are more prone to perceiving their supervisors as unethical since these behaviors reveal little or no concern for employees' well-being.

Linking mechanisms

According to some researchers, most of the research to date has focused on investigating the direct effects of ethical leadership, with very little research examining or offering an explanation or mechanism by which ethical leadership leads to favorable outcomes (e.g. Avey, Wernsing & Palanski, 2012; Kacmar, Andrews, Harris & Tepper, 2013). Nevertheless, we consider that research in this area is growing, as our review identified several studies that investigated linking mechanisms, which focus mainly on subordinate perceptions and work context, even though we can find two studies that offer alternative mechanisms, such as subordinate and task characteristics.

Subordinate perceptions

Stouten and colleagues' (2013) study proposed that followers' perceptions of moral reproach explain the curvilinear relationship of ethical leadership with follower OCB. In other words, followers perceive leaders who act in highly ethical ways as looking down upon their morality and consider them not being sufficiently moral, which would undermine their motivation to engage in OCB. Similarly, followers will perceive leaders who act in lowly ethical ways also as looking down upon their morality given that these followers might perceive such leaders as reproaching them because these leaders do not care for morality. In sum, these findings suggest that employee OCB is highest at moderate levels of ethical leadership (Stouten et al., 2013).

Avey, Wernsing and Palanski (2012) examined employee perceptions regarding their voice behaviors and psychological ownership as mediators between ethical leadership and employee satisfaction and well-being. Walumbwa and Schaubroeck (2009), arguing that more empirical attention should be devoted toward understanding of psychological processes that may differentiate the behavior of followers of ethical

leaders from that of followers of less ethical leaders, proposed that psychological safety mediates the relationship between ethical leadership and voice behavior.

In another study, Steinbauer, Renn, Taylor and Njoroge (2014) argued that followers' perceived accountability (i.e., people's expectation that they will have to justify their decisions to others who possess reward or punishment powers) as a linking mechanism between ethical leadership and follower self-leadership focused on ethics. Hence, ethical leaders hold employees accountable for their ethical decisions and employees feel more strongly motivated to engage in self-leadership that focus on setting ethical goals and motivating themselves continuously to improve their ethical conduct.

Chughtai, Byrne and Flood (2015) sought to propose an underlying mechanism through which ethical leaders influence followers' health and well-being, by examining the mediating role of trust in supervisor in the relationship between ethical leadership and work engagement and emotional exhaustion. These authors drew upon social exchanges theory to hypothesize that positive behaviors displayed by ethical leadership (e.g. caring about their subordinates' well-being or encouraging them to voice their opinions) create obligations for the subordinates to reciprocate this fair and balanced treatment by showing increased trust in their supervisor and, consequently, enhancing work engagement and diminishing work exhaustion (Chughtai, Byrne & Flood, 2015). Finally, Bouckenooghe, Zafar and Raja (2015) focused on the alignment of goals between leaders and followers as a potentially intervening mechanism through which ethical leadership relates to in-role job performance.

Work context

Although to a lesser extent, some authors have emphasized the work context as an important linking mechanism between ethical leadership and several outcomes. For

example, Kacmar, Andrews, Harris and Tepper (2013) found that organizational politics (i.e. unethical behaviors, not approved by formal authority, able to undermine the achievement of organizational goals) is one possible mechanism through which ethical leadership impacts employee helping and promotability, since ethical leadership behaviors reduce organizational politics among workers. Three studies examined ethical climate as a mediator of the relationship between ethical leadership and different outcomes including, employee misconduct (Mayer, Kuenzi & Greenbaum, 2010), affective commitment (Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015; Neubert et al., 2009), turnover intentions (Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015) and job satisfaction (Neubert et al., 2009).

Subordinate characteristics

To our knowledge, only one study proposed that subordinate characteristics mediate the linkage between ethical leadership perceptions and work behaviors. Specifically, Yidong and Xinxin (2013) relied on cognitive evaluation theory (Deci, 1975; Deci & Ryan, 1980) to explain the psychological mechanism (enhancement of intrinsic motivation through increasing autonomy and competence) that relates ethical leadership and innovative work behavior. That is, ethical leaders can enhance the work involvement, job satisfaction and enjoyment of the work itself, so that their followers are more likely to be motivated to exert extra effort and innovation in work.

Task characteristics

Regarding the mediational role of task characteristics, we also identified only one study, developed by Piccolo, Greenbaum, Den Hartog and Folger (2010). These authors suggested that the effects of ethical leadership on task performance and citizenship performance are mediated by core job characteristics (i.e. task significance, autonomy, and effort). According to the model proposed by the authors, ethical leaders play a key role in shaping the nature of work offering guidance and high levels and

influence over decision making, and, consequently, enhance perceptions of autonomy and task significance.

Boundary Conditions

As some researchers pointed out, research on boundary conditions of ethical is particularly important because it identifies the conditions that enhance or curb the effectiveness of ethical leadership (e.g. Neves & Story, 2015). So far, existent research has mainly examined the role played by the work context or by subordinate characteristics and perceptions.

Work context

Kalshoven, Den Hartog and De Hoogh (2013) proposed ethical context (because employees would have sufficient ethical cues from the context that help them determine how to act ethically) as a moderator of the relationship between ethical leadership and follower pro-social behavior, the remaining studies have focused on the subordinate characteristics or perceptions. In turn, Kacmar, Bachrach, Harris and Zivnuska (2011) predicted that male and female employees are likely to respond to ethical leadership differently, depending on political work environment. Briefly, this study suggests that political work environment perceptions and gender moderate the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB, such that for female employees this relationship is positive under low political work environments and weakened under high political work environments, whereas the authors proposed the inverse pattern for male employees.

Subordinate characteristics

Several studies highlighted that subordinate characteristics play an important moderational role of subordinate characteristics in the relationship between ethical leadership and follower behaviors. Thus, van Gils et al. (2015) proposed that high moral

attentiveness moderates the relationship between low ethical leadership and follower deviance, such that followers who are highly attentive to moral cues are more likely to detect low ethical leadership and will therefore react to it more strongly in terms of deviance than followers low in moral attentiveness. On a different note, Kacmar and colleagues (2013) put forth the idea that political skill moderates the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational politics, with consequences for helping and promotability. Because politically skilled individuals are more able to control the political environment and to reduce the uncertainty posed by organizational politics, they can reduce the negative outcomes associated with this uncertainty and enhance the associated positive outcomes inherent in political environments (i.e. legitimate opportunity to accomplish their goals).

In another study, Demirtas (2015) found that the influence of ethical leadership behavior on organizational justice was enhanced according to the ethical ideologies. Thus, high idealist ideologies and low relativist ideologies strengthen the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational justice perceptions. Finally, we mention the Avey, Palanski and Walumbwa's (2011) study, which showed that followers' self-esteem influences the relationship between ethical leadership and employee outcomes (OCBs and deviance), such that individuals higher in self-esteem are more well equipped to deal with environmental cues and do not need to constantly adapt attitudes and behaviors to the context (Avey, Palanski & Walumbwa, 2011).

Subordinate perceptions

Regarding subordinate perceptions as boundary conditions for ethical leadership, Neubert et al. (2009) examined the moderating influence of perceptions of interactional justice on the relationship between ethical leadership and ethical climate, such that this relationship is stronger when the supervisor exhibiting ethical leadership is also

perceived as being interactionally just than when the supervisor is perceived to be interactional unfair, with consequences for the perceptions of ethical climate. Zhu, May and Avolio (2004) found that employees' perception of the authenticity of a leader's ethical behavior (i.e., the consistency between leaders' moral intentions and their behaviors) should moderate the linkages between ethical leadership behavior and individuals' organizational commitment and trust in their leaders.

More recently, Neves and Story (2015) reasoned that supervisors' reputation for performance (as perceived by subordinates) moderates the relationship between ethical leadership and affective commitment to the organization. Thus, when the supervisor is perceived as competent and helpful, who fulfills his/her tasks at work following a set of moral standards (i.e. high reputation for performance), it strengthens more the relationship between ethical leadership and affective commitment to the organization, compared to when reputation for performance is low (Neves & Story, 2015).

Consequences

Outcomes of ethical leadership tend to receive the great majority of research attention. In fact, several studies attempted to explain the effects of ethical leadership on a number of positive outcomes. So, we organized the review of the consequences of ethical leadership by grouping extant research according to the following themes: work-related attitudes, work-related behaviors, psychological well-being/distress and organizational climate.

Work-related attitudes

Extant research suggests that ethical leadership is positively related to job satisfaction (Avey, Wernsing & Palanski, 2012; Neubert et al., 2009; Toor & Ofori, 2009), organizational commitment (Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015; Neubert et al., 2009; Zhu, May & Avolio, 2004), trust in leaders (Zhu, May & Avolio, 2004), work

engagement (Chughtai, Byrne & Flood, 2015) and negatively associated with turnover intentions (Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015; Palanski, Avey & Jirapon, 2014).

For example, Neubert and colleagues (2009) argued that ethical leadership influences follower job satisfaction and organizational commitment through an ethical climate, since a working environment characterized by ethical conduct, honesty and respect for others makes employees more satisfied with their jobs and more committed to their organization. Similarly, Demirtas and Akdogan (2015) posited that the influence of ethical leadership extends to influence employee affective commitment and turnover intentions through an ethical climate.

In another study, Chughtai, Byrne and Flood (2015) suggested that the effect of ethical leadership on work engagement (and emotional exhaustion) is indirectly transmitted through trust in supervisor. Thus, if employees believe that their supervisor will recognize their contribution and fairly compensate their effort, they are likely to reciprocate by investing more time, energy and resources into their jobs.

Psychological well-being/distress

The results of two studies suggest that ethical leadership is positively related to employee well-being (Avey, Wernsing & Palanski, 2012) and negatively related to emotional exhaustion (Chughtai, Byrne & Flood, 2015). Avey, Wernsing and Palanski, (2012) underlined that employees working with leaders who respect their rights and dignity are expected to experience more positive affective states, which are reflected in higher psychological well-being, when compared to counterparts whose supervisors do not emphasize ethical work norms and high quality supervisor-subordinate relationships.

Work-related behaviors

In a large number of studies, researchers have investigated relationships between ethical leadership and subordinates' performance outcomes and consistently found positive relationships. Therefore, previous research has found significant relationships between ethical leadership and in-role performance (Bouckenooghe, Zafar & Raja, 2015; Piccolo, Greenbaum, Hartog & Folger, 2010; Walumbwa, Morrison & Christensen, 2012), organizational citizenship behavior (e.g. Avey, Palanski & Walumbwa, 2011; Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012b; Kacmar et al., 2011; Mayer et al., 2009; Piccolo, Greenbaum, Hartog & Folger, 2010; Ruiz, Ruiz & Martínez, 2011; Stouten et al., 2013; Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara & Suárez-Acosta, 2013), proactive behavior such as helping or voice behavior (Kalshoven, Den Hartog & De Hoogh, 2012; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009), innovative work behaviors (Yidong & Xinxin, 2013), deviant behaviors (e.g. Avey, Palanski & Walumbwa, 2011; Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012a; van Gils et al., 2015; Mayer et al., 2009; Mayer, Kuenzi & Greenbaum, 2010; Ruiz, Ruiz & Martínez, 2011; Stouten et al., 2010; Stouten et al., 2013; Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara & Suárez-Acosta, 2013).

To illustrate, Bouckenooghe, Zafar and Raja (2015) built on social learning theory (Bandura, 1986) to suggest that ethical leaders are important role models who provide positive cues and constructive feedback about the work context, fostering a positive work environment characterized by efficacious, hopeful, optimistic and resilient employees (Bouckenooghe Zafar & Raja, 2015). In turn, employee high PsyCap should lead to enhanced in-role performance. Additionally, Piccolo and colleagues (2010) proposed that ethical leadership encourage effort by offering subordinates job autonomy and the opportunity to voice their opinions, which could

lead employees to reciprocate by exhibiting greater task performance and increased organizational citizenship behaviors.

Den Hartog and Belschak (2012a) demonstrated that ethical leadership stimulates work engagement that enhances organizational citizenship behaviors and decreases counterproductive behaviors. Therefore, since engagement forms a unique motivational state that increases dedication to work, the authors assumed that engaged employees would show more citizenship behaviors in general and would avoid behaviors that undermine their work (i.e. counterproductive behaviors) (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012a).

Organizational climate

Three studies have explored the relationship between ethical leadership and the organization's ethical climate, articulating different processes by which a leader's ethical approach affects organization's ethical climate (Mayer, Kuenzi, & Greenbaum, 2010; Schaubroeck et al., 2012; Schminke, Ambrose & Neubaum, 2005).

Schminke and colleagues (2005) conducted the first study that analyzed the aforementioned relationship. These authors suggested that leader U-score (consistency between leader moral development and his/her actions) and the age of the organization influence the strength of the relationship between ethical leadership and ethical climate. Specifically, high U-score leaders would demonstrate greater consistency between their moral development and their actions and then would exert stronger influence on ethical climate, when compared to low U-score leaders. Moreover, Schminke and colleagues (2005) also proposed that the association between ethical leadership and ethical climate would be stronger for organizations in an early stage, since young organizations are more permeable to ethical leader's power to influence organizational vision and values.

Drawing on social learning theory (Bandura, 1977a, 1986), Mayer, Kuenzi and Greenbaum (2010) also proposed that ethical leaders have a positive effect on ethical climate. Hence, ethical leaders should act as role models of ethical behavior, helping to create a climate in which high ethical standards are maintained and valued. Finally, Schaubroeck and colleagues (2012) developed a multilevel model in which ethical leaders use social influence to promote follower ethical beliefs and conduct throughout different organizational levels, affecting the work unit ethical culture.

Followership

The previous research on abusive supervision and ethical leadership literatures allows to conclude that both literatures include the role played by subordinate characteristics and behaviors (e.g. Avey, Palanski and Walumbwa, 2011; Martinko et al., 2013). Nevertheless, the focus on supervisors in the abusive supervision and ethical leadership processes is undeniable, which it is also true for the leadership research in general.

In fact, leadership has often been studied from the perspective of the leader, whereas followers have rarely been considered (Junker & van Dick 2014). Leaders have long been considered the drivers of organizational performance, resulting in leader-centered leadership research that focus on leader traits and behaviors as antecedents to leadership processes and outcomes (Oc & Bashshur, (2013). Therefore, the study of leadership from the perspective of the follower and the study of followership has been largely ignored. Even when followers are evoked as a key component of the leadership process, they have most commonly been treated as the dependent variable (Pierce & Newstrom, 2011), as outcomes of the leadership process as opposed to inputs (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009). For example, abusive supervisory behaviors and ethical leadership literatures mostly conceive the role of followers from the point of view of

their susceptibility to their leaders' abusive or ethical behaviors (i.e. followers react to leader' behaviors, which leads to negative or positive outcomes) and fail to acknowledge that followers play an active role in shaping these behaviors.

Conventionally, the label *follower* is associated to images of passivity, deference, obedience and submission to leaders (Carsten et al., 2010, Hoption et al., 2012), whereas the label *leader* is associated to sensitivity, charisma, intelligence and strength (Offerman, Kennedy & Wirtz, 1994). To illustrate, Agho (2009) examined the perceptions of senior directors in terms of what constituted desirable attributes for both followers and leaders. Notwithstanding that a significant number of respondents considered that followership skills are essential for effective leadership (since leadership and followership are interrelated) honesty, competence and intelligence were the attributes considered important for effective leadership, whereas dependability, loyalty and cooperation 'ranked higher as desirable characteristics for followers' (Agho, 2009, 165). These findings clearly reveal that complementary in interpersonal relations is clearly preferred. That is, in general individuals tend to assume and consider submissive behaviors as adequate when confronted with a more powerful and dominant partner (i.e. a leader).

Definition

Following a constructionist approach (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010) followership should be viewed as a "relational interaction through which leadership is co-created in combined acts of leading and following" (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe & Carsten, 2014, p.88). Followership approaches identify both leaders and followers as the causal agents, mutually influencing both parties' attitudes, behaviors and outcomes (Shamir, 2007). Therefore, leaders can also engage in "following behaviors" and followers can also assume "leading behaviors" (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe & Carsten, 2014).

Researchers have developed followership typologies that recognize that different categories of followers influence differentially leaders and the leadership process (Carsten et al., 2010; Chaleff 2009; Kelley 1988, 1992, Kellerman 2008).

Kelley (1992) presented five basic styles of followership: conformist followers (passive, uncritical, dependent on a leader for thinking and motivation), passive followers (they require constant guidance and never take initiative), alienated followers (critical and independent in their thinking but passive in the conduct of their role), pragmatist followers ("fence sitters", adapt to change but do the minimum necessary to master the rules) and finally, effective/exemplary followers (proactive, assertive, innovative, independent problem solvers, risk takers).

Kellerman (2008) developed the following typology: isolated followers (detached from leaders, strengthen leaders through not knowing and doing nothing), bystanders (observe but deliberately do not participate or get involved, remaining neutral), participant followers (active engagement), activist followers (eager, energetic and engage either supporting or undermining leaders), diehard followers (deeply devoted to leaders or ready to remove them from their position, are willing to take risks).

The first follower of Challeff's (2009) typology is the partner (support the leader but challenge him/her when needed), the second group addressed in Challeff's (2009) study is the implementer (show strong support and are relatively unwilling to challenge the leader), the individualist (willing to challenge policies or procedures if needed), and, finally, the resource follower type (predominately extrinsically motivated, shows low commitment to the leader or the organization).

Carsten et al. (2010) conducted the first formal empirical study to understand how followers themselves constructed followership. Using an exploratory qualitative

approach, these authors found that followers group themselves into one of three categories: proactive followers (they have more influence in the leadership process since they proactively challenge a leader's opinions and ideas and voluntarily provide information and feedback without being asked to do so), active followers (even though they voice their opinions when given the opportunity, they remain obedient, loyal and don't challenge the leaders' opinions even when they don't agree with the leader) and passive followers (they are loyal, supportive and obey leaders´ directives without question). The different follower schema that are identified in this typology are the most recently used and cited in the followership literature (e.g. Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe & Carsten) since it stresses that the context is a key factor in whether followers can enact their schema (Carsten et al., 2010).

This diversity of follower typologies highlights that different followers hold different types of role orientations, which influence differentially their leaders and the leadership process. Depending on the behaviors that followers choose to exhibit (e.g. from employees who narrowly define their tasks in terms of their formal job requirements to employees who proactively engage in upward influence tactics), the outcomes of the leadership process will be necessarily different. That is, even when followers choose to act as "passive bystanders", they are, in fact, behaving as agentic beings who actively shape their environments.

Follower-centered approaches to leadership

Even though some approaches (mainly contingency theories and LMX theory) highlighted that the alignment of a leaders' behavioral style and the context, which includes aspects of followers, is an important precursor of leadership effectiveness, followers are still considered simply features or a passive part of the leader's context (Oc & Bashshur, 2013). A truly explicit follower-centered approach did not appear until

the emergence of implicit leadership theories (e.g., Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; Lord et al., 1984; Offermann, Kennedy & Wirtz, 1994), implicit followership theories (e.g. Sy, 2010) or the romance of leadership (Meindl, 1990; Meindl, Ehrlich & Dukerich 1985), which are described in the next sections.

Follower-centered approaches view leadership as a social construction and propose that followers are active causal agents who play a significant role in the leadership process (Brown, 2012). Good examples of this are the field and laboratory studies developed by Grant, Gino & Hofmann (2011) in which they demonstrated that employee proactivity reverses the effect of leader extraversion on group performance, such that when followers are more proactive, leader extraversion is negatively, rather than positively, related to group performance. Hence, this study stresses that employee behaviors are not only caused by leader characteristics and behaviors but rather employee behaviors (i.e. proactive behaviors) also shape and alter the effects of leader characteristics (i.e. extraversion) on group outcomes.

Implicit Leadership Theories

ILTs (Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; Lord, Foti & De Vader, 1984; Offermann, Kennedy & Wirtz, 1994) represent the first shift from a leader-centered to a follower-centered perspective of leadership, by arguing that follower perceptions, preferences or attitudes can shape leadership processes (Oc & Bashshur, (2013). In short, ILTs represent followers' implicit beliefs and assumptions regarding the characteristics of leader effectiveness, which translate into prototypes for an ideal leader in a given situation or context (Lord et al., 1984).

Prior research on leadership tended to view ILTs as a source of bias in leadership measurement (e.g., Eden & Leviathan, 1975; Gioia & Sims, 1985). Therefore, almost all studies on ILTs developed in the 1970s to early 1990s were

studies conducted in laboratory settings aiming to focus on issues related to content and measurement (Epitropaki et al., 2013). It was only during the 1990s that research on ILTs was conducted in organizational contexts mainly due to Lord and Maher's (1991) work, which advanced our understanding of ILTs by offering a robust theoretical rationale for the role of ILTs in the context of real manager-follower dyads. Even though some field research examining ILTs has been conducted since then (e.g., Engle & Lord, 1997; Epitropaki & Martin, 2005), the number of studies is relatively small in comparison to laboratory experiments or to research on other leadership constructs (Epitropaki et al., 2013).

Prototypes in cognitive categorization theory

Shortly defined, schemas are the cognitive organization systems that provide individuals with a pre-existing cognitive framework and are used to encode (and compare) incoming information about stimuli (Tesser, 1978; Fiske & Linville, 1980). This cognitive structure should affect the individuals' subsequent judgments, expectations and information processing. Cognitive prototypes are commonly used forms of schemas that are used during information processing (Cantor & Mischel, 1979) and constitute sets of the most common features of a category widely shared or salient features of members in some category (including objects or people) (Phillips & Lord, 1982; Rosch, 1978).

Prototypes in ILTs

According to Lord, Foti and Phillips (1982) people use the same cognitive categorization process described above to process incoming information about leaders. Hence, followers possess a wide array of contextually-based prototypic representations of leaders organized in a hierarchical structure composed by three distinct hierarchical levels that differ on their level of abstraction (Lord & Maher, 1991; Lord et al., 1984,

1982): a) the superordinate level contains generalized information including, for example, the differences between a leader and a non-leader; b) the basic-level representations are more specific categories that hold information about the context. For example, Solano (2006) found that follower preferences about different types of leaders altered according to the context; c) the subordinate level contains multiple representations of leaders (e.g., gender and organizational level differences) also depending on the context, what require different patterns of actions and characteristics.

These schema enable "individuals to distinguish leaders from non-leaders and make sense of a leader's behavior by assimilating their specific experience with general knowledge about leadership (…) and are subsequently used during information processing so that different individuals who resemble a perceiver's expectations for leadership can all be classified as leaders and treated equivalently" (Shondrick, Dinh, & Lord, 2010, p. 961).

ILTs are formed through socialization and shaped by individual's past experience and unique personal interactions (Keller, 1999, 2003, Lord; Foti, & Phillips, 1982; Lord & Maher, 1991; Lord et al., 1984) and activated in a recognition-based approach when followers match a target's features to preexisting mental representations of a leader (i.e. a prototype) (Lord & Maher, 1991; Lord et al., 1984). ILTs simplify social perceptual processes and relieve resources through social sense making, behavioral expectations and memory guidance. For example, even when little or ambiguous information is provided about the leaders' behaviors, ILTs influence followers' ratings of leadership (Eden & Leviatan, 1975).

Causal attributions are an important area that is closely related to followers' perceptions of their leaders. Schyns and Hansbrough (2008) proposed that employees tend to attribute leaders' failures or mistakes to internal causes if a leader's features do

not match with their preexisting prototypes. Conversely, if a supervisor's characteristics do match with his or her followers ILTs, the employees tend to attribute the same failures or mistakes to external or situational causes.

Implicit leadership profiles

Leadership prototypes consist of multiple profiles of expected leadership features and behaviors (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005). According to ILTs, Individuals form an impression of their manager based on the match between the individual's implicit leadership profile and the supervisor's actual characteristics. The degree to which discrepancies exist between one's implicit leadership profile and their supervisor's actual characteristics subsequently affects the impression that will be formed (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005). Thus, some dimensions are considered prototypic – characteristics that most people would view as desirable indicators of leadership - and other dimensions are viewed as antiprotoypic – characteristics that are seen as socially undesirable, yet may be strongly associated with the idea of leadership for some people (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005). Offermann, Kennedy and Wirtz (1994) identified four prototypic dimensions (sensitivity, intelligence, motivation, and dynamism) and two antiprototypic dimensions (tyranny and masculinity).

Implicit followership theories (IFTs) are based on the same underlying principles upon which implicit leadership theories are based. For example, IFTs are also based on cognitive prototypes, and the match between one person's prototype and another person's actual characteristics. This is explained with more details in the next section.

Implicit Followership Theories

IFTs are defined as ''individuals' personal assumptions about the traits and behaviors that characterize followers'' (Sy, 2010, p. 74). IFTs are cognitive structures

and schemas about the traits and behaviors that characterize followers and can influence the manner in which leaders interact with followers, the relationships between leaders and followers and organizational outcomes (Sy, 2010). These common taxonomic follower prototypes are broader based, they might consist of both positive and negative attributes and are developed through socialization processes and past experiences, stored in memory and activated in a recognition-based approach when individuals interact with members of a particular category (Epitropaki et al., 2013).

Just as in ILTs, IFTs are used as a benchmark to form impressions of followers (Lord & Maher, 1993) and they are expected to influence employee outcomes in two ways: first, leaders who hold more positive IFTs should, on average, have a better relationship with his or her followers and have followers with better outcomes; second, the match between a supervisor' IFTs and the follower's actual features and behavior will also affect leader-employee relationships and follower behaviors (Sy, 2010). Based on the degree of congruence between their IFTs and the target follower, leaders form an impression of followers that influences their behaviors towards followers.

Research on IFTs is noticeably scarce when compared to research on ILTs (Sy, 2010), even though the concept appears in the literature more than two decades ago (e.g. Eden, 1990). Albeit nearly absent, this research stream aims to provide a more holistic view of the leadership process by including followers as a focal element and to examine leaders' thoughts and leaders' perceptions of followers (Sy, 2010). The existing literature on IFTs has found support for the significant effect of positive IFTs on leaders' and followers' wellbeing and liking for each other (Kruse, 2010). Additionally, Johnson and Kedharnath (2010) argued that leaders positive IFTs predict variance beyond leaders' positive affect in followers' attribution of their leaders' level of

charisma, and positive IFTs also predict variance beyond leaders' positive affect in followers' performance.

The role of mediators between IFTs and follower outcomes has also been considered. For example, the Pygmalion effect (Eden, 1992) has been examined as a mediator in the relationship between leaders' IFTs and follower outcomes (Tram, 2010; Whiteley; 2010). Tram's (2010) results on work groups suggest that leaders' positive IFTs may influence a group's expenditure of effort through their impact on group efficacy and performance, whereas Whiteley's (2010) findings on leader-follower dyads suggest that positive IFTs increase followers' expectations of performance, which leads to a better quality of relationship between leaders and followers, and results in a higher level of follower performance.

Romance of Leadership

The romance of leadership (Meindl, 1990; Meindl, Ehrlich & Dukerich 1985) refers to the prominence of leaders and leadership in the way organizational actors and observers address organizational issues and problems, revealing a potential "bias" or "false assumption-making" regarding the relative importance of leadership factors to the functioning of groups and organizations" (Meindl, 1995, p. 330). This approach describes leadership as a social construction created by followers and it clearly differs from leader-centric views since it emphasizes followers' thoughts and contexts for defining leadership itself and for understanding its significance. That is, the actions of followers are assumed to be more influenced by their constructions of the leader's personality, rather than from the real control and influence of the leader (Meindl, 1995). Relying on social psychological measures, Meindl and colleagues (1985) found that the fundamental attribution error leads followers to over-attribute causality for organizational outcomes to the leader (who is the focal point of the group's attention),

under ambiguous conditions in which the true underlying structure was indeterminate (Meindl et al. (1985) than to equally valid alternatives (i.e. subordinates and external causes). This biased pattern of causal attributions was mainly when presented with extreme positive or negative outcomes (Bligh & Schyns, 2007).

Meindl and Ehrlich (1987) sought to explore further the nature and implications of this bias toward the value and significance attached to leadership on evaluations of organizational performance across two studies. In study, 111 M.B.A. students were asked to evaluate quantitative, "bottom-line" business indicators according to four different causal accountings of the organizational performance (leadership, employees, market or government). The results show that evaluations of outcomes attributed to leadership were significantly higher than evaluations of outcomes whose attributions did not presupposes leadership (Meindl & Ehrlich, 1987). Study 2 aimed to focus on the nature and causes of the attributions analyzed in the first study. With this purpose, 132 M.B.A. students were asked to consider the nature and effects of the causal forces that could explain the firm's performance. The results obtained suggest that respondents assumed leadership to have reliable and potent effects on factors with direct causal links to performance variables.

According to Meindl (1985), the significance of leadership to people's organizational experiences, (i.e. this romanticized conception of leadership) provides a sense of comfort and security and it reduces uncertainty. Meindl (1995) highlights that there is a reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers and because leadership actually exists in the minds of followers, leadership outcomes should not be operationalized as the self-perceptions or self-reports of leaders, but as the perceptions of followers (Bligh & Schyns, 2007).

Exploring new avenues for leadership research

The followership approaches just described highlight that leadership involves the contribution of multiple actors and bidirectional influences (i.e., not only more typical hierarchical top-down influences, but also bottom-up follower based approaches) (Dinh et al., 2014). However, the leader-centric view that dominates leadership research, including abusive supervision and ethical leadership fields, tend to disregard the roles of follower, environmental and task characteristics, by overemphasizing the role of leaders and attributing the organizational outcomes to the agency of specific individuals (Dinh et al., 2014). We now attempt to inverse this trend by emphasizing that seemingly independent processes may operate together to affect leadership and organizational outcomes.

For example, enhanced core task or job characteristics (e.g. task significance or skill variety) are associated with higher levels of intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction (Hackman & Oldman, 1976) and are clearly dependent on structural aspects of one's formal description (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006), not directly dependent on leaders' actions. The greater the extent to which certain features characterize the relevant working conditions, the greater the employees' sense of control over their own work, making them less dependent on their leaders (Piccolo, Greenbaum, Den Hartog, & Folger, 2010). As previously discussed, abusive supervision is a subjective assessment made by subordinates, which can be biased by employees' characteristics and situational factors (Mackey et al., 2013). Thus, in order to get to grips with the abusive supervision phenomenon, it is worth to investigate deeper the individual or contextual characteristics that moderate the relationship between subordinates' perceptions of abuse and its negative consequences.

Several studies have examined individual characteristics, e.g., ingratiation, positive affect or emotional intelligence (Harvey et al., 2007; Hu, 2012), as moderators of the abusive supervision-subordinate outcomes relationship, however our understanding of job characteristics that could buffer against the negative consequences of abusive supervision is far from complete or conclusive (Tepper, 2007). To the best of our knowledge, no study has previously examined the moderating role of job or task characteristics in the relationship between abusive supervision perceptions and employee outcomes. Thus, our first research question is:

Research question 1: Do task characteristics buffer the negative consequences of abusive supervision?

In an attempt to answer this research question, our first two studies, *Abusive Supervision, Psychosomatic Symptoms and Deviance: Can Job Autonomy Make a Difference?* and *The Relationship between Abusive Supervision, Distributive Justice and Job Satisfaction: A Substitutes for Leadership Approach* set out to broaden the study of abusive supervision by proposing that job autonomy, role clarity and job resources characteristics might buffer the adverse effects of abusive supervision for employee's well-being, attitudes and behaviors.

The research on ethical leadership has mostly assumed a leader-centric approach, overlooking how follower characteristics form boundary conditions for ethical leadership (e.g. van Gils et al., 2015). Since it might be difficult to ensure that leaders always act in an ethical way, it is essential to identify follower characteristics that could buffer the negative consequences of low standards of ethical leadership. Recent research has started to analyze the influence of follower characteristics in the relationship between ethical leadership perceptions and outcomes (e.g. Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Mayer et al., 2009; van Gils et al., 2015; Walumbwa et al., 2011),

however, researchers have continued to call for more research attention to follower characteristics in ethical leadership research (e.g. Avey, Palanski & Walumbwa, 2011). On the basis of existing theory and research and the interest in identifying factors that enhance or mitigate the influence of ethical leader behavior in organizations, we also explored the following research question:

Research question 2: Does proactive personality impact the effects of ethical leadership on follower behaviors?

Despite widespread evidence that leaders are an important source of employee emotions at work, there is little empirical research linking leaders' behaviors to employee emotions (Bono, Foldes, Vinson & Muros, 2007). Additionally Brown and Mitchell (2010) emphasize that research on ethical leadership "has not fully considered the role that emotions play in employees' perceptions of and reactions to ethical and unethical leadership" (p. 592). Thus, aiming to assess affective mechanisms as a process by which ethical leadership is linked to follower outcome, we formulated the following research question:

Research question 3: Do follower emotions constitute a linking mechanism that explain the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors?

Thus, our second study *Shaping emotional reactions to ethical behaviors: proactive personality as a substitute for ethical leadership* addresses these calls by suggesting that followers' proactive personality may impact the effects of ethical leadership on organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs). Additionally, we ground our work in affective-events theory (AET: Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) to examine emotions as a linking mechanism of the ethical leadership – OCBs relationship.

The leadership literature increasingly recognizes leadership as a complex process among leaders, followers, and contexts (Osborn, Hunt & Jauch, 2002; Shamir & Howell, 1999). From a relational and constructionist view of leadership and followership, organizational outcomes are the result of mutual influences between leaders and followers, embedded in a particular context (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). Even though it is widely accepted that leadership and followership do not exist in a *vaccum*, context remains a largely neglected side of leadership (Osborn, Hunt & Jauch, 2002). Additionally, future work on followership research should examine how followers' beliefs, expectations, values, or attitudes actively and explicitly determine the nature of the relationship formed with the leader and performance outcomes (Shamir, 2007). Specifically, LMX acknowledges that followers' motivation and abilities contribute to the quality of the leader-member relationship, but it does not fully developed the manner in which followers and contextual variables influence the nature of the relationship (Graen & Ul-Bien, 1995). It was with these arguments in mind that we identified the following research question:

Research question 4: What is the role played by followership schema and contextual variables in the LMX process?

Hence, our fourth study, *A followership approach to leadership: the interplay between leadership, context and follower behaviors*, was designed with these questions in mind. This study aims to explore the linkages between followership and LMX quality that, in combination with the organizational context (i.e. top management openness) enhance follower work behaviors.

PART II – EMPIRICAL STUDIES

STUDY 1: ABUSIVE SUPERVISION, PSYCHOSOMATIC SYMPTOMS AND

DEVIANCE: CAN JOB AUTONOMY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?[2]

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[2] Velez, M. J.; & Neves, P. (2015). Abusive Supervision, Psychosomatic Symptoms, and Deviance: Can Job Autonomy Make a Difference? .*Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*.

Abstract

Recently, interest in abusive supervision has grown (Tepper, 2000). However, little is still known about organizational factors that can reduce its adverse effects on employee behavior. Based on the Job Demands–Resources Model (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner & Schaufeli, 2001), we predict that job autonomy acts as a buffer of the positive relationship between abusive supervision, psychosomatic symptoms and deviance. Therefore, when job autonomy is low, a higher level of abusive supervision should be accompanied by increased psychosomatic symptoms and thus lead to higher production deviance. When job autonomy is high, abusive supervision should fail to produce increased psychosomatic symptoms and thus should not lead to higher production deviance. Our model was explored among a sample of 170 supervisor-subordinate dyads from four organizations. The results of the moderated mediation analysis supported our hypotheses. That is, abusive supervision was significantly related to production deviance via psychosomatic symptoms when job autonomy was low, but not when job autonomy was high. These findings suggest that job autonomy buffers the impact of abusive supervision perceptions on psychosomatic symptoms, with consequences for production deviance.

Keywords: abusive supervision, job autonomy, psychosomatic symptoms, deviance

Introduction

In the past decade, the destructive side of leadership has become an increasingly popular topic among organizational researchers (e.g., Aasland, Skogstad & Einarsen, 2008), partly due to its negative consequences for employee well-being and performance (Tepper, 2007). The most studied negative workplace supervisor behavior is *abusive supervision* that has been defined by Tepper (2000, p.178) as "subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact".

This definition includes several features. First, it presupposes a continuing exposure to abusive behavior. Supervisors engage in abusive behaviors for a purpose (e.g., to elicit high performance or to send the message that mistakes will not be tolerated) and abusive supervisors may mistreat their subordinates to accomplish objectives other than causing injury (Tepper, 2007). Second, abusive supervision refers to behaviors that reflect indifference, as well as hostility (Tepper, 2000). Finally, abusive supervision involves a subjective assessment and depends on subordinates' perceptions of abuse and may be colored by characteristics of the observer and/or subordinate (e.g., personality, demographic profile) and of the context in which the assessment is made (e.g., the work environment, coworker perceptions). Examples of behaviors that fall within the domain of abusive supervision include public criticism, invasion of privacy, taking undue credit, inappropriately assigning blame, rudeness, loud and angry tantrums, inconsiderate actions, coercion or withholding important information (Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter & Kacmar, 2007; Tepper, 2000; Tepper et al., 2006).

Researchers have found that, compared to their nonabused counterparts, subordinates who perceive their supervisors as more abusive are less satisfied with their

jobs, less committed to their organization, trust their coworkers less, more psychologically distressed, more resistant to their supervisors' influence attempts, and less willing to perform prosocial organizational behaviors (e.g., Tepper, 2000; Tepper, Duffy, Henle & Lambert, 2006; Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler, & Ensley, 2004; Tepper, Duffy, & Shaw, 2001; Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002).

The most common theoretical explanation for the relationship between abusive supervision and follower behavior is social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). We propose an additional mechanism to explain the complex relationship between abusive supervision and production deviance: health impairment. Accordingly, the primary objective of this study is to examine psychosomatic symptoms as a key mechanism of the abusive supervision – production deviance relationship. We ground our work in the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R model: Demerouti et al., 2001), which proposes that job demands are initiators of a health impairment process and job resources are initiators of a motivational process.

We also respond to a gap in the literature by identifying possible organizational buffers of abusive supervision. Previous studies have identified subordinates' individual characteristics that could buffer the adverse effects of abusive supervision (Aryee, Sun, Chen, & Debrah, 2008), such as conscientiousness (Tepper, Duffy & Shaw, 2001) or power distance orientation (Lian, Ferris, & Brown, 2012a; Lin, Wang & Chen, 2013). However, little is known about the moderating effect that job resources (i.e. job autonomy) play in the negative effects of abusive supervision on organizational functioning. The relationship between job demands and strain is weaker for employees enjoying a high degree of job resources, such as job security, team climate, role clarity or job autonomy (e.g., Bakker, Demerouti, Taris, Schaufeli & Schreurs, 2003). We specifically examine job autonomy, since it provides opportunity for personal control

over important decisions in subordinates' work, in the indirect relationship between abusive supervision and production deviance trough increased psychosomatic symptoms.

The present research contributes to the literature in the following ways: we contribute to the abusive supervision literature by investigating an alternative mechanism of the abusive supervision-production deviance behaviors relationship. Past research has mainly drawn on social exchanges theory to explain the relationship between abusive supervision and employees' outcomes. We rely on the JD-R model (Demerouti et al., 2001) to propose that abusive supervision exhausts employees' physical resources and evokes an energy depletion process, leading to psychosomatic symptoms and impairing performance. We are also broadening the study of abusive supervision since previous studies have generally described abusive supervision based on the characteristics and personality traits of supervisors, and have mostly ignored the variability that exists between individuals and different contexts (Martinko, Harvey, Sikora & Douglas, 2009). Thus, the current study aims to fill out this gap by proposing that job resources (i.e. job autonomy) buffer the adverse effects of abusive supervision for employee's well-being and behaviors.

Technically, we are describing moderated mediation, since the mediating process that is responsible for producing the effect on the outcome (i.e. production deviance) depends on the value of a moderator variable (i.e. job autonomy) (Morgan-Lopez & MacKinnon, 2006; Muller, Judd & Yzerbyt, 2005).

The proposed model is represented in Figure 1.

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┌──────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
│ Abusive  │  │ Psychosomatic│  │ Production   │
│Supervision│─▶│  Symptoms   │─▶│ Deviance *   │
└──────────┘  └──────────────┘  └──────────────┘
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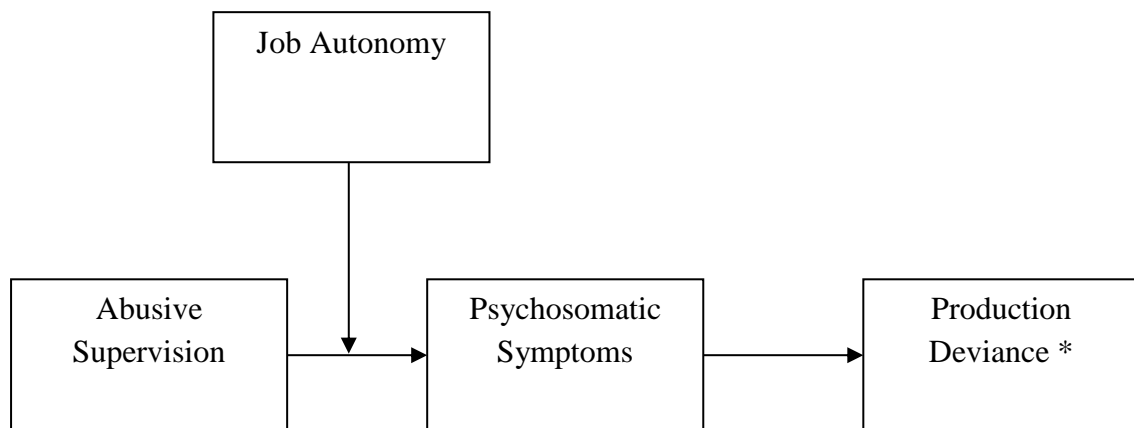
Figure 1. Hypothesized moderated mediation model

* Assessed from supervisors

Abusive Supervision and Production Deviance

Empirical evidences suggest that abusive supervision is related both to decreases in organizational citizenship behaviors and performance, as well as increases in counterproductive behaviors (e.g., Aryee, Sun, Chen & Debrah, 2007; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Tepper, 2000). In fact, there is an increased interest in the relationship between abusive supervision and counterproductive behaviors (see Tepper (2007) for a review). This is mostly due to the potential consequences of these harmful behaviors for organizational productivity (Dalal, 2005) because in reaction to abusive supervision employees may engage in deviant behaviors, such as theft fraud or working slower than usual (Tepper et al., 2009).

Generally speaking, counterproductive work behaviors are responses to job stressors at work (Fox, Spector & Miles, 2001) and these behaviors are commonly divided into two dimensions: organizational and interpersonal (Bruk-Lee & Spector, 2006; Mulkia, Jaramillo & Locanderc, 2006). Organizational counterproductive work behaviors include production deviance, a less visible and more passive behavior that can be difficult to prove (e.g., failure to complete a task or do it correctly), withdrawal of

effort, decrease of productivity and property deviance (e.g., damage of organization equipment) (Mulkia et al., 2006; Spector et al., 2006). On the other hand, interpersonal counterproductive work behaviors are divided into political deviance (for example, spreading negative rumors about the organization) and personal aggression, which can include abuse, rudeness or physical assault (Mulkia et al., 2006).

Prior studies in this area have drawn mostly on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) to understand the relationship between abusive supervision and workplace deviance. Social exchange theory proposes that social exchanges presuppose a generalized norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), that is, when parties provide benefits or injuries to one another, there is an expectation of repayment for the benefits or injuries received. When subordinates receive poor treatment, they are likely to reciprocate with negative behaviors (e.g., Thau, Bennett, Mitchell & Mars, 2009). Supervisory mistreatment provokes an imbalance in the relationship that subordinates seek to rectify by engaging in retaliatory behaviors (Lian, Ferris, Morrison & Brown, 2013; Thau et al., 2009).

Although social exchange is commonly invoked to explain the relation between abusive supervision and workplace deviance, research suggests a wide range of reasons why employees present deviant behaviors (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). For example, based on a self-regulation failure perspective (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996), abusive supervision forces subordinates to deplete emotional and cognitive resources to manage and interpret the abuse, leaving fewer resources to self-regulate their deviant impulses (Lian et al., 2013; Thau, Aquino & Poortvliet, 2007; Thau & Mitchell, 2010).

Regardless of the theoretical explanations, previous evidence points to the key role played by abusive supervision in predicting workplace deviance (Lian, Ferris &

Brown, 2012b; Lian et al., 2013; Mitchel & Ambrose, 2007; Tepper et al., 2008; Tepper et al., 2009; Thau et. al, 2009). Therefore, we propose:

Hypothesis 1: Abusive Supervision will be significantly related to production deviance.

Role of Psychosomatic Symptoms

Although the most common sources of work stress identified in the literature are workload and role stressors (for example, role conflict, role ambiguity or role overload) (Boyar et al., 2003; Cooper et al., 2001; Jackson & Schuler, 1985; Tubre & Collins, 2000), stressors resulting from the social work environment, such as conflict with supervisors, have begun to receive greater attention (Bruk-Lee & Spector, 2006). Previous research has concluded that many stress-related symptoms and illnesses arise when the relationship between employees and their leaders is perceived as psychologically unhealthy, making it one of the most common sources of stress in organizations (Skakona, Nielsenb, Borgb & Guzman, 2010). Work stress is generally defined as employee's feelings of job-related hardness, tension, anxiety, frustration, worry, emotional exhaustion and distress and can also lead to various health problems such as neck pain, stressed-out eyes, painful hands, hypertension, heart problems or difficulty in sleeping (Kanjia & Chopra, 2009).

Managerial practices and leadership skills in general, such as psychological climate for health, consideration for the health of subordinates, personal support or feedback, influence employees' physical health and work-related well-being (Gilbreath & Benson, 2004; Westerlund et al., 2010; Gurt, Schwennen & Elke, 2011; Seltzer & Numerof, 1988). Kelloway, Sivanathan, Francis and Barling (2005) suggest that aggressive acts by supervisors might have more deleterious effects on subordinates' outcomes than similar acts committed by other actors. In fact, many employees indicate

their supervisors as being among the primary sources of their stress at work, which is detrimental for a number of dimensions, such as absenteeism, job satisfaction, productivity, and most importantly health (Schaubroeck, Walumbwa, Ganster, & Kepes, 2007). For example, poor supervisor-subordinate relationships, characterized by reduced worker control and participation, low goal clarity, supportiveness and quality of communication, lack of feedback and high performance pressure, have been associated with higher stress (Borrill & Stride, 2004; Dierendonck, Haynes, Mullen, Kelloway & Teed, 2011; Offermann & Hellmann, 1996). Another study showed (Gilbreath & Benson, 2004) that subordinates whose supervisors exhibited a highly structuring, but low consideration style of supervision, accompanied by harsh criticism were also more prone to present symptoms of burnout. Conversely, transformational leadership has been associated with decreased work related stress and employees' health complaints (Westerlund et al., 2010).

The aforementioned studies suggest that abusive supervision is related to health symptoms, suggesting an additional mechanism to explain the relationship between abusive supervision and workplace deviance. We argue that the JD-R model (Demerouti et al., 2001) also provides strong theoretical foundations to examine this relationship. This model assumes that employees' well-being may be produced by two specific sets of working conditions: job demands and job resources (Bakker et al., 2007).

Job demands represent those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (i.e., cognitive or emotional) effort on the part of employees and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs (Demerouti et al., 2001). As we have already noted, abusive supervision presupposes a continuing exposure to abusive behaviors (Tepper, 2000) and has been linked with several manifestations of psychological distress including anxiety,

depression, burnout, job strain and somatic health complaints (Tepper, 2007). In this sense, abusive supervision is itself a job demand, since prolonged exposure to abusive supervision increasingly wears subordinates' personal energy and exceeds subordinates' adaptive capability, engendering feelings of exhaustion (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). In turn, job resources refer to those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

The JDR-model posits that job demands and job resources evoke two relatively independent processes: a health impairment process, in which high job demands exert an energy-draining effect on employees through a stress process, being associated with burnout, perceived ill-health, sickness absence or health complaints (Hu, Schaufeli & Taris 2011); and a motivational process in which job resources induce employees to attain their work goals (Guglielmi, Simbula, Schaufeli & Depolo, 2012). Additionally, job demands require sustained effort and are associated with physiological or psychological costs (e.g., psychosomatic symptoms) (Bakker et al., 2010). A number of studies have shown that exposure to abusive and tyrannical leaders have a negative impact on victim's health and well-being, including a wide range of psychosomatic symptoms, such as sleep problems, back and headaches and stomach problems (e.g., Hoel et al., 2010; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002; Rafferty, Restubog & Jimmieson, 2010; Tepper, 2007). Targets of destructive leaders also spend much of their time and energy simply trying to cope with supervisory abusive behaviors, therefore impairing performance (Hoel et al., 2010).

Overall, excessive job demands tend to reduce the ability to exert control over the work environment, which in turn adversely affects the capacity to perform in an efficient way (Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004). For example, Veldhuizen, Gaillard

and de Vries (2003) found that exhausted participants had problems investing sufficient energy in their tasks. Moreover, their performance results decreased since they reacted more slowly and produced a smaller number of correct responses. Exhaustion depletes the available energy of employees and leads to an impairment of the efforts put into work, and, as a result, individuals tend to perform ineffectively (Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004; de Jonge et al., 2012). This happens not only because psychosomatic symptoms negatively affect the quantity (employees might work more slowly than usual or have to repeat tasks) but also the quality of work (employees might make more and/or more serious mistakes) (Beil, Weiss, Barros & MacDermid, 2005).

In the present study, we apply this logic by conceptualizing psychosomatic symptoms as a mechanism linking abusive supervision to workplace deviance. Abusive behaviors (such as speaking rudely to subordinates or publicly ridiculing and undermining them) require sustained psychological effort and, consequently, heighten employee psychological and physical distress (Bamberger & Bacharach, 2006; Rafferty, Restubog & Jimmieson, 2010; Tepper, 2001). Individuals in abusive supervisory relationships experience more psychosomatic symptoms as part of the health impairment process, increasing the inability to perform work tasks efficiently (production deviance). This leads to our second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Psychosomatic symptoms will mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and production deviance.

Job Autonomy as a Moderator

The existent literature about abusive supervision focuses, almost exclusively, on the negative effects of abusive supervision and leaves out strategies organizations can use to minimize such negative impact (Harvey et al., 2007). One of the assumptions of the JD-R model is that job resources (e.g., job autonomy) buffer the impact of job

demands (e.g., abusive supervision). The buffering hypothesis proposes that the relationship between job demands and strain is weaker for those enjoying a high degree of job resources (Bakker, Demerouti, Taris, Schaufeli & Schreurs, 2003; Caplan, Cobb, French, Van Harrison & Pinneau, 1975). When job demands are high (as is the case of abusive supervision), if employees are provided with increased job resources (e.g. autonomy, social support, supervisory coaching, or feedback), they should be better equipped to deal with those same demands. Buffers can work in multiple ways, by reducing the tendency of organizational properties to generate specific stressors, altering the perceptions and cognitions evoked by such stressors, moderating responses that follow the appraisal process, or reducing the health-damaging consequences of such responses (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992).

Job autonomy has been identified as one of the most important features of work design with a significant impact on employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction and motivation (Parker & Turner, 2001). It refers to the degree of discretion, freedom or independence employees possess in making job related decisions, such as the timing or methods of their tasks (Hackman & Oldman, 1976). Subordinates with high job autonomy can determine their methods, procedures to follow, work scheduling and overall decision making concerning their tasks (Ng, Soon & Chan, 2008). Contrarily, low levels of job autonomy suggest that subordinates have reduced choices in terms of their work tasks and the strategies available for fulfilling those tasks (Wang & Cheng, 2009). Job autonomy has been positively related to work-related behaviors (for example, performance), attitudes (such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment and motivation), well-being, self-efficacy or personal initiative (e.g., Langfred & Moye, 2004; Morgeson, Delaney-Klinger, & Hemingway, 2005; Niesse & Volmer, 2010) and negatively related to employee's physical and emotional distress (Tai & Liu, 2007).

Autonomy is crucial for the coping process because employees can decide for themselves when and how to respond to their job demands, therefore reducing their stressful impact on well-being (Bakker et al., 2005). Similar findings were reported by Xanthopoulou and colleagues (2006), which revealed that autonomy proved to be the most important buffers of job demands for both burnout dimensions (i.e. cynicism and exhaustion), when compared to support and professional development. Moreover, it provides employees with a greater sense of control over their jobs and consequently they perceive role stress in a more healthy way (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). This highlights that is not the objective events or stimuli in the environment that provoke adverse outcomes (strains), but rather the perceived lack of job resources (e.g. work autonomy) to cope with these threats or job demands (Fox, Spector & Miles, 2001).

Increased job autonomy should help employees to cope with stressful situations, such as abusive supervision, by allowing employees to decide for themselves when and how to respond to their work demands and reducing their dependence on the supervisor. Additionally, having the capacity to make decisions concerning the accomplishment of tasks may lead subordinates to be less sensitive to abusive supervisory behaviors. Furthermore, assigned control over job tasks enables individuals to exercise personal control within the work environment thus helping them escape from the tight control of their abusive supervisors, again making them less vulnerable to supervisory mistreatment. Conversely, when job autonomy is low, employees are likely to be more affected by abusive treatment on the part of their supervisor.

We suggest that, aligned with the JD-R model, the relationship between abusive supervision and production deviance via psychosomatic symptoms should be affected by job autonomy. When job autonomy is low, a higher level of abusive supervision should be accompanied by increased psychosomatic symptoms (Bakker et al., 2005;

Fox et al., 2001) and thus lead to higher production deviance. When job autonomy is high, abusive supervision should fail to produce increased psychosomatic symptoms, as employees feel they have control over their job and can escape from the tight control of their abusive supervisors, and thus should not lead to an impairment of their work efforts, as reflected in production deviance. Thus, we propose:

Hypothesis 3: The indirect effect of abusive supervision on production deviance through psychosomatic symptoms will be significant when job autonomy is low but not when it is high.

Method

Sample and Procedure

We contacted the Human Resource managers of four organizations, all of which agreed to participate in our study. We conducted brief meetings with the Human Resource managers of these four organizations, where we explained the purpose of the study and its multi-source research method. The four Human Resource departments invited 39 supervisors to participate in the study. Twenty-two (54.6%) supervisors of these four organizations accepted the invitation. We then invited their subordinates, that is, 263 full-time employees, to participate in the study.

Two sets of questionnaires were used in the study: one for subordinates and another for their immediate supervisors. We coded each questionnaire with a researcher-assigned identification number in order to match employees' responses with their immediate supervisors' evaluations. For those that accepted the invitation, questionnaires were distributed individually (both subordinates and supervisors), and collected directly by the researchers to ensure confidentiality. A letter was attached to each of the questionnaires to inform respondents about the aim of the survey and the

voluntary nature of their participation, as well as to reassure them of the confidentiality of their responses.

The sample size was reduced to 201 employees (76% response rate) owing to the employees who declined to participate. The second set of questionnaires was delivered to the supervisors of the employees that accepted the invitation and the twenty-two supervisors provided evaluations for 170 subordinates. Thus, the final sample size was comprised of 170 subordinate-supervisor dyads. The number of subordinates managed by each supervisor ranged from 1 to 19, with a mean of 7.7.

The dyads came from different sectors, including food and agriculture (54%), culture (29%) and marketing (17%). In these organizations, the size of the work groups ranged from four to thirty-five members. The Human Resources representatives also enabled us to identify teams (i.e. members who report to the same supervisor and work interdependently to achieve shared goals), and even though the teams that integrate our sample came from diverse organizational settings, they have well-defined group tasks and perform similar functions that include administrative support, human resource management and financial management.

Regarding subordinates, 119 employees were from two public organizations and 51 employees from two private organizations. One public organization had approximately 450 employees, the other had about 55 employees; one private organization had approximately 85 employees and the other had about 22 employees. To examine if our sample was representative of the four organizations, we compared their demographic characteristics. Even though the four organizations had 612 employees and 39 supervisors and we collected data from 170 subordinates and 22 supervisors, we consider that this sample is representative of the larger organizations; it is similar to the overall characteristics of the four organizations. Overall, 21.2% of the

surveyed employees did not complete high school (20.1% of the employees considering the large organizations), 34.4% of the participants had completed high school (33.2%) and 44.4% had a university degree (46.7%). Average organizational tenure was approximately 4.7 years (5.2 years), 42.6% of employees were under 45 years old (42.6% of employees were under 48 years old) and 65.7% were women (63%). For supervisors, 1.8% had completed high school (2.2% of the supervisors considering the large organizations) and 98.2% had a university degree (97.8%). Average organizational tenure was 10 years (13 years), 50% of supervisors were under 45 years old (48% were under 45 years old) and 50.7% were women (51%).

Measures

For all measures, with the exception of control variables, respondents rated their agreement with each statement using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree, for abusive supervision, job autonomy and production deviance; 1 = Never, 5 = Every day, for psychosomatic symptoms). We present the source of the measures, supervisors or subordinates, in parentheses.

Control Variables. Gender, age, organizational tenure, education and tenure with the supervisor have been found to be related to psychosomatic symptoms and production deviance (e.g., Ali & Davies, 2003; Birditt, Fingerman, & Almeida, 2005; Borglin et al., 2005; Hobfoll, 2001; Indartono & Chen, 2010; Moser & Galais, 2007; NG & Feldman, 2009; Quinones, Ford & Teachout, 1995; Schreudera, Roelena, Koopmansb & Groothoff, 2008; Sparrow & Davies, 1998), and therefore we analyzed whether we should control for their influence in our model. Following the recommendations offered by Becker (2005), we controlled for subordinates' gender and tenure with supervisor in our analysis because these were the only control variables significantly correlated with our outcome variables. We coded gender as male=1 and

female =2 and tenure with supervisor as less than 6 months = 1; between 6 months and 1 year = 2; between 1 and 5 years = 3; between 5 and 10 years = 4; between 10 and 20 years = 5; over 20 years = 6.

Abusive Supervision (subordinate measure). Subordinates reported the frequency with which their supervisors presented abusive behaviors using Tepper's (2000) 15-item scale. Sample items include 'My supervisor ridicules me' and 'My supervisor does not allow me to interact with my coworkers'. Cronbach alpha was .87.

Job autonomy (subordinate measure). Subordinates indicated their perceptions of job autonomy using the Beehr's (1976) 4-item Job Autonomy Scale. Sample items include 'I have a lot of freedom to decide how I perform assigned tasks'. Cronbach's alpha was .69.

Psychosomatic Symptoms (subordinate measure). Subordinates were asked how often they felt psychosomatic symptoms during the previous 6 months with six items adapted from Nomura et al. (2007) ('How often do you have: Sleeping problems; Headaches; Backaches; Indigestion/Acidity in stomach; Fatigue/Lack of energy; Flutter'). Cronbach's alpha was .80.

Production Deviance (supervisor measure). Supervisors evaluated their subordinates' production deviance behaviors with four items from Robinson and Bennett's (1995) workplace deviance measure (e.g., 'This subordinate stays out of sight to avoid work'; 'This subordinate intentionally works slow'). These items assess behaviors that reflect employees' withdrawal of work efforts and decrease of productivity. Cronbach's alpha was .85.

Results

The participants in this study were from different organizations and were nested within 22 supervisors (or teams). Thus, our data are potentially not independent and need to be analyzed at two levels (individual and supervisor). To determine the appropriate level of analysis, we computed the intraclass coefficient 1 (ICC(1), which represents the amount of variance that resides between supervisors) and the intraclass coefficient 2 (ICC(2), which represents the stability of the supervisor means) for each variable. The ICC(1)s for abusive supervision, job autonomy, psychosomatic symptoms and production deviance were .11, .13, .12 and .11, respectively. The ICC(2)s for the same variables were .68, .72, .72 and .71, respectively. On the one hand, ICC(1) values are all significant and lie within the range of ICC(1) values commonly encountered in applied field research (e.g., Bliese, 2000), suggesting moderate group-level variance. On the other hand, ICC(2) values do not reach satisfactory levels for any of the four measures. ICC(2) is generally interpreted as a reliability coefficient, and the appropriate cutoff scores depend on the intended use of the construct, but should generally be .80 or higher (see Lance et al., 2006; Nunnally, 1978). As such, neither composition method yields a group construct that allows reliable comparison of team scores. These results, coupled with Kenny's (1995) proposal that it is relatively safe to analyze data at the individual level if ICC(1)s are below .30, lead us to keep our analyzes at the individual level.

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables in the study. Reliability coefficients are reported along the main diagonal in the table. Abusive supervision presented significant correlations with psychosomatic symptoms (r= .19, p<.01), job autonomy (r= -.15, p<.05) and production deviance (r= .20, p<.01). Psychosomatic symptoms were also significantly related to all variables, including our

control variables: gender (r=.21, p< .01), such that women reported more psychosomatic symptoms than men; and were negatively correlated with tenure with supervisor (r=-.20, p< .01). Since our sample included both public and private organizations, we conducted an independent-samples t-test to test if there were differences between these types of organizations. Results suggested that there were no significant differences between public and private organizations in psychosomatic symptoms (t (96) = .80, p>.05) or production deviance (t (80) = -1,32, p> .05), and therefore we did not control for it in our model.

In order to examine the representativeness of our sample we conducted chi-square analyses and analyses of variance (ANOVAs) tests to compare the characteristics of our sample with the overall demographics of the organizations from which data were sampled. Chi-square and ANOVAs results indicated no significant differences between our sample and the sampled organizations' population on subordinates' ($\chi^2(1) = .588$, *ns*) or supervisors' gender ($\chi^2(1) = .412$, *ns*), age ($F(1,392) = 2.238$, *ns;* $F(1,17) = .242$, *ns*, respectively), organizational tenure ($F(1,153) = .665$, *ns;* $F(1,001) = .000$, *ns,* respectively) and, finally, education level ($\chi^2(4) = 4.048$, *ns* ; $\chi^2(2) = .556$, *ns, respectively*). The non-significant results provided us with some degree of confidence that sampling bias was not a major concern in the present study.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables [a][b][c]

	Mean[a]	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Subordinates' gender		.48	-					
2. Subordinates' tenure with supervisor	3.13	1.1	.02	-				
3. Abusive Supervision	1.66	.60	.09	-.05	(.87)			
4. Psychosomatic Symptoms	2.40	.74	.24**	-.19**	.19**	(.80)		
5. Job Autonomy	3.82	.74	-.04	.09	-.18**	-.27**	(.69)	
6. Production Deviance	1.63	.85	.07	-.15	.25**	.20**	-.09	(.85)

Notes. [a] 5-point scales; [b] Cronbach's alphas are displayed on the diagonal in parentheses; [c] Gender (1=male; 2=female); Tenure with supervisor (1 = less than 6 months, 2 = between 6 months and 1 year, 3 = between 1 and 5 years, 4 = between 5 and 10 years, 5 = between 10 and 20 years, 6 = over 20 years); ** $p < .01$, all two-tailed tests.

Test of Hypotheses

The control variables (gender and tenure with supervisor) were significantly related to psychosomatic symptoms (B= .33, p<.01; B= -.11, p<.01, respectively) accounting for 7% of its variance. We used a simple linear regression to test hypothesis 1 by regressing production deviance on abusive supervision, after entering the control variables as a block. According to our expectations, abusive supervision presented a significant relationship with production deviance (B=.31, p <.05), accounting for 5% of its variance. Therefore, hypotheses 1 was supported.

To test the remaining hypotheses, we adopted the bootstrapping procedure outlined by Hayes (2012). The bootstrapping procedure estimates the conditional indirect effect as the mean conditional indirect effect calculated across bootstrap sample estimates, and the standard error of the conditional indirect effect as the standard deviation of the estimates (Preacher, Rucker & Hayes, 2007). Additionally, and following Aiken and West´s recommendation (1991), we centered the predictor variables prior to entering them into the equation.

To test hypothesis 2, a mediational analysis using the bootstrapping approach (Hayes, 2012) was conducted. A bootstrap-based bias corrected and accelerated confidence interval (95%) for the indirect effect was generated by taking 1000 samples from the original data set. The conditional indirect effect of abusive supervision on production deviance through psychosomatic symptoms was significant (B= .19, p< .05), supporting hypothesis 2.

Table 2

Bootstrapping results

Predictors	Mediator Psychosomatic Symptoms				Outcome Production Deviance			
	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1: Control Variables								
Tenure with supervisor	-.11	-2.18**			-.07	-1.81		
Gender	.33	2.85**	.07	.07	.04	.31	.03	.03
Step 2: Main effects								
Abusive Supervision	.13	2.71**			.31	2.59**		
Job Autonomy	.22	1.23	.13	.06	.02	.11	.08	.05
Step 3: Interaction term								
AS X JA	-.24	-2.52**	.16	.03	-.02	-.13	.08	.00
Step 4: Mediator						.		
Psychosomatic Symptoms					.19	2.13*	.10	.02

Notes. * p < .05; ** p < .01; Tabled values are unstandardized regression coefficients; AS – Abusive Supervision; JA – Job Autonomy.

Before testing our moderated mediation hypothesis (Preacher et al., 2007), we examined the simple interaction effects. The interaction term between abusive supervision and job autonomy (B= -.24; p< .01) was also significant, adding 3% to the explained variance of psychosomatic symptoms. Using simple slope analysis, we found

that the positive relationship between abusive supervision and psychosomatic symptoms was significant when job autonomy was low (t=3.15; p<.05), but not when it was high (t=-.52; p>.05) (Figure 2). We then analyzed the conditional indirect effect of abusive supervision on production deviance through psychosomatic symptoms at specific values of the moderator, i.e., job autonomy. In support of hypothesis 3, the indirect effect of abusive supervision X job autonomy on production deviance through psychosomatic symptoms was significant for low (B = .18, p < .05) but not for high job autonomy (B = .11, p > .05). That is, an increase in abusive supervision is related to higher production deviance through heightened psychosomatic symptoms when job autonomy is low. When job autonomy is high, increases in abusive supervision are not related to changes in psychosomatic symptoms or production deviance.
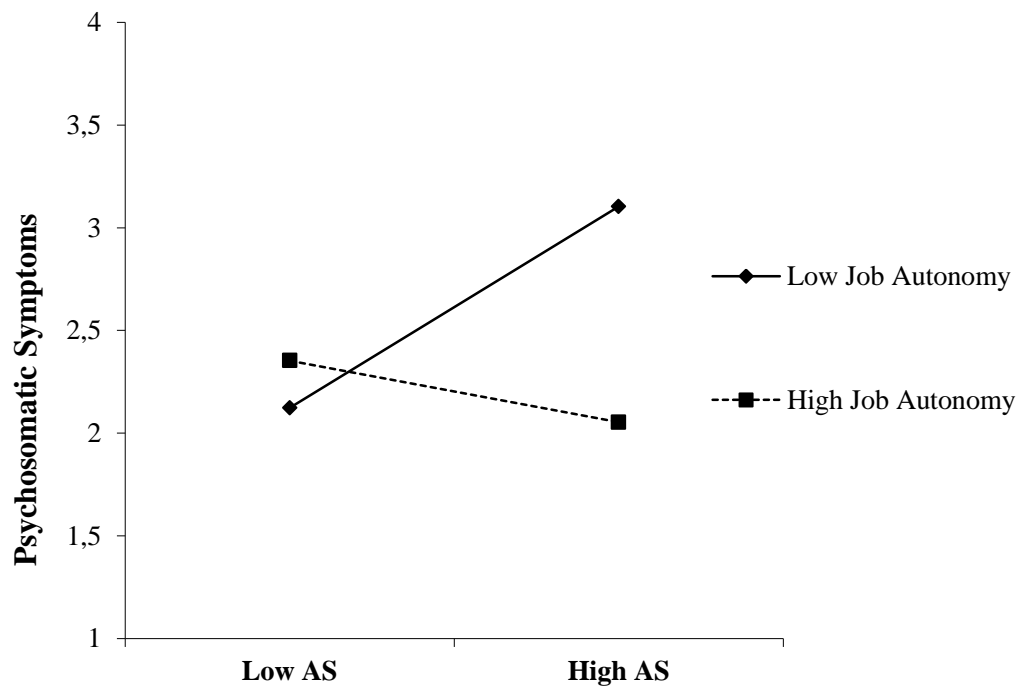
Figure 2. Interaction between Abusive Supervision (AS) and Job Autonomy

Note. AS - Abusive Supervision

Discussion

Our research contributes to a growing body of research exploring abusive supervision in organizations, particularly to the mostly overlooked area concerning potential organizational buffers of the abusive supervision process. Specifically, we were interested in testing the moderating role of a key organizational resource (job autonomy) on the relationship between abusive supervision and negative outcomes for employees (such as health complaints) which in turn impact organizational functioning (production deviant behaviors).

As expected, we found that as abusive supervision increased, employees with low job autonomy experienced higher levels of psychosomatic symptoms. When job autonomy was high, abusive supervision was not significantly related to psychosomatic symptoms. Moreover, we predicted that psychosomatic symptoms would mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and production deviance, conditional on different levels of job autonomy. As expected, psychosomatic symptoms mediated the relationship between the abusive supervision X job autonomy interaction and production deviance, such that abusive supervision was related to production deviance through an increase in psychosomatic symptoms, only when job autonomy was low.

These results are aligned with the JD-R model, which proposes that job resources buffer the impact of job demands on job strain (e.g., Tai & Liu, 2007). For example, Bakker et al.'s (2005) study of 1,000 teachers at a large institute for higher education showed that job demands influenced burnout only if teachers possessed few job resources (autonomy, social support, supervisory coaching, and feedback). In the same vein, Bakker et al. (2003) found that the relationship between job demands (e.g., workload, physical demands, and patient harassment) and feelings of exhaustion

disappeared when homecare professionals possessed many resources (e.g., autonomy, opportunities for professional development, performance feedback).

This study shows that job resources (i.e. job autonomy) are particularly relevant under the highly demanding conditions caused by abusive supervision. Our results support the view that organizations can effectively minimize the negative effects of abusive supervision, namely by providing employees with increased levels of job autonomy; as this is an effective buffer against the pervasive influence of abusive supervision on psychosomatic symptoms. Job autonomy provides freedom and flexibility to manage job tasks (Morgeson et al., 2005) and these aspects become more important when employees are facing abusive supervisors. This is due to the added increased employees' latitude of control over their jobs and increased independence in relation to their supervisors, consequently minimizing its relationship with health complaints (and indirectly production-related deviant behaviors).

Implications for Theory and Practice

This research makes several contributions for theory and practice. Our findings advance previous research by suggesting an alternative mechanism of the abusive supervision-production deviance relationship. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to use the JD-R model (Demerouti et al., 2001) to propose that abusive supervision exhausts employees' physical resources and evokes an energy depletion process, leading to psychosomatic symptoms and impairing performance. Our results suggest that psychical complaints serve as a generative conduit that transmits the effects of abusive supervision to production deviance.

Our findings reveal that abusive supervision has a stronger direct effect on production deviance than it has on psychosomatic symptoms or that psychosomatic symptoms have on production deviance. These results suggest that other mechanisms

may also play a role in the relationship between abusive supervision and production deviance. Our findings are aligned with past research, which proposes multiple intervening mechanisms to understand the relationship between abusive supervision and workplace deviance (e.g. Lian, Ferris, Morrison & Brown, 2013; Tepper et al., 2008; Thau et al., 2009), such as social exchange theory or justice (Tepper, 2000). In particular, previous studies have suggested that abusive supervision decreases employees' perceptions of justice and social exchange quality with their organizations, which in turn translate into deviant behaviors. Those behaviors harm the organization as a form to reestablish the balance in the relationship with the organization and its agents (e.g. Duffy, Ganster & Pagon, 2002; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Thau & Mitchell, 2006). Future research may also benefit from examining multiple explanatory mechanisms simultaneously, in order to provide a comprehensive model of the process of abusive supervision.

This research also expands the content domain of abusive supervision research by examining job resources (i.e. job autonomy) as a moderator of the relationship between abusive supervision and negative outcomes. Abusive supervision research focuses almost exclusively on behaviors and personality traits of supervisors, which have direct effects on subordinates work attitudes and behaviors (Harvey et al., 2007). This research contributes to a new perspective over abusive supervision by demonstrating that organizational practices actively contribute to minimize the negative consequences of the abuse process. Therefore, increased job autonomy may alleviate the influence of abusive behaviors on psychosomatic symptoms and deviance because job autonomy puts these abusive supervisory behaviors in perspective, by allowing employees to have higher discretion in their decisions and to become less dependent on their supervisors.

This study also contributes to the JD-R model literature by examining a particular demand-resource combination. We identify one additional job demand (i.e. abusive supervision) to the job demands list originally proposed (Demerouti et al., 2001). Abusive supervision is itself a job demand since prolonged exposure to abusive supervision increasingly wears subordinates' personal energy and exceeds subordinates' adaptive capability, engendering feelings of exhaustion (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). Job autonomy should help employees to cope with supervisory abuse, by allowing them to make decisions regarding the accomplishment of work tasks, thus, reducing their dependence on the supervisor and making them less vulnerable to supervisory mistreatment.

Although not hypothesized, our findings show that job autonomy did not moderate the relationship between abusive supervision and production deviance, supporting psychosomatic symptoms as a key mechanism of this relationship. This result also shows that the degree to which job autonomy acts as a moderator is contingent on the outcome being studied, since autonomy buffers effects of abusive supervision on psychosomatic symptoms (and indirectly on production deviance), but it doesn't buffer the residual direct effect on production deviance. This is consistent with several studies suggesting that other moderating variables, such as employees' past experiences and personality characteristics, act as buffers of the direct relationship between abusive supervision and subordinate outcomes (e.g. Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter, & Kacmar, 2007; Hu, 2012; Mackey, Ellen III, Hochwarter & Ferris, 2013; Tepper et al, 2001). Thus, building on Xanthopoulou et al.'s (2006) work, which proposes that personal resources play a significant role in the JD-R model, research might also investigate subordinate characteristics that are predictors of exhaustion, such as core self-evaluations, negative affectivity or the big five factors (Alarcon, Eschleman

& Bowling, 2009). Additionally, also drawing on the JD-R model, another logical extension would be to examine the mediating effect of the most often studied outcomes in this model (i.e. work burnout and work engagement) (Schaufeli, Bakker & Van Rhenen, 2009) in the relationship between abusive supervision and followers' behaviors. This result also corroborates past research findings that show that job autonomy buffers the negative influence of demands (such as abusive supervision) on organizational outcomes (e.g. production deviance) via well-being (e.g. psychosomatic symptoms) (see Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker, Demerouti & Euwema, 2005). By considering the employees' well-being, our theoretical predictions and empirical findings deepen the understanding of how abusive supervision contributes to production deviance. Production deviance may be exacerbated not only by abusive supervisory behaviors, but more importantly, because when exhaustion depletes their available energy, employees tend to perform tasks ineffectively. Based on the buffering hypothesis, which proposes that the relationship between job demands (i.e. abusive supervision) and strain (that includes psychosomatic symptoms) is weaker for those enjoying a high degree of job resources (Bakker et al., 2003; Caplan et al., 1975), employees with high job autonomy may be less dependent on their supervisors, and thus abusive supervision fails to increasingly wear subordinates' personal energy and engender feelings of exhaustion (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004).

Finally, these results extend research on the relationship between abusive supervision and subordinates' distress (e.g., Tepper, 2000; Tepper, Moss, Lockhart & Carr, 2007). As we know, health problems are closely associated with higher absenteeism and presenteeism, and both imply costly consequences to organizations (Gilboa, Shirom, Fried & Cooper, 2008; Hemp, 2004). Thus, understanding what causes

distress in organizational contexts, and what can be done to deal efficiently with those stressors is key to improve the overall well-being of the company.

These results also hold practical implications for organizations wishing to reduce deviance, since it is costly for both managers and organizations. Our findings suggest two paths by which managers and organizations can diminish the incidence of production deviance. One way of achieving this is to discourage abusive supervision. Organizations need to create a zero-tolerance culture regarding abusive behavior and provide abuse prevention training for managers. However, it might be difficult to control all abusive behaviors, since these behaviors also have deep roots in supervisor's own personality (e.g., Aryee et al., 2007; Thau, Bennett, Mitchell & Marrs, 2009). Therefore, and according to our study, a second path to reduce production deviance (through minimizing psychosomatic symptoms) is to increase subordinates' job discretion, in order to strengthen their ability to cope with abusive behaviors and, thus, diminishing symptoms of exhaustion. Organizations may consider providing increased freedom and control to employees to schedule their own work, make operational decisions or determine the means to accomplish their objectives. By doing so, they are not only fostering employees' self-efficacy and personal initiative, but also minimizing the negative effects of abusive supervision on employees' health and, indirectly, on employees' performance.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This research also presents several limitations. First, subordinates may be reluctant to report abusive behaviors about their supervisors and, consequently, levels of these sensitive variables may have been artificially suppressed. However, our data are aligned with previous research on abusive supervision, thus minimizing our concern about the honesty of our participants (e.g., Zellars et al., 2002). Specifically, our study

reported a mean level of abusive supervision of 1.66, which is similar to those found in previous studies, ranging from 1.26 (Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler & Ensley, 2004) to 1.87 (Aryee et al., 2008).

Second, there are also come concerns about common method variance, since abusive supervision, psychosomatic symptoms and job autonomy were collected from the same source (i.e., subordinates). However, there are two aspects of our research that minimize these concerns. On the one hand, we collected data from multiple raters (supervisors and subordinates) to reduce the likelihood that results are due to the influence of common method variance effects (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2003). Additionally, interaction effects are not likely artifacts of common method, since interaction effects will be deflated by unique measurement error, making them more difficult to detect (Busemeyer & Jones, 1983). Nonetheless, future research should try to assess these variables from other sources (e.g. abusive supervision as viewed by coworkers).

Third, our measure of psychosomatic symptoms also warrants some attention. We measured through six physical symptoms, on a five point scale ranging from 1 = Never to 5 = Every day. However, these symptoms could also be due to general work stress or other personal factors, which we did not account for. Moreover, these symptoms may fluctuate through time (e.g., within a week) because they are assumed to reflect transient influences of situational factors at the time of assessment. Future research should also take into account other factors, such as problems in other life domains or consistency of physical symptoms through time.

This study's findings also suggest additional directions for future research. For example, it may be that subordinates become accustomed to abusive supervisory behaviors or it could be that these situations and behaviors become worse as they

accumulate over time, as suggested by Tepper (2000). Researchers may want to investigate longitudinally if patterns of (perceptions of) abuse – as well as employees' reactions to it - change through time and if organizational and individual resources help shape such relationship. For example, as time passes by, employees with high job autonomy may become accustomed to abusive supervision as they feel they are better equipped with the necessary resources to cope with the stressor. On the other hand, employees with low job autonomy may feel their inability to cope with abusive supervision aggravates across time, leading to feeling of helplessness and more extreme symptoms (e.g. depression).

Researchers may also wish to explore other conditions that influence the strength of the relationship between perceptions of abusive supervision and psychosomatic symptoms. Although we examined job autonomy, one of the most important features of work design and a powerful buffer of the stressful impact of job demands on well-being (Bakker et al., 2005), the JD-R model suggests that other resources could be explored. These include resources located at the interpersonal/team level (e.g., team climate), at the level of the organization of work (e.g., participation in decision-making) or at the task level (e.g., skill variety or task identity).

Finally, we encourage future research to examine how the level of perceived abuse varies with the level of production deviance. It is possible that this relationship presents a feedback loop, where abusive supervision leads to increases in production deviance, which in turn promotes higher levels of abusive supervision. Future work would benefit from the use of cross-lagged longitudinal or experimental designs to draw stronger inferences regarding causality and to fully understand how this process operates.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we believe that our research contributes to the better understanding of abusive supervision, mainly by emphasizing the moderating role of a key work characteristic in the relationship between abusive supervision, employee's well-being and deviant behaviors. The serious personal and organizational costs associated with abusive supervision are evident. However, organizations have in their grasp strategies for mitigating the negative consequences of abusive supervision, namely through the empowerment of employees. Our results have important implications for both research and practice, and we believe our findings open new avenues of research to continue this promising line of inquiry.

STUDY 2: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ABUSIVE SUPERVISION,

DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE AND JOB SATISFACTION: A SUBSTITUTES FOR

LEADERSHIP APPROACH[3]

Abstract

Recently, interest in abusive supervision has grown (Tepper, 2007). However, little is still known about organizational factors that can reduce the adverse effects of abusive supervision. Based on a substitutes for leadership perspective (Kerr & Jermier, 1978), we predict that job resources adequacy and role clarity act as buffers in the negative relationship between abusive supervision, distributive justice and job satisfaction. A sample of 253 employees from a City Hall was used to test our hypotheses and we found that abusive supervision was significant and negatively related to distributive justice when job resources adequacy and role clarity were low, but not when job resources adequacy and role clarity were high, with consequences for job satisfaction. These findings suggest that job resources adequacy and role clarity can reduce the negative impact of abusive supervision, which then lessens distributive unfairness perceptions and job dissatisfaction.

Keywords: abusive supervision, substitutes for leadership, job resources adequacy, role clarity, distributive justice, job satisfaction

Introduction

In the last dozen years, research interest in the destructive side of leadership has grown due do the potential negative consequences of such behaviors in organizations, including organizational costs, as well as negative personal outcomes (Aasland, Skogstad, Notelaers, Nielsen & Einarsen, 2010). The most studied negative workplace supervisor behavior is *abusive supervision*, because although it is a low base-rate phenomenon, there is evidence that its effects are noteworthy (Zellars, Tepper & Duffy, 2002). It is defined as "subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact" (Tepper, 2000, p. 178).

This definition includes several features. Firstly, it presupposes a continuing exposure to abusive behavior. Supervisors engage in abuse behaviors for a purpose (e.g. to elicit high performance or to send the message that mistakes will not be tolerated) and abusive supervisors may mistreat their subordinates to accomplish objectives other than causing injury (Tepper, 2007). Secondly, abusive supervision refers to behaviors that reflect indifference, as well as hostility (Tepper, 2000). Finally, abusive supervision consists in a subjective assessment and depends on subordinates' perceptions of abuse and may be colored by characteristics of the observer and/or subordinate (e.g. personality, demographic profile) and of the context in which the assessment is made (e.g. the work environment, coworker perceptions). Overall, abusive supervision represents prolonged emotional or psychological mistreatment of subordinates from behaviors such as taking undue credit, assigning blame inappropriately, ridiculing subordinates publically, withholding important information or using disparaging language, threats, and intimidation tactics (e.g. Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter & Kacmar, 2007; Tepper, 2000; Tepper et al, 2006).

Abusive supervision has been related to several negative outcomes, including job dissatisfaction, injustice perceptions, psychological and physical illness, deviant behaviors or withholding of organizational citizenship behaviors (e.g. Tepper, 2000; Tepper, Duffy, Henle & Lambert, 2006; Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler, & Ensley, 2004; Tepper, Duffy, & Shaw, 2001; Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002). These studies have generally interpreted abusive supervision based on the characteristics and personality traits of supervisors, and have mostly ignored the variability that exists between individuals and different contexts (Martinko, Harvey, Sikora & Douglas, 2009).

Most studies of abusive supervision have focused on moderating factors – both individual and situational – that exacerbate the effects of exposure to abusive supervisors (e.g. Tepper, 2000; Tepper, 2007). Some other studies, albeit scarce, have also identified possible buffers of the adverse effects of abusive supervision (Aryee, Sun, Chen, & Debrah, 2008), namely subordinates' individual characteristics, such as conscientiousness (Tepper, Duffy & Shaw, 2001), power distance orientation (Lian, Ferris, & Brown, 2012; Lin, Wang & Chen, 2013), or negative reciprocity beliefs (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). However, we believe one key dimension has been overlooked in the literature: task characteristics. Task characteristics may help subordinates better understand their roles and work processes (Kerr & Jermier, 1978), thus minimizing the negative effects of abusive supervisors, by providing task guidance and incentives to perform and to respond to their work demands, reducing their dependence on the supervisor.

We draw on the substitutes of leadership perspective developed by Kerr and Jermier (1978) to propose two task characteristics (i.e. job resources adequacy and role clarity) as potential moderators of the abusive supervision process. According to this model, substitutes of leadership influence the relationship between leaders' behaviors

and work outcomes, by replacing or acting in place of a specific leader behavior. Kerr and Jermier (1978) proposed a variety of subordinate, task, and organizational characteristics that moderate the effect of task and people oriented leadership on relevant behaviors and work outcomes (Kerr, 1977). The effect of these factors (i.e. moderators) is "to negate the leader's ability to either improve or impair subordinate satisfaction and performance (Kerr & Jermier, 1978, p. 377).

Abusive Supervision and Distributive Justice

Previous research has long recognized that there is a relationship between leader effectiveness and distributive, procedural, and interpersonal fairness (e.g. van Knippenberg, De Cremer and van Knippenberg, 2007; Grover & Coppins, 2012). Organizational justice plays an important role in leadership, in that subordinates' perceptions of fairness determine their evaluations of supervisors' leadership capabilities (Pillai, Scandura & Williams, 1999). As justice research clearly suggests, the fairness of the outcomes and treatment received from their leaders constitutes a key concern to followers (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2003; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Therefore, if managers do not pay attention to fairness (regarding processes, interpersonal treatment or outcomes), leadership cannot be effective because followers will reject leader authority (Pillai, Scandura & Williams, 1999).

Abusive supervision represents a source of injustice that has serious implications for organizations and employees (Tepper, 2007). Tepper's (2000) model of abusive supervision was derived from the theory of organizational justice, since abusive supervision affects perceptions of interactional, procedural and distributive unfairness, with serious implications for organizations and employees. That is, when subordinates perceive injustice, disconcerting feelings of imbalance may lead to negative attitudes and behaviors, including job dissatisfaction and turnover intentions. Justice scholars

refer that distributive justice (perceived fairness of the outcomes or allocations that an individual receives), is the best predictor of personal outcomes (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001), such as job satisfaction.

Since distributive justice deals with the perceived fairness of outcomes, it presents strong implications in the organizational context, of which the distribution of outcomes is an essential component (Cohen-Charash & Spector 2001). For example, subordinates of abusive supervisors may feel disadvantaged compared to target referents, by perceiving that they are getting less than they deserve or they may have to overcome this situation by increasing the time and effort needed to perform their tasks, thus decreasing the perceptions of distributive justice (Tepper, 2000).

Substitutes for Abusive Supervision: Job Resources Adequacy and Role Clarity

Kerr and Jermier (1978) proposed the concepts of neutralizers and substitutes for leadership when they questioned the assumption present in nearly all leadership theories that leaders always have an effect on followers, regardless of the style adopted or the situation (Wu, 2010). These authors argued that leaders' behaviors is not the only influence on subordinates' understanding, attitudes, and effectiveness, nor is it the most important factor in some situations (Wu, 2010). Instead, Kerr and Jermier (1978) suggested 14 characteristics of subordinates (e.g., ability/experience/knowledge, need for independence, professional, orientation, indifference to organizational rewards), tasks (e.g., unambiguous/routine, methodologically invariant, provides its own feedback, intrinsically satisfying), and organizations (e.g., formalization, inflexibility, highly specified functions, cohesive work group, organizational rewards not within leader control, spatial distance between leader and subordinate) believed to neutralize and/or substitute for the effects of a leader's behavior, either positive or negative (Dionne, Yammarino, Howell & Villa, 2005). These characteristics may interact with

leaders' behaviors or may influence subordinates' job satisfaction, morale, role perceptions and performance (Wu, 2010). According to Kerr and Jermier (1978), the greater the extent to which these variables are present, the less influence the leader is likely to have on subordinate behavior (Williams & Podsakoff, 1988).

Leadership neutralizers constitute characteristics that make it effectively impossible for leadership to make a difference (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). On the other hand, substitutes for leadership describe characteristics which render leadership not only impossible but also unnecessary (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). Leadership substitutes may act as moderator or suppressor variables by influencing the relationship between leader behavior and subordinate attitudes and/or performance (Kerr, 1977). For example, some characteristics that help subordinates better understand their roles and work processes, or allow them to obtain feedback from sources other than their managers, function as substitutes for leadership (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). Neutralizers do not replace the leader's behavior and, as a result, produce an influence vacuum (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996). In turn, substitutes for leadership reduce leader's ability to influence subordinate criterion variables and, in effect, replace leader influence (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996). Leadership substitutes are potentially useful as remedies where there are organizational problems stemming from negative leadership (such as abusive supervision). That is, organizations can provide task guidance and incentives to perform to such a degree that they virtually negate the leader's ability to either improve or impair subordinate performance (Howell, Bowen, Dorfman, Kerr & Podaskoff, 1990).

Overall, substitutes for leadership moderate the effect of leadership on relevant work outcomes, making it redundant (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). Kerr and Jermier (1978) suggested that future research should expand the model, by identifying other relevant

leader behaviors and other potential substitutes and/or neutralizers (i.e., expansion of the domains). However, empirical support for the substitutes model has not raised questions, even though subordinate, task, and organizational characteristics substantially increase the proportion of variance accounted for employee role perceptions, job attitudes, and performance; and often they are more strongly related to the criterion variables than the leader behaviors (Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Bommer, 1996). Kerr and Jermier (1978) focused only on task and relationship oriented leader behaviors and highlighted that the development of such taxonomy was still at an early stage, since the substitutes construct had much wider applicability. Over the last decades, additional substitutes for leadership have been identified, such as teams, core self-evaluations, job autonomy, task significance or organizational reputation (Huusko, 2007; Neves, Rego & Cunha, 2014; Nübold, Muck & Maier, 2013), however there is still a call for extending the list of potential substitutes for leadership, which also takes the specific domain of leadership into account (e.g. Dionne et al., 2005), because the same moderators should not operate for all dimensions of leader behavior (Neves, Rego & Cunha, 2014).

Within the perspective developed by these authors, job characteristics compensate for deficiencies in the relationship with the supervisor (Podsakoff, Niehoff, MacKenzie & Williams, 1993). This may be, for example, when subordinates have the necessary means to perform their tasks at their disposal in their immediate work environment (including equipment and tools, materials, facilities, support services, space, and time) (*Job resources adequacy*: Rousseau & Aubé, 2010), or when subordinates receive inputs from the environment that guide behavior and provide knowledge that it is appropriate, such as duties, allocation of time, the clarity or existence of guides, directives, policies; and the ability to predict sanctions as outcomes of behavior (*Role clarity*: Rizzo, House & Lirtzman, 1970).

The defining aspects of a substitute hold true for job resources adequacy and role clarity. Firstly, job resources adequacy and role clarity directly influence work outcomes, regardless of the leader's behavior (e.g. Foote, Seipel, Johnson & Duffy, 2005; Villanova & Roman, 1993). Secondly, when job resources adequacy is high, subordinates can orient their energy toward obtaining desired outcomes (Peter & O'Connor, 1980). Previous research highlights that job resources adequacy has an impact on work outcomes, since it increases the level of potential effort, job-related knowledge or skills that can be applied towards job tasks (Bacharach & Bamberger, 1995). That is, this construct constitutes an important predictor of both individual and organizational level phenomena, including organizational innovation, adaptation, development and job satisfaction (Bacharach & Bamberger, 1995).

In the same sense, when role clarity is high, subordinates possess a clear understanding of their requirements, enabling them to preserve their mental energy and use it effectively to accomplish their jobs (Whitaker, Dahling, & Levy, 2007; Fried et al. 2003). Lapidus, Roberts and Chonko (1996) point out that organization formalization delineates written job goals and objectives, work schedules and performance appraisals, manifesting itself in the form of role clarity. Role clarity facilitates contextual performance by clarifying the expected standards, as well as the behaviors that are valued by the organization, contributing to important organizational outcomes (Whitaker, Dahling, & Levy, 2007). For example, role clarity has been found to have a positive effect on satisfaction with the work itself (e.g. Bray, Beauchamp, Eys & Carron, 2005; Shoemaker, 1999).

Thirdly, subordinates' actual feeling of having the means at their disposal to perform their tasks, as well as certainty and knowledge about appropriate behaviors,

duties, guides, directives and policies, should increase subordinates' feelings of control over their job and thus help escape from the tight control of their abusive supervisors.

In sum, abusive supervision may have a differential effect on subordinates' distributive justice perceptions, depending on whether job resources adequacy or role clarity is currently high or low. High job resources adequacy and high role clarity should be an effective substitute of abusive supervision, and therefore should prevent a decrease in distributive justice perceptions as a result of abuse.

Carry Over Effects to Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction constitutes a central topic of organizational research and, recently, organizational scholars have turned their attention to the role of organizational justice in shaping this work attitude (Clay-Warner, Reynolds, Roman. 2005). In fact, a large number of studies have linked justice perceptions to a broad range of organizational outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, withdrawal behaviors and organizational citizenship behaviors (see Colquitt et al., 2001 for a review). However, previous research suggests that different justice perceptions have different predictive roles depending on whether the outcome in question is personal (for example, pay or job satisfaction) or reflects more general evaluations of organizational outcomes. Previous research has concluded that distributive justice tends to be a better predictor of employees' attitudes toward personal outcomes, including job satisfaction, pay satisfaction and life satisfaction, whereas procedural procedural justice tends to be a better predictor of employees' attitudes toward organizations and their representatives, such as organizational commitment, and interactional justice appears to play an important role in explaining how work-related experiences affect individuals' lives away from work (e.g. Tepper, 2000).

According to the personal outcomes model (McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992), workers focus on distributive fairness to increase their personal outcomes, because they expect fair distributions to produce favorable allocations. Thus, distributive justice is the key antecedent predicting workplace attitudes regarding personal outcomes, such as job satisfaction (McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). The personal outcomes model has found empirical support, since distributive justice has been consistently identified as a dominant predictor of job satisfaction. For example, McFarlin and Sweeney (1992) conducted a study with bank employees and found that distributive justice tends to be a stronger predictor of personal outcomes (pay satisfaction and job satisfaction) than procedural justice. In the same line, Martin and Bennett (1996) conducted a study of financial services employees, concluding that distributive justice is closely linked to evaluations of specific personally relevant outcomes, such as facet satisfaction. Finally, Colquitt et al. (2001) conducted a meta-analytic review of 183 justice studies that suggest that organizational justice is a consistently strong predictor of person-referenced outcomes, including satisfaction with a pay raise or performance evaluations.

Although there is little empirical research on the role of distributive justice as mediating factor between leadership and work outcomes, some studies clearly indicate that distributive justice mediates the relationship between the quality of supervisor-subordinate interactions and work outcomes (e.g. Lee, 2001; Hassan & Chandaran, 2006). Tepper (2000) reported that abusive behaviors affect negatively employees' perceptions of the fairness of organizational outcomes. In turn, the perceived distributive injustice resulting from abusive supervision translates into job dissatisfaction.

The present study extends Tepper's (2000) work by suggesting that this relationship is conditional on both job resources adequacy and role clarity are related to

distributive justice and, subsequently, job satisfaction. When job resources adequacy is low, a higher level of abusive supervision should be accompanied by decreased distributive justice perceptions (Tepper, 2001) and thus produce low job satisfaction. When job resources adequacy is high, higher level of abusive supervision should fail to produce decreased distributive justice perceptions, as employees have the means at their disposal in their work context to fully use their abilities and skills to fulfill their tasks and thus can escape from the tight control of their abusive supervisors. Therefore, abusive supervision should not contribute to lower perceptions of fairness in the allocation of outcomes that are consistent with the goals of a particular situation, as defined by distributive justice.

Similarly, when role clarity is low, a higher level of abusive supervision should be accompanied by decreased distributive justice perceptions (Tepper, 2001) and thus produce low job satisfaction. However, when role clarity is high, higher level of abusive supervision should fail decrease distributive justice perceptions, as employees possess a precise understanding of their fit and function within a given context. In both cases, employees can escape from the tight control of their abusive supervisors, and thus maintain their levels of perceived distributive fairness.

Overview Section

The present study aims to explore the moderating role of job resources adequacy and role clarity on the relationship between abusive supervision and distributive justice and its carry-over effect on job satisfaction. We examined distributive justice as a key mechanism of the abusive supervision – job satisfaction relationship based on Tepper's (2000) argument that abusive supervision negatively influences perceptions of distributive justice, which in turn exerts greater influence on personal outcomes, such as pay satisfaction and job satisfaction, than procedural, interpersonal or informational

justice (Colquitt, 2001). Technically, we are describing mediated moderation, involving the interaction between two predictor variables (abusive supervision and job resources adequacy, as well as abusive supervision and role clarity) on a mediator (distributive justice) which, in turn, affects an outcome (job satisfaction) (Morgan-Lopez & MacKinnon, 2006).

The present research contributes to the literature in the following ways: First, we contribute to the abusive supervision literature by extending Tepper's (2000) original model and demonstrating that the mediating effect of distributive justice on the relationship between abusive supervision and job satisfaction is not a linear process, but conditional on other factors. Second, it integrates the substitutes for leadership and abusive supervision literature, by proposing that both job resources adequacy and role clarity may represent substitutes for abusive supervision. Finally, we are broadening the study of abusive supervision by proposing that task characteristics (i.e. role clarity and job resources adequacy) may constitute possible buffers of the adverse effects of abusive supervision on employee justice and job satisfaction perceptions."

In line with previous research, we propose that:

Hypothesis 1: Abusive supervision is negatively related to distributive justice.

Hypothesis 2: Job resources adequacy *(a)* and role clarity *(b)* moderate the negative relationship between abusive supervision and distributive justice, such that when job resources adequacy or role clarity is higher, abusive supervision has a weaker relationship with distributive justice.

Hypothesis 3: Distributive justice mediates the relationship between the *(a)* abusive supervision X job resources adequacy interaction and the *(b)* abusive supervision X role interaction and job satisfaction."

The proposed model is represented in Figure 1.

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│ Abusive  │  │ Distributive │  │     Job      │
│Supervision├─▶│   Justice    ├─▶│ Satisfaction │
└──────────┘  └──────────────┘  └──────────────┘
                 ▲
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        ┌────────┴────────┐
        │   Role Clarity  │
        └─────────────────┘
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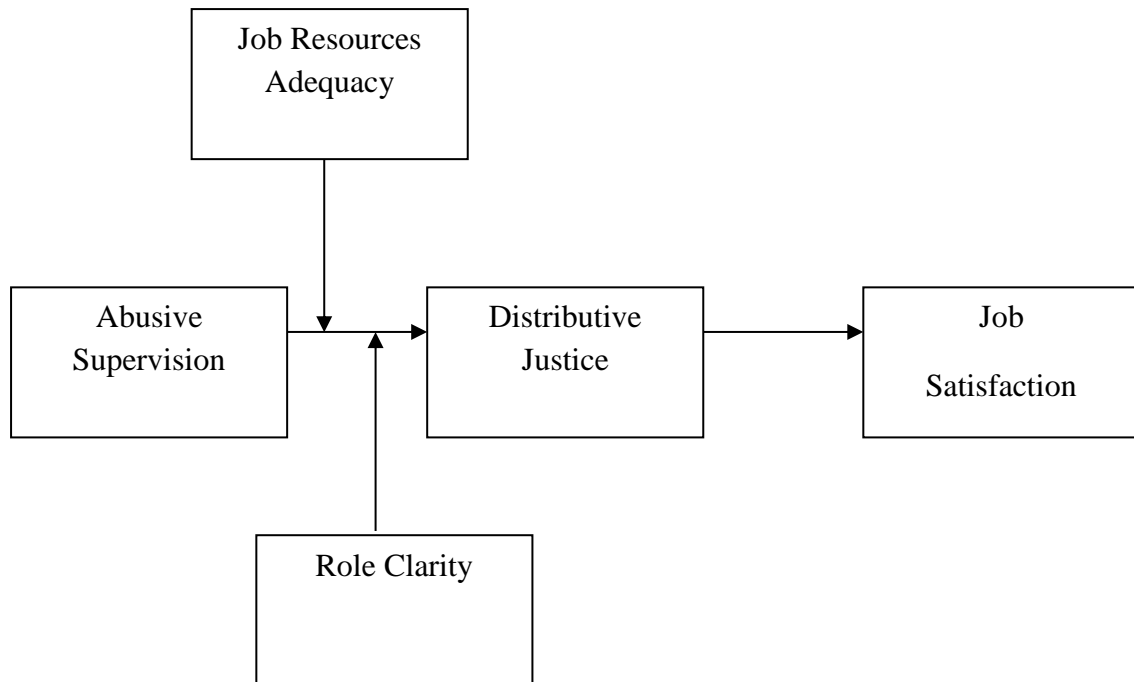
Figure 1. Hypothesized mediated moderation model

Method

Sample and Procedure

We contacted the Human Resources Management Department of a City Hall, which agreed to participate in our study. We invited 405 full-time employees of this organization to participate in the study. For those that accepted the invitation, questionnaires were distributed individually and collected directly by the researchers to ensure confidentiality. A letter was attached to each of the questionnaires to inform respondents about the aim of the survey and the voluntary nature of their participation, as well as to reassure them of the confidentiality of their responses. The sample size was reduced to 253 employees (62.5% return rate) owing to the employees who declined to participate or didn't complete the surveys. Missing values varied across items (the cutoff point was three missing values), but never exceeded 2%. Therefore, listwise

deletion of cases with missing values was used. The sample size after listwise deletion is n=253, compared with a total sample size of 255. Evaluations of the assumptions including normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity of residuals revealed no violations. With a p<. 001 criterion for Mahalanobis distance, there were no outliers among the cases.

To examine if our sample was representative of the total population, we compared their demographic characteristics. Even though the organization had 405 employees and we obtained data from 253 subordinates, we consider that this sample is representative of the total population; since the overall characteristics are quite similar. Overall, 16.9% of the surveyed employees did not complete high school (17.4% of the employees considering the total population), 41% of the participants had completed high school (40.3%) and 42.1% had a university degree (42.3%). Average organizational tenure was approximately 4.6 years (5.2 years), 59.9% of employees were under 45 years old (62.6%) and 55.7% were women (63%).

Measures

The questionnaires were in Portuguese, but all measures were originally in English. In line with the conventional method of back translation (Brislin, 1976), three steps were taken. First, the measures were translated from English to Portuguese. This was done with the parallel back-translation procedure. Back translation first involves translating the measures from English to Portuguese by an expert. Secondly, this translation was then translated back to the original language by another expert without the use of the original measures. This method provides an initial assessment of the adequacy of the translated version of the measures. Finally, we pretested the Portuguese version of the questionnaire on 20 employees from the participating organizations (who

were not included in final the sample). The pre-test did not reveal major any major issues concerning our surveys.

For all measures, with the exception of control variables, respondents rated their agreement with each statement using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) (the items comprising each of the five measures are shown in the Appendix).

Control Variables. Gender, age, organizational tenure, education and tenure with the supervisor have been found to be related to distributive justice or job satisfaction (e.g. Ambrose & Cropanzano, 2003; Bedeian, Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Clark, Oswald, & Warr, 1996; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Gordon & Arvey, 1975; Hunt & Saul, 1975; Jackson, Messe & Hunter, 1985; Rice, Near & Hunt, 1980) and therefore we analyzed whether it was important to control for their influence in our model. According to the recommendations offered by Becker (2005), we controlled for subordinates' age, education and tenure with supervisor in our analysis because these were the only control variables significantly correlated with our outcome variables. We coded education as 1= primary education; 2 = ninth grade; 3 = completed high school; 4 = undergraduate degree; 5 = graduate degree; and tenure with supervisor as less than 6 months = 1; between 6 months and 1 year = 2; between 1 and 5 years = 3; between 5 and 10 years = 4; between 10 and 20 years = 5; over 20 years = 6. As such, both distributive justice and job satisfaction are positively and significantly correlated with age, such that older employees reported higher levels of distributive justice and job satisfaction perceptions. In turn, job satisfaction is significantly and negatively correlated with education and tenure with supervision, such that less educated employees and employees who have been working less time for the current supervisor reported lower levels of job satisfaction (Table 1).

In order to rule out alternative explanations for our findings, in addition to these controls, role clarity was included as a control variable in the job resources adequacy model and job resources adequacy was included as a control variable in the role clarity model.

Abusive Supervision. Subordinates reported the frequency with which their supervisors presented abusive behaviors using Tepper's (2000) 15-item scale. Sample items include 'My supervisor ridicules me' and 'My supervisor does not allow me to interact with my coworkers'. Cronbach alpha was .91.

Distributive Justice. We measured distributive justice by using the 5-item Distributive Justice Index (Moorman, 1991). (e.g. 'My organization has been rewarding me fairly the responsibilities I have'; 'My organization has been rewarding me fairly the stresses and strains of my job'). The respondents indicated the extent to which they believed they were fairly rewarded for their responsibilities, experience, effort, work, and job stress. Cronbach alpha was .88.

Job Resources Adequacy. Subordinates were asked about the basic resources required to accomplish related goals using six items based on the work of Tesluk and Mathieu (1999) and Peters and O'Connor (1980) (e.g. 'I have adequate materials and supplies to do my job'; 'I have adequate tools and equipment to accomplish my work'). Cronbach's alpha was .70.

Role Clarity. We measured role clarity by using Rizzo, House and Lirtzman's (1970) Role Ambiguity Scale. These eleven items assess the extent of clarity or predictability perceived in their work-related behavior (e.g. 'I feel certain about how much authority I have'; 'I know exactly what is expected of me'). Cronbach alpha was .72.

Job satisfaction. We measured job satisfaction using the three-item overall satisfaction subscale from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1979). Sample items include 'All in all, I am satisfied with my job'; 'In general, I don't like my job'. Cronbach alpha was .77.

Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables in the study. Reliability coefficients are reported along the main diagonal in the table. It is possible to notice that abusive supervision is significantly and negatively correlated with distributive justice (r= -.25, p<.01), job resources adequacy (r= -.18, p<.01), role clarity (r= -.32, p<.01) and job satisfaction (r= .51, p<.01), and positively correlated with tenure with supervisor (r= .13, p< .05) and educational level (r= .16, p< .05). Besides abusive supervision, distributive justice was also related to job resources adequacy (r= .45, p< .01), role clarity (r= .26, p< .01), job satisfaction (r= .40, p< .01), and, finally age (r= .15, p< .05).

Table 1

Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables [a][b][c]

	Mean[a]	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age	41.46	10.29	-							
2. Education	3.30	1.16	-.20**	-						
3. Tenure with Supervisor	3.58	1.01	.39**	.15*	-					
4. Abusive Supervision	1.66	.64	.01	.13*	.16*	(.91)				
5. Distributive Justice	2.83	.84	.15*	.10	-06	-.25**	(.88)			
6. Job Resources Adequacy	3.71	.69	.16**	-.22	-.12	-.18**	.45**	(.70)		
7. Role Clarity	3.92	.48	.15*	-.33**	-.17**	-.32**	.26**	.50**	(.72)	
8. Job Satisfaction	4.09	.65	.20**	-.17**	-.13**	-.51**	.40**	.37**	.38**	(.77)

Notes. [a] 5-point scales; [b] Cronbach's alphas are displayed on the diagonal in parentheses; [c] Education (1= primary education; 2 = ninth grade; 3 = completed high school; 4 = undergraduate degree; 5 = graduate degree); Tenure with supervisor (1 = less than 6 months, 2 = between 6 months and 1 year, 3 = between 1 and 5 years, 4 = between 5 and 10 years, 5 = between 10 and 20 years, 6 = over 20 years); * p< .05; ** p < .01, all two-tailed tests.

Because our sample includes employees with different professional categories working in six different departments, we conducted analyses of variance (ANOVAs) tests to examine any potential differences between departments or professional categories in the reports of job resources adequacy and role clarity. ANOVAs results indicated no significant differences between departments or professional categories for job resources adequacy ($F(5,250) = .526$, *ns*; $F(2,251) = .844$, *ns*; respectively) or for role clarity ($F(5,252) = 1.085$, *ns*; $F(2,250) = .997$, *ns*; respectively).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS 20 to examine whether our measurement model had an acceptable fit. We compared our theoretical five-factor model with a four-factor model that combined job resources adequacy and role clarity; and finally, a single-factor model that combined all five constructs into one single factor.

Since our sample size was small (N = 253), compared to the number of indicators in our measurement model (k = 40), we followed the parceling procedure recommended by Bagozzi and Edwards (1998) for the abusive supervision (15 items), distributive justice (5 items), job resources adequacy (6 items) and role clarity (11 items) scales. We didn't follow the parceling procedure for the job satisfaction scale, as it is the scale with the smallest number of items. An item parcel is an aggregate level indicator composed of the average of two or more items (Little, Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman, 2002). In order to maintain item-to-construct balance, we, derived parcels that are equally balanced in terms of their difficulty (intercept) and discrimination (slope) (Little, Cunningham & Shahar, 2002). Specifically, we used the highest loading items to anchor each parcel, followed by the lowest loading items. When more items

were available, we continued this procedure, by placing lower loaded with higher loaded items.

Using this procedure we reduced the number of indicators in the abusive supervision scale to five indicators, in the distributive justice scale to three indicators, in the job resources adequacy to three indicators and in the role clarity scale to four indicators. The main advantages of this procedure are the reduction of the number of parameters to be estimated and the decrease of measurement error (Bagozzi & Edwards, 1998). The hypothesized five-factor model was the best fitting model (χ^2(125) = 391,262**; CFI = .92; TLI = .89; RMSEA = .07; SRMR = .06), so the five constructs were treated separately in subsequent statistical tests of our hypotheses (Table 2). The first factor (abusive supervision) presented factor loadings ranging from .43 to .88. The second factor (distributive justice) presented factor loadings ranging from .57 to .77. The third factor (job resources adequacy) presented factor loadings ranging from .39 to .71. The fourth factor (role clarity) presented factor loadings ranging from .31 to .74. Finally, the fifth factor (job satisfaction) presented factor loadings ranging from .60 to .88.

Table 2

CFAs for the hypothesized and alternative models

	df	X^2	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Five-factor model	125	391.262**	.92	.89	.07	.06
Four-factor model [b]	129	434.923**	.86	.81	.09	.08
One-factor model	135	952.174	.50	.42	.17	.12

Notes. [a] Merge job resources and role clarity.

CFAs = confirmatory factor analyses; *df* = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root-mean- square error residual; ** p < .01.

Test of Hypotheses

To test the proposed mediated moderation effect, we adopted the procedure outlined by Hayes (2012). The bootstrapping procedure estimates the conditional indirect effect as the mean conditional indirect effect calculated across 1.000 bootstrap sample estimates and the standard error of the conditional indirect effect as the standard deviation of the estimates (Preacher, Rucker & Hayes, 2007). This procedure has been recommended for testing of indirect effects, especially with smaller sample sizes, because it has no assumptions regarding underlying sampling distributions (Shrout & Bolger, 2002). Through the computation of bootstrapped confidence intervals (CIs), it is possible to avoid some problems due to asymmetric and other non-normal sampling distributions of an indirect effect (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004). Following recommendations, we resampled 1,000 times, and used the percentile method to create 95% CI (Preacher & Hayes, 2007). The indirect effect is statistically significant at the .05 level if the 95% CI for these estimates does not include zero (Zhao, Lynch & Chen, 2010). Additionally, and following Aiken and West´s recommendation (1991), we centered the predictor variables prior to entering them into the equation.

The main results are presented in tables 3 and 4. Among the control variables, only age is significantly related to distributive justice (B= .01; 95% CI [-.04, -.02]; p<.05). In line with hypothesis 1, abusive supervision was significantly and negatively related to distributive justice (B = -.36; 95% CI [-.36, -.11]; p <.01).

Table 3

Bootstrapping results for role clarity as moderator

Predictors	Mediator				Outcome			
	Distributive Justice				Job Satisfaction			
	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1: Control Variables								
Age	.01	-2.19*			.02	3.81**		
Education	.00	.04			-.03	-.62		
Tenure with Supervisor	.01	.14			-.16	-.3.06**		
Job Resources Adequacy	.08	5,74**	.13	.13	.02	2.37*	.10	.10
Step 2: Main effects								
Abusive Supervision	-.36	-4.17**			-.58	-8.34**		
Role Clarity	.40	3.28**	.24	.09	.21	2.07*	.36	.26
Step 3: Interaction term								
AS X RC	-.44	-2.49**	.26	.02	-.41	-1.25**	.38	.02
Step 4: Mediator					.			
Distributive Justice					.21	4.04**	.42	.04

Notes. * p < .05; ** p < .01; Tabled values are unstandardized regression

coefficients; AS – Abusive Supervision; RC – Role Clarity.

Table 4

Bootstrapping results for job resources adequacy as moderator

Predictors	Mediator Distributive Justice				Outcome Job Satisfaction			
	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1: Control Variables								
Age	.01	-2.19*			.02	3.81**		
Education	.00	.04			-.03	-.62		
Tenure with Supervisor	.01	.14			-.16	-3.06**		
Role Clarity	.21	2.15*	.11	.11	.20	2.28*	.10	.10
Step 2: Main effects								
Abusive Supervision	-.35	-4.60**			-.58	-8.85**		
Job Resources Adequacy	.52	7.38**	.30	.19	.21	3.38*	.38	.28
Step 3: Interaction term								
AS X JRA	-.20	-1.95**	.31	.01	-.18	-1.81**	.39	.01
Step 4: Mediator						.		
Distributive Justice					.20	3.48**	.42	.03

Notes. * p < .05; ** p < .01; Tabled values are unstandardized regression coefficients; AS – Abusive Supervision; JRA – Job Resources Adequacy.

The interaction term between abusive supervision and role clarity (B= -.43; 95% CI [-.38, -12]; p< .01) was also significant. Using simple slope analysis, we found that the negative relationship between abusive supervision and distributive justice was significant when role clarity was low (*t*=3.15; p<.05), but not when it was high (*t*=-.52; p>.05) (Figure 2). These results support hypothesis 2a.

The interaction term between abusive supervision and job resources adequacy (B= -.20; 95% CI [-.08, -.01]; p< .05) was also significant. Using simple slope analysis, we found that the negative relationship between abusive supervision and distributive justice was significant when job resources adequacy were low (t=3.07; p<.05), but not when they were high (t=-.55; p>.05) (Figure 3). These results confirm hypothesis 2b.

Finally, we tested our mediated-moderation hypotheses (Preacher et al., 2007) of whether the interaction effects of abusive supervision X role clarity and abusive supervision X job resources adequacy extended to job satisfaction, through its relationship with distributive justice. Before testing the overall conditional indirect effects, we examined whether the mediator was significantly related to job satisfaction[4]. As predicted, we found that distributive justice was significantly related to job satisfaction (B = .21; 95% CI [.03, .15]; p < .01). We then analyzed the conditional indirect effect of abusive supervision on job satisfaction through distributive justice at specific values of the moderators, that is, role clarity and job resources adequacy.

In support of hypothesis 3a, the indirect effect of abusive supervision X role clarity on job satisfaction through distributive justice was significant for low (B = .20; 95% CI [.10, .25]; p < .05) but not for high role clarity (B = .09; 95% CI [-.07, .16]; p > .05). As predicted in hypothesis 3b, the indirect effect of abusive supervision X job resources adequacy on job satisfaction through distributive justice was significant for low (B = .21; 95% CI [.05, .21]; p < .05) but not for high job resources adequacy (B = .10; 95% CI [-.14; .04]; p > .05). That is, an increase in abusive supervision is related to lower job satisfaction through a decrease in distributive justice perceptions only when

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[4] We set out to explore the differential effects of the three justice dimensions in the relationship between abusive supervision and job satisfaction, but for the sake of parsimony and adequate resource management, we did not include these analyses on our final model. We tested the mediating effect of procedural and interactional justice on the relationship between abusive supervision and job satisfaction, however, the mediating effect was not significant either for procedural (B = .02; 95% CI [-.02, .07]; *ns*) or interactional justice (B = .10; 95% CI [-.22, .02]; *ns*).

role clarity or job resources adequacy is low. When role clarity or job resources adequacy is high, abusive supervision is not related to changes in distributive justice or job satisfaction.
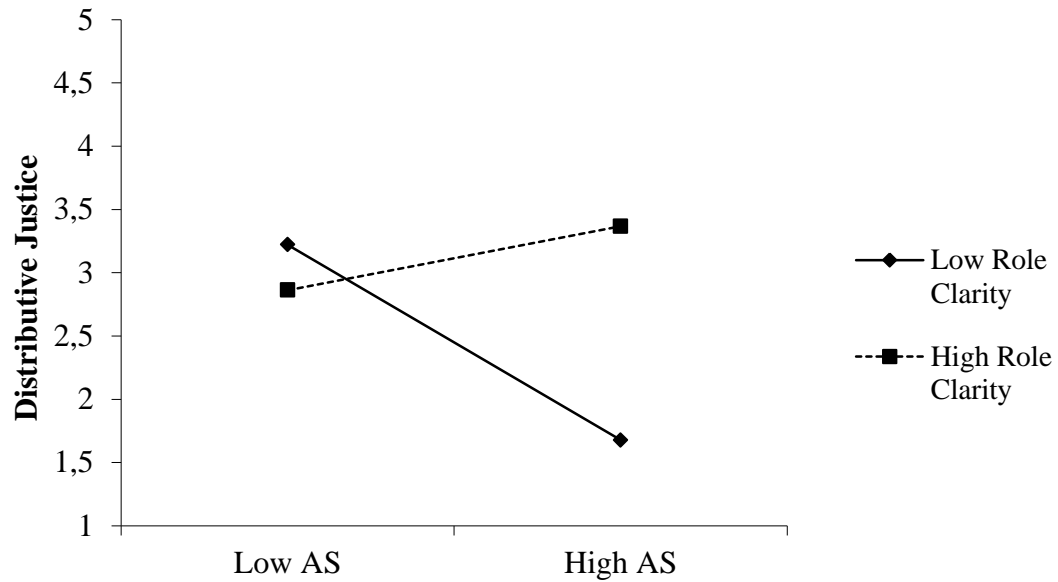
Figure 2. Interaction between Abusive Supervision (AS) and Role Clarity
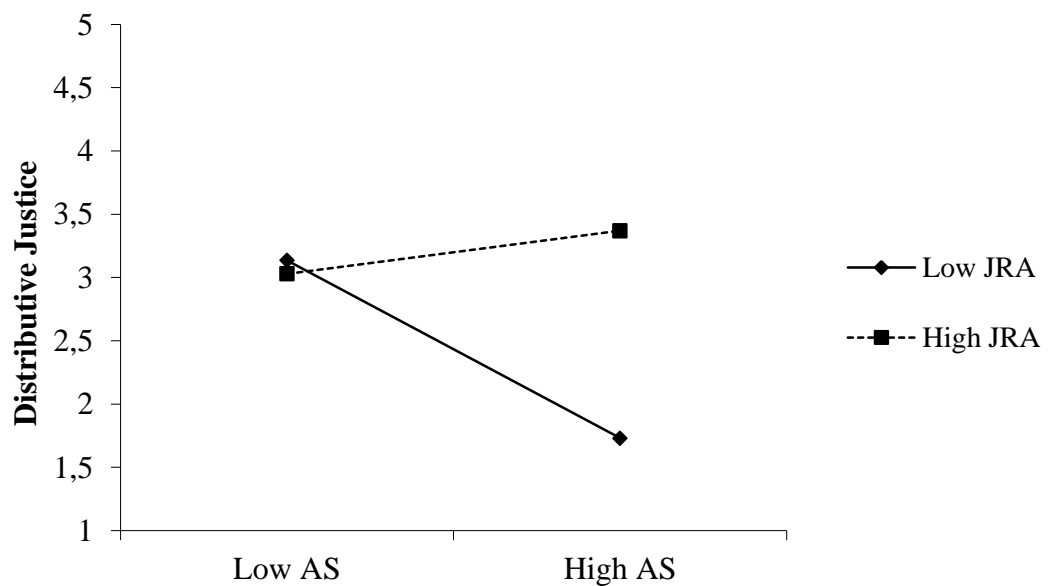
Figure 3. Interaction between Abusive Supervision (AS) and Job Resources Adequacy (JRA)

Discussion

The focus of the present study was to test the moderating role of job resources adequacy and role clarity on the relationship between abusive supervision and distributive justice and its carry-over effect on job satisfaction. First, corroborating Tepper's (2000) findings, the present study showed that subordinates' perceptions of distributive justice act as a mediator of the abusive supervision–job satisfaction relationship. However, the most important findings of our study is that job resources adequacy and role clarity moderate the indirect relationship between abusive supervision and job satisfaction trough decreased distributive justice perceptions. When job resources adequacy or role clarity are high, perceptions of abusive behaviors from the supervisor do not decrease distributive justice perceptions or job satisfaction, since they have the means at their disposal to perform their tasks, as well as certainty and knowledge about appropriate behaviors, duties, guides, directives and policies, increasing subordinates' feelings of control over their work.

These results are aligned with Kerr and Jermier's (1978) substitutes for leadership model which proposes a wide variety of individual, task and organizational characteristics identified as factors that influence the relationship between supervisors' behaviors and subordinates' work outcomes (such as job satisfaction). These characteristics replace supervisors' behaviors and serve as important remedies where there are organizational problems (Howell et al, 1990). We also contribute to the model by identifying two additional substitutes (i.e. job resources adequacy and role clarity) to the list of leadership substitutes originally proposed by Kerr and Jermier (1978). Our results showed that job resources adequacy and role clarity can undermine abusive supervisors' ability to influence negatively their subordinates, and therefore serve as substitutes for leadership.

This study contributes to a growing body of research exploring abusive supervision in organizations by showing that task characteristics (i.e. job resources adequacy and role clarity) are particularly relevant under the highly demanding conditions caused by abusive supervision. Our results support the view that organizations can effectively buffer the negative effects of abusive supervision, namely by providing employees with increased job resources adequacy and role clarity. Job resources adequacy provides the means in the employees' immediate work situation to fully accomplish their tasks (Rousseau & Aubé, 2010). In turn, role clarity guarantees a precise understanding of subordinates' fit and function in work context (Foote et al., 2005). These aspects are even more important when employees are facing abusive supervisors because both job resources adequacy and role clarity add to the employees' latitude of control over their jobs and allow them to have greater independence in relation to their supervisors, consequently minimizing its negative impact on the allocation of outcomes, i.e., distributive justice (and indirectly job satisfaction).

Implications for Theory and Practice

This study makes several contributions to the existing body of literature. First, these findings are consistent with the leadership substitutes perspective developed by Kerr and Jermier (1978) which proposes that characteristics of the job compensate for deficiencies in the relationship with the supervisor (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Our results suggest that job resources adequacy and role clarity neutralize the potentially damaging effects of abusive supervisory behaviors, since both constructs are sources of task guidance and support.

Second, our findings also expand the content domain of abusive supervision research by examining job characteristics (i.e. job resources adequacy and role clarity) as a moderator of the relationship between abusive supervision and negative outcomes.

Abusive supervision research focuses almost exclusively on behaviors and personality traits of supervisors, which have direct effects on subordinates work attitudes and behaviors (Harvey et al., 2007). Although the mediating effect of subordinates' distributive justice perceptions between abusive supervision and their job satisfaction had been confirmed in Tepper's (2000) research, the current study contributes to a new perspective over abusive supervision by demonstrating that organizational practices actively contribute to minimize the negative consequences of the abuse process.

This research also provides some guidance for managerial practice. Since employees' job satisfaction is closely related to performance and retention (Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001), exploring factors that can buffer the negative effect of distributive injustice perceptions on job satisfaction assumes an important role. Our research showed that providing employees with job resources adequacy and role clarity can reduce the negative impact of abusive supervision, which then lessens distributive unfairness perceptions and job dissatisfaction. For example, organizations should consider providing clarity of behavioral requirements, as well as the resources needed by employees to accomplish their tasks, including equipment, tools, materials, facilities, support services, space, and time. Indeed, role clarity is likely to be a job characteristic that can be relatively easily enhanced through the improvement of formal organizational communication or clear communication of expectations.

Since abusive supervision is related to distributive injustice perceptions and job dissatisfaction, we should also make efforts to reduce abusive supervision in organizations. For example, organizations should provide management skills training that aim at learning proper ways of interaction with subordinates, as well as abuse prevention training, in order to ensure that supervisors engage in appropriate management practices, also through a zero-tolerance culture regarding abusive

supervision. However, it might be difficult to control all abusive behaviors (and this highlights the importance of examining potential substitutes or neutralizers), since these behaviors also have deep roots in supervisor's own personality (e.g. Aryee, Chen, Sun & Debrah, 2007; Thau, Bennett, Mitchell & Marrs, 2009).

Given that all our respondents worked in a Portuguese public institution and our data were collected in 2011, when Portugal received a bailout from the 'Troika' and had to enact a series of public spending cuts which affect significantly public employees, the buffering effect of role clarity and job resources adequacy proved to be particularly relevant in an economic crisis context. This context is characterized by uncertainty, fear of downsizing, high unemployment rates and loss of job security, making our respondents more vulnerable to supervisory mistreatment since they have scarce employment alternatives and feel they cannot separate themselves from their supervisor abusive behavior. Therefore, studying abusive supervision in this severe economic context is particularly relevant because it could provide a facilitative context for abusive supervision. This could be because the features of an economic crisis context may emphasize both dominance and conformity, which may foster a tolerance of overbearing supervision. Further research should collect data during an average economic growth period to investigate the economic context effects on the proposed research framework.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This research also presents some limitations. First, subordinates may be reluctant to report abusive behaviors about their supervisors and, consequently, the levels of these sensitive variables may have been artificially suppressed. However, our data are aligned with previous research on abusive supervision, thus minimizing our concern about the veracity of our participants (e.g. Zellars et al., 2002). Specifically, our study reported a mean level of abusive supervision of 1.66, which is similar to those found in previous

studies, ranging from 1.26 (Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler & Ensley, 2004) to 1.87 (Aryee et al., 2008).

Another limitation is related to common method bias, since all data were collected from a common source (employees). We applied a number of procedures to minimize the potential impact of CMV (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003) and our tests suggest that a method latent variable explained very little variation in the data. Procedurally, in order to decrease socially desirable responding, we presented detailed information about the precautions taken to ensure the confidentiality of our respondents. To decrease evaluation apprehension, we assured our respondents that there were no rights or wrongs answers to the items in the survey. We counterbalanced the order of the measurement of the predictor and criterion variables in order to control for priming effects, item-context induced mood states, and other biases related to the question context or item embeddedness (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

We also employed statistical remedies to partial out common method variance in our analyses. Using AMOS 20, we estimated a model that included a fifth latent variable to represent a method factor and allowed all 18 indicators to load on this uncorrelated factor (Podsakoff et al., 2003). According to Williams, Cote and Buckley (1989), if the fit of the measurement model is significantly improved by the addition of an uncorrelated method factor then CMV may be present. Fit statistics after adding an uncorrelated method factor improved slightly ($\chi^2(89) = 203.58**$; CFI = .93; TLI = .91; RMSEA = .06; SRMR = .06). To determine the extent of the influence of CMV, the variance explained by the method factor can be calculated by summing the squared loadings, in order to index the total amount of variation due to the method factor. In our case, CMV accounted for 14% of the total variance, which is less than the 25% threshold observed by Williams et al. (1989). The results of these analyses suggest that

CMV is indeed present in the study. However, the improvement in fit is small and more importantly the method factor appears to account for little variation in the data. Therefore, and based on these procedures, CMV does not appear to be a pervasive problem in this study and that the relationships observed represent substantive rather than artifactual effects. On the other hand, there are no strikingly high correlations among variables and research has shown that common method bias deflates interaction effects, making them more difficult to detect (Busemeyer & Jones, 1983). Nonetheless, future research should obtain ratings from different sources (i.e. supervisors and subordinates).

Because our study is cross-sectional by design, we cannot infer causality. Indeed, it is possible that, for example, employee lower levels of distributive justice perceptions could drive perceptions of abusive supervision as opposed to the causal order we predicted. Future work would benefit from the use of longitudinal or experimental designs to draw stronger inferences regarding causality.

This study's findings suggest additional directions for future research. For example, scholars may wish to explore other substitutes for leadership. The leadership substitutes perspective (Kerr & Jermier, 1978) includes other subordinate characteristics (e.g. experience, training and knowledge), task characteristics (e.g. intrinsically satisfying tasks) and organizational characteristics (e.g. staff support or spatial distance between supervisors and their subordinates) that may also moderate the relationship between perceptions of abusive supervision and job related perceptions, attitudes and outcomes.

Another logical extension of our study would be to examine both interactional and procedural justice and different organizational outcomes, usually linked to these justice perceptions, such as organizational commitment, withdrawal behaviors and

organizational citizenship behaviors (Colquitt et al., 2001). Both procedural and interactional justices constitute two important mediators in the relationship between abusive supervision and work outcomes (e.g. Aryee et al., 2007; Zellars, Tepper & Duffy, 2002). Since abused subordinates receive a poor interpersonal treatment at the hands of their supervisor, they tend to perceive low levels of interactional justice (Aryee et al., 2007). Similarly, the absence of formal procedures that discipline abusers or protect abuse victims at work may produce perceptions of procedural unfairness (Zellars, Tepper & Duffy, 2002). As several studies suggest, justice perceptions transmit the effects of supervisory practices on employees' work-related attitudes, affective reactions, and performance contributions (Mossholder, Bennett, Kemery & Wesolowski, 1998; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993; Pillai, Schriesheim, & Williams, 1999; Tepper, Eisenbach, Kirby, & Potter, 1998).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current study extends research on abusive supervision by using a substitutes for leadership approach and examining the moderating effect of job characteristics in the indirect relationship between abusive supervision and job satisfaction through distributive justice perceptions. These findings contribute to the literature by proposing that two job characteristics, job resources adequacy and role clarity, may operate as substitutes for abusive supervision. Our results draw attention to previously unexamined buffers of abusive supervision, showing that these job characteristics act as buffers in the negative relationship between abusive supervision, distributive justice and job satisfaction. This study provides the basis for practical interventions that have the potential to mitigate the adverse consequences of abusive supervision, particularly through the empowerment of employees, such as with increased levels of job resources adequacy and role clarity. There is clearly more work

to be done in this area, but our research takes a much-needed step toward exploring the important role that task characteristics play in shaping the negative effects of abusive supervision.

STUDY 3: SHAPING EMOTIONAL REACTIONS TO ETHICAL

BEHAVIORS: PROACTIVE PERSONALITY AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Abstract

Due to ethical lapses of leaders, interest in ethical leadership has grown, raising important questions about the responsibility of leaders in ensuring moral and ethical conduct. However, research on ethical leadership has failed to examine the active role that followers' attributes play in enhancing or minimizing the influence of ethical leadership in organizational outcomes. We applied the substitutes for leadership approach (Kerr & Jermier, 1978) to ethical leadership and predicted that proactive personality acts as substitute in the relationship between ethical leadership, workplace emotions and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs). Data from two distinct samples offered strong support for the hypotheses. Specifically, we found that ethical leadership was significantly and negatively related to negative workplace emotions when subordinate proactive personality was low, but not when it was high, with consequences for OCBs. These findings suggest that proactive personality constitutes an important boundary condition on the impact of low ethical leadership on workplace emotions, with consequences for OCBs.

Keywords: ethical leadership, substitutes for leadership, proactive personality, affective events theory, workplace emotions, organizational citizenship behaviors

Introduction

Although philosophers have recognized the importance of ethics for character development since ancient times, the study of ethical behavior in organizations has gained a renewed interest over more than one decade (e.g. Pelletier & Bligh, 2008; Zhang & Jia, 2013). The emerging field of behavioral ethics, especially ethical forms of leadership, has garnered attention across multiple sectors of society mainly due to ethical scandals, such as Enron or National Irish Bank, and their long-term dramatic organizational costs (e.g. Dermitas, 2013; Resick et al., 2006).

Leaders play an essential role in influencing employees' perceptions of what is ethical and beneficial to the organization and employees (Yukl, 2013). Based on this assumption, Brown, Treviño and Harrison (2005) proposed a new conceptualization of ethical leadership as ''the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making'' (Brown et al., 2005, p. 120).

The most common theoretical explanations for the relationship between ethical leadership and follower behaviors include social learning theory (Bandura, 1977b, 1986) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). We propose an additional mechanism to explain the complex relationship between ethical leadership and employees' behavior. We ground our work in affective-events theory (AET: Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) to examine emotions as a key mechanism of the ethical leadership – OCBs relationship since leadership constitutes a key factor that has substantial impact on employee emotions and outcomes due to leaders' influence over followers to guide, structure, motivate and enable them to contribute toward the organizational effectiveness and success (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans & May, 2004; Yukl, 2013).

We also respond to a gap in the literature concerning the conditions under which ethical leadership is more or less effective (Avey, Palanski & Walumbwa, 2010). Research on leadership has treated follower behaviors as outcomes of the leadership process and has failed to examine the active role that followers play in the leadership process (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009). Accordingly, the present study sets out to identify a boundary condition for ethical leadership by proposing that subordinate characteristics constitute potential moderators of the ethical leadership process. Drawing on the substitutes for leadership perspective developed by Kerr and Jermier (1978), which posits that certain subordinate, task and organizational characteristics influence the relationship between leaders' behaviors and work outcomes by replacing or acting in a place of a specific leader behavior, we consider how followers' proactive personality may impact the effects of ethical leadership on OCBs. We chose to examine proactive personality as a moderator because proactive work behaviors have become a key-driver of high-quality decisions and organizational effectiveness (Burris, 2012), given the widespread use of decentralized organizational structures (Spitzmuller et al., 2015). Modern organizations, in order to compete in a global economy that requires continuous innovation, are shifting responsibility downward and require proactive employees who meet stable, long-term objectives within transient and unpredictable environments, seek to improve current circumstances, show flexibility, go beyond narrow task requirements and take initiative (Sonnentag, 2003; Thomas, Whitman & Viswesvaran, 2010). The mere completion of assigned tasks is no longer sufficient for an employee, and being proactive has become the main source of competitive advantage for organizations (e.g. Bergeron, Schroeder & Martinez, 2014; Spitzmuller et al., 2015; Zhang, Wang & Shi, 2012). Because proactive personality constitutes one of the most important dispositional antecedents of proactive behavior at work, it has emerged as a principal research topic

of interest (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Griffin, Neal & Parker, 2007; Thomas, Whitman & Viswesvaran, 2010). We focus on proactive personality as a substitute for ethical leadership because a proactive individual is described as "one who is relatively unconstrained by situational forces and who effects environmental change" (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105). Thus, we expect that proactive subordinates will actively shape and manipulate the environment, regardless of supervisory ethical behaviors.

The present research contributes to the literature in the following ways: First, we build on a recent trend that suggests a model of substitutes for ethical leadership, arguing that these characteristics, when present at high levels, should minimize the effect of leaders' behaviors (Neves, Rego & Cunha, 2014) and propose proactive personality as a substitute for ethical leadership. In this vein, we aim to extend our knowledge of ethical leadership since past research has mainly focused on the positive effects of ethical leadership, as well as on what can organizations do in order to maximize or promote ethical behaviors (see Den Hartog, 2015, for a review). However, recent corporate scandals clearly show that is not easy for organizations to guarantee that their leaders are behaving in an ethical manner at all times. Accordingly, because it is also relevant to understand what strategies organizations can implement to better cope or to mitigate the adverse consequences of lack of ethical leadership, this highlights the importance of examining potential substitutes for ethical leadership (Neves, Rego & Cunha, 2014). With increasing global competition and uncertainty, employee proactivity is becoming a necessity rather than a novelty or a choice for modern, global and dynamic organizations (Bergeron, Schroeder & Martinez, 2014; Thomas, Whitman & Viswesvaran, 2010). Because individuals high in proactive personality are minimally hindered by situational constraints, showing a tendency to ensure a positive outcome regardless of their environment (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Cunningham & De La Rosa,

2008), we propose that proactive personality renders ethical leadership unnecessary (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996) by replacing leader's influence (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996). Furthermore, we are also broadening the study of ethical leadership since previous studies have generally described ethical leadership based on the characteristics and personality traits of the leader, and have mostly ignored the influence of follower variables in the relationship between ethical leadership and follower perceptions and outcomes (e.g. Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Eisenbeiss & van Knippenberg, 2015; Mayer et al., 2009). Even tough recent studies have started to identity followers' individual characteristics that could influence their perceptions of ethical leadership, such as moral emotions and mindfulness (Eisenbeiss & van Knippenberg, 2015), moral attentiveness (van Gils et al., 2015), moral development (Jordan, Brown, Treviño, & Finkelstein, 2013) or self-esteem (Avey, Palanski, &Walumbwa, 2011), we seek to extend the perspective that followers are not passive recipients of ethical leadership by proposing that proactive personality buffers the impact of ethical leadership on follower emotions and behaviors.

Second, we explore the consequences of ethical leadership on organizational outcomes and aim to contribute to the ethical leadership literature by examining an overlooked mechanism, since previous research on ethical leadership has not fully considered the role that employees' emotions may play as a result of ethical leadership (Brown & Mitchell, 2010). In this sense, we are also investigating an important, yet understudied mechanism of the ethical leadership-OCBs relationship. Past research has mainly drawn on social learning theory (Bandura, 1977b, 1986) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) to explain the relationship between ethical leadership and employees' OCBs. We rely on AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) to propose that ethical leadership should be perceived by subordinates as a source of affective events

that creates uplifts (i.e. positive emotional experience) or hassles (i.e. negative emotional experience), which, in turn, would enhance or lessen OCBs, respectively.

Ethical Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

The topic of ethical leadership is generating increasing interest due to its relationship to important follower attitudes and behaviors beyond the realm of ethics, such as job satisfaction, voice behavior, personal initiative, trust in the leader, organizational commitment, work engagement, in-role performance, work withdrawal behaviors, deviant behaviors, employee emotions or OCBs (e.g. Avey, Wernsing & Palanski, 2012; Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005; Cullen, Parboteeah & Victor, 2003; Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012b; Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes & Salvador, 2009; LePine, Erez & Johnson, 2002; Piccolo, Greenbaum, Den Hartog & Folger, 2010; Walumbwa, Morrison & Christensen, 2012; Zhang, Walumbwa, Aryee & Chen, 2013).

Of particular interest is the relationship between ethical leadership and OCBs (e.g. Avey, Palanski, & Walumbwa, 2011; Kacmar, Bachrach, Harris & Zinuvska, 2011; Mayer, Kuenzi & Greenbaum, 2010; Mayer et al., 2012; Piccolo et al., 2010; Walumbwa, Morrison & Christensen, 2012). The logic behind this increased attention stems from the fact that a fair and ethical work environment is conducive to employees being more willing to engage in discretionary (citizenship) behaviors that are beyond the contractual obligations and are beneficial to the organization (Podsakoff, Whiting & Podsakoff, 2009; Walumbwa et al., 2010). Examples of OCBs include adhering to informal rules devised to maintain order, defending the organization from criticism, showing pride for the organization, and protecting the organization from potential problems (Organ, 1988; Zellars, Tepper & Duffy, 2002).

Prior studies in this area have drawn mostly on social learning theory (Bandura, 1977b, 1986) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) to help understand the relationships between ethical leadership and OCBs. The social learning perspective posits that ethical leaders are expected to use transactional efforts (e.g., communicating, rewarding, punishing, emphasizing ethical standards), as well as modeling in order to influence their followers to behave in an ethical and positive manner (Brown, Treviño & Harrison, 2005). In turn, the social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964) presupposes a generalized norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960): when followers receive ethical and fair treatment, they are likely to reciprocate by contributing to organizational performance (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005) and by engaging in discretionary behaviors that benefit the leader, as well as the work setting (Piccolo et al., 2010).

Even though these theoretical frameworks offer valuable and insightful contributions to explain the relationship between ethical leadership and OCBs, we propose that affective-events theory (AET: Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) provides an additional mechanism to examine the ethical leadership-OCBs relationship. AET suggests that emotions can be an essential link between workplace events and employee behavior the role of emotions in the relationship between employees' experiences and work behaviors (Carlson et al., 2011; Dasborough, 2006). Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) propose that two different types of behaviors can be distinguished: affect-based behavior and cognitively driven behavior in the workplace. Affect-based behavior, however, is more directly (intensively) affected by actually aroused emotions (Wegge et al., 2006).

The occurrence of positive or negative affective work events (i.e. daily hassles and uplifts) leads to negative and positive affective reactions that, in turn, lead to affect driven behaviors (Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996). AET does not specify the kind of work

environments or work events that may be associated with positive or negative affective reactions (Basch & Fisher, 2000). In the present study, we propose that ethical leadership constitute a work event that triggers positive or negative emotions in employees, leading to affect driven behaviors (i.e. OCBs). According to AET, OCBs constitute an example for affect-based behavior. In support of these assumptions, previous research has shown that positive emotions tend to produce OCBs (e.g. Fisher, 2002; Miles, Borman, Spector & Fox, 2002; Spector & Fox, 2002) and that negative emotions at work tend to produce low OCBs (Johnson, 2008). That is, the set of behaviors that characterizes ethical leaders, for example statements about the importance of ethics, dissemination of ethics guidelines for members of the organization, role-modeling behaviors that are normatively appropriate (e.g., self-discipline, responsibility), setting and communicating high performance expectations in the assessment of performance, treating people fairly and with respect and criticizing or punishing unethical behavior (Mayer, Aquino, Greenbaum, & Kuenzi, 2012; Walumbwa, Morrison & Christensen, 2012; Yukl, 2012; Zhang, Walumbwa, Aryee, & Chen, 2013), is likely to trigger positive emotions on employees. As a consequence, employees experiencing positive emotional states should be more prone to engage in OCBs. In a similar vein, leaders' low ethical behaviors (e.g. failing to make statements about the importance of ethics, to disseminate ethics guidelines for members of the organization, to yield role-modeling behaviors that are normatively appropriate, to set and communicate high performance expectations in the assessment of performance, to treat people fairly and with respect and to criticize or punish unethical behavior) are likely to elicit negative emotions on employees. Consequently, employees experiencing negative emotional states should be less prone to engage in OCBs. For example, employees feeling pleased, happy or optimistic due to their leader's ethical behaviors

would be more likely to engage in discretionary work behaviors that contribute to organizational well-being, but are not part of formal job expectations (i.e. OCBs; Organ, 1988). For example, employees feeling angry, worried and unhappy as a consequence of their leader's low ethical behaviors would be less prone to engage in OCBs.

Aligned with previous evidence pointing to the key role played by ethical leadership in predicting OCBs (e.g. Avey, Palanski, & Walumbwa, 2011; Kacmar, Bachrach, Harris & Zinuvska, 2011; Mayer, Kuenzi & Greenbaum, 2010; Mayer et al., 2012; Piccolo et al., 2010; Walumbwa, Morrison & Christensen, 2012) we propose:

Hypothesis 1: Ethical leadership is significantly related to OCBs.

The Role of Follower Emotions

Recently, affective and emotional experiences at work have received growing attention (e.g. Avolio et al., 2004; Bono et al., 2007) including the key role that emotions play in the leadership process (Avolio et al., 2004; Rolell & Judge, 2009). Despite being widely accepted that leaders are in a unique position to influence employees' emotions at work, existent empirical research examining the direct effects of leadership behaviors on employees' emotional experiences is still scarce (Bono et al., 2007). For instance, Brown and Mitchell (2010) propose that ethical leadership should provoke positive follower emotions (such as enthusiasm or joy), due to higher quality relationship and ethical work norms, leading to followers' volunteerism or prosocial behaviors. On the other hand, unethical leadership, which fails to respect the rights and dignity of employees, should trigger negative emotions (such as anger or sadness) and, consequently followers should be more likely to engage in deviant or retaliatory behaviors (Avey, Wernsing & Palanski, 2012). Following these propositions, the present study argues that affective events theory (AET: Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) provides strong theoretical foundations to examine the aforementioned relationships.

AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) posits that certain aspects of the work environment (i.e. specific characteristics of organizational factors such as work, supervisors and co-workers) can constitute positive and negative "affective events" (daily hassles and uplifts) that create affective responses and, in turn, lead to attitudinal (such as job satisfaction or commitment) and behavioral outcomes (such as helping behaviors or misconduct) (Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011; Avey, Wernsing & Luthans, 2008; Gardner, Fischer, & Hunt, 2009). According to Dasborough (2006), leaders can be a major source of affective events through their own behaviors because their behaviors stimulate a wide range of emotional reactions in followers (Humprey et al., 2008). In other words, since the leader's behavior elicits an emotional response in followers, it can be conceptualized as an affective event for followers, which can impact followers' subsequent attitudes and behaviors (Johnson, 2008). In the context of this research, the leaders' ethical behaviors should be perceived by subordinates as a source of affective events which create uplifts (i.e. positive emotional experience), whereas the leaders' low ethical behaviors should create hassles (i.e. negative emotional experience). For example, individuals would feel pleased, happy or optimistic if their supervisor respects their rights and dignity, cares for their welfare or listens to their concerns and ideas (Avey, Wernsing & Palanski, 2012; Brown & Mitchell, 2010). Conversely, employees would feel angry, worried and unhappy if they perceive their leader is displaying low ethical behaviors, making decisions that violate moral standards or imposing processes and structures that promote unethical conduct (Brown & Mitchell, 2010).

Hypothesis 2a: Ethical leadership is significantly related to positive emotions.

Hypothesis 2b: Ethical leadership is significantly related to negative emotions.

Hypothesis 3a: Positive emotions mediate the relationship between ethical leadership and OCBs.

Hypothesis 3b: Negative emotions mediate the relationship between ethical leadership and OCBs.

Substitute for Ethical Leadership: Proactive Personality

Kerr and Jermier (1978) suggested a variety of subordinate (e.g. abilities, experience or knowledge), task (e.g., feedback or intrinsically satisfying tasks) and organizational characteristics (e.g., organizational formalization or cohesiveness or work groups) that may negate the effects of hierarchical leadership and that can serve as ' substitutes ' for the effects of a leader's behavior, either positive or negative. According to these authors, the greater the extent to which these variables are present, the less influence the leader is likely to have on subordinate behavior (Dionne et al, 2005; Williams & Podsakoff, 1988).

Substitutes for leadership describe characteristics which render leadership unnecessary (Kerr, 1977; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996) by replacing the leader's influence (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996). For example, Avey, Palanki and Walumbwa (2010) found that followers who were lower in self-esteem tended to be more influenced by ethical leaders and those higher in self-esteem to be less influenced. Faced with this preliminary evidence, Neves, Rego and Cunha (2014) extended the model of substitutes for leadership by proposing potential substitutes for ethical leadership at the individual (subordinates' self-esteem and ethical orientation), task (job autonomy and task significance) and organizational (corporate ethical values and organizational reputation) levels.

We build on this model and propose that followers' proactive personality may represent another important substitute for ethical leadership. Individuals with high

levels of proactive personality ''identify opportunities and act on them, show initiative, take action, and persevere until meaningful change occurs'' (Crant, 2000, p. 439), even against others' opposition. Moreover, proactive workers reveal personal initiative for identifying new ideas to improve work processes, updating their skills, or better understanding company politics (Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001), thus showing decreased dependency on their leaders. Based on these assumptions, we consider that proactive personality may act as a substitute for ethical leadership. Firstly, proactive employees have a strong commitment to work goals and exhibit high levels of effort and performance (Li, Liang & Crant, 2010), regardless of the context or the external information, thus supervisory interactions are less likely to affect their emotional experiences. Secondly, these followers believe in their own ability to overcome constraints by situational forces and the ability to induce changes in the environment if they see something they do not like (such as low ethical supervisory behaviors) (Bateman & Crant, 1993), consequently these individuals do not need to rely on leaders' ethical behaviors to engage in discretionary (citizenship) behaviors that are beyond the contractual obligations and are beneficial to the organization.

In sum, we propose that proactive personality may represent an inner resource for positive state affectivity, positive feelings of competence and self-determination, since proactive followers actively shape and manipulate the work environment in order to accomplish their goals (Major, Turner & Fletcher, 2006). Moreover, proactive followers may not need the ethical leader's guidance to make their work more meaningful and motivating because they can initiate, control and carry out positive behaviors (i.e. OCBs) without the influence of their leaders (Li, Liang & Crant, 2010).

Additionally, proactive employees are resilient in face of high job demands by reporting lower job strain and higher job efficacy (Parker & Sprigg, 1999), as they are

more capable of recovering from less favorable situations, such as low ethical supervisory behaviors, indicating higher psychological well-being, job satisfaction and experiencing more positive emotions and fewer negative emotions, (Harvey, Blouin & Stout, 2006). Conversely, individuals who are not proactive are more likely to experience negative emotions, since they do not challenge the status quo, fail to identify opportunities, show little initiative, and only passively adapt to their work conditions (Zhang, Wang & Shi, 2012) and clearly need and benefit from ethical leadership.

In sum, ethical leadership may have a differential effect on subordinates' emotions, depending on whether levels of proactive personality are high or low. High levels of proactive personality should be an effective substitute for ethical leadership since proactive individuals are more motivated to participate in organizational improvement initiatives and to engage in discretionary behaviors beyond employees' prescribed roles (i.e. OCBs) (Li, Liang & Crant, 2010). In turn, when employee proactive personality is low, as ethical leadership decreases, so should positive emotions (and conversely negative emotions should increase) and thus contribute to lower OCBs. Specifically, the lack of ethical leadership should not lessen intense and short lived positive affective states or contribute to negative affective states, as defined by positive and negative emotions, respectively.

Technically, we are describing mediated moderation, the interactive influence of two variables (ethical leadership and employee proactive personality) on a mediator (employee positive and negative emotions), which in turn, affects an outcome (OCBs) (Morgan-Lopez & MacKinnon, 2006). Therefore we argue that when proactive personality is high, the indirect effect of ethical leadership on OCBs through positive and negative emotions is weaker than when proactive personality is low, leading to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4a: Positive emotions mediate the relationship between the ethical leadership X followers' proactive personality interaction and OCBs.

Hypothesis 4b: Negative emotions mediate the relationship between the ethical leadership X followers' proactive personality interaction and OCBs.

The proposed model is represented in Figure 1.
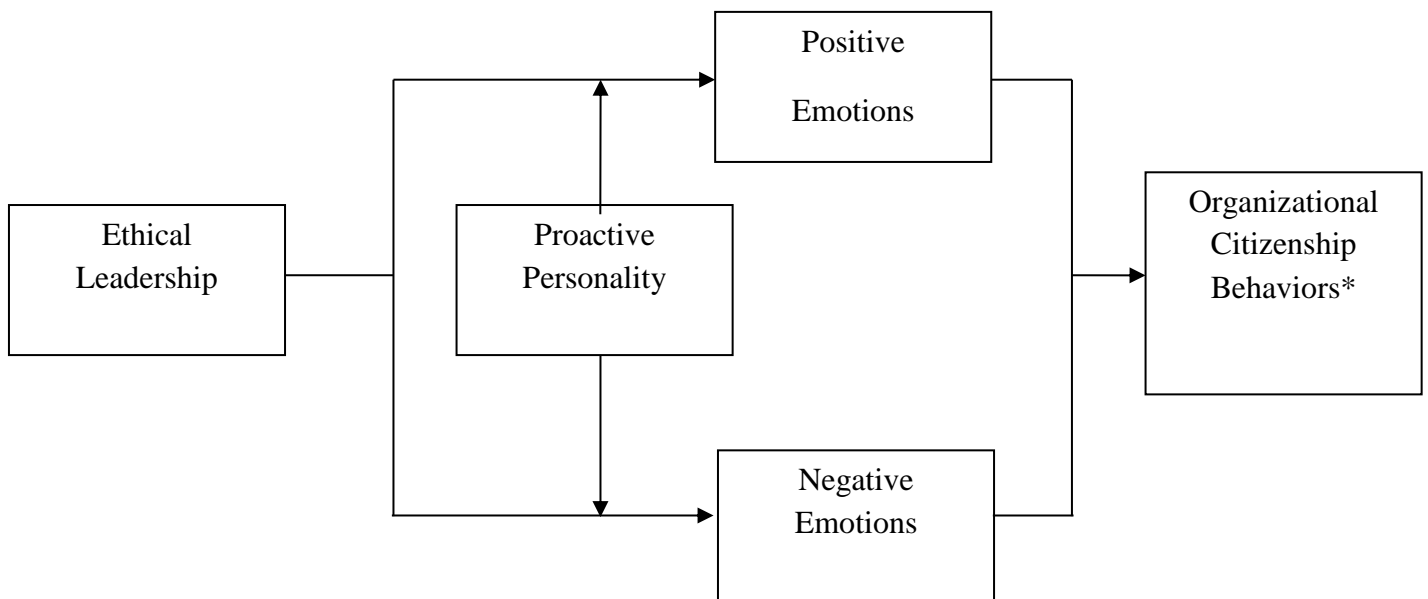
Figure 1. Hypothesized mediated moderation model

* Assessed from supervisors

Method

Samples and Procedure

The present research offers a two-sample replication investigation across two pools of subjects from two different sectors (industry and services) to provide evidence related to the generalizability and/or boundary conditions of our results, since the same model is examined across both samples. Firstly, we contacted the Human Resource

managers of the organizations (or directly with the business owner for microenterprises), all of which agreed to participate in our study. Then, we conducted brief meetings with the Human Resource managers, where we explained the purpose of the study and its multi-source research method. The Human Resource department of each organization contacted the subordinates in order to invite them to participate in the study. If the subordinates agreed to participate, the researchers then asked the immediate supervisor (according to the information provided by the Human Resource department) if he or she was willing to participate. If both were willing to participate, they administered the subordinate survey and the supervisor evaluation form in person in order to guarantee confidentiality. In microenterprises, because the initial meetings were conducted with the business owner, who was simultaneously the direct supervisor, we firstly invited the supervisor to participate in the study and afterwards the subordinates. Two sets of questionnaires were used in both samples: one for subordinates and another one for their immediate supervisors. Each questionnaire was randomly coded in advance with a researcher-assigned identification number in order to match employees' responses with their immediate supervisors' evaluations. The researchers administered the questionnaires to the subordinates and their supervisors separately. We personally approached the respondents to brief them about the purposes of the study and to explain the procedures. They received a questionnaire, a return envelope and a cover letter explaining the aim of the survey, the voluntary nature of their participation and reassuring them of the confidentiality of their responses. To reinforce confidentiality, we asked the respondents to seal the completed questionnaires in the return envelopes and to give them directly to the researchers onsite.

Sample 1. We contacted 451 employee-supervisor dyads from 46 organizations operating in the manufacturing industry. Four hundred and thirty nine dyads (97.3% of

the total number of individuals contacted) agreed to participate and returned the surveys. We excluded 27 dyads because they did not have corresponding supervisors/subordinates surveys completed. Thus, our final sample consisted of 412 dyads from 45 organizations, a usable response rate of 91% of those originally contacted. The second set of questionnaires was delivered to 44 supervisors. The number of surveys completed by a single supervisor ranged from 1 to 23, with a mean of 3.6. With respect to organizational size, 18% of the dyads came from organizations with less than 10 employees, 63% from organizations with between 10 and 100 employees, and 19% from organizations with more than 100 employees. Overall, 39.1% of the employees did not complete high school, 37.4% of the participants had completed high school and 23.5% had a university degree. Average organizational tenure was approximately 2.9 years, 55.4% of employees were under 35 years old and the majority of them were women (61.8%). For supervisors, 15.7% did not complete high school, 40.5% of the participants had completed high school and 43.7% had a university degree. Average organizational tenure was 4.6 years, 53.5% of supervisors were under 43 years old and 50.2% were men.

Sample 2. We contacted 256 employee-supervisor dyads from 23 organizations operating in the services sector. Two-hundred and thirty five dyads (91.7% of the total number of individuals contacted) agreed to participate and returned the surveys, and 11 dyads were eliminated for the reason stated in Sample 1. Thus, our final sample consisted of 224 dyads from 23 organizations, a usable response rate of 87.5% of those originally contacted. The second set of questionnaires was delivered to 68 supervisors. The number of surveys completed by a single supervisor ranged from 1 to 10, with a mean of 3.8. With respect to organizational size, 44% came from organizations with less than 10 employees, 39% from organizations with between 10 and 100 employees, and

17% from organizations with more than 100 employees. Overall, 8.1% of the employees did not complete high school, 28.9% of the participants had completed high school and 63% had a university degree. Average organizational tenure was approximately 3.7 years, 52.5% of employees were under 35 years old and the majority of them were women (59.1%). For supervisors, 25.8% of the participants had completed high school and 74.2% had a university degree. Average organizational tenure was 4.9 years, 50.6% of supervisors were under 43 years old and about half were men (52%).

Measures

For all measures, with the exception of control variables, respondents rated their agreement with each statement using a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). We present the source of the measures, supervisors or subordinates, in parentheses.

Control Variables. Gender, age, organizational tenure, education and tenure with the supervisor have been found to be related to workplace emotions or performance (e.g. Burke, Ng, & Fiksenbaum, 2009; Fisher, 2010; Issacowitz, & Noh, 2011; Michalos, 2008; Pini & Mayes, 2012; Sloan, 2012; Wright & Bonett, 2002). Following the recommendations offered by Becker (2005), we analyzed whether we should control for their influence in our model. We controlled for subordinates' education, organizational tenure and tenure with supervisor in sample 1; and for subordinates' education and organizational tenure in sample 2, as these were the only control variables significantly correlated with our outcome variables.

We also controlled for some personality variables that existent research has considered predictors of OCBs, that is, conscientiousness (e.g. Hattrup, O' Connell & Wingate, 1998; Kamdar & Van Syne, 2007; LePine & Van Dyne, 2001; Van Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996) and agreeableness (Barrick et al., 1998; Kamdar & Van Syne, 2007;

Johnson, 2001). Highly conscientious employees should be relatively unaffected by the quality of their exchange relationships since they are intrinsically motivated to volunteer for extra work or to help coworkers. In a similar vein, highly agreeable employees should be relatively insensitive to the quality of their exchange relationships because individuals who are generally cooperative, flexible, caring and tolerant are dispositionally predisposed to be helpful (i.e. to engage in OCBs).

Ethical Leadership (subordinate measure). We assessed ethical leadership using the 10- item Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS) developed and validated by Brown et al. (2005). Sample items include 'My supervisor disciplines employees who violate ethical standards'; 'My supervisor sets an example of how to do things the right way in terms of ethics' (Sample 1 – α = .84; Sample 2 – α = .83).

Proactive Personality (subordinate measure). The self-report measure of proactivity was a 10-item scale of the Proactivity Personality Survey (Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999), a shortened version of the instrument originally developed by Bateman and Crant (1993). Example items included 'I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life'; 'If I see something I don't like, I fix it' (Sample 1 – α = .80; Sample 2 – α = .81).

Positive Emotions (subordinate measure). To measure positive emotions at work, we used the eight positive emotions included on the Job Emotions Scale (Fisher, 2000). The terms adopted for positive emotions were: liking for someone or something, happy, enthusiastic, pleased, proud, optimistic, enjoying something and content (Fisher, 2000, p. 191). Each term was rated on a five point scale, from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a great deal). Finally, the instructions were: "During the past few months, how often have you experienced these emotions experienced at work? (Sample 1 – α = .82; Sample 2 – α = .81).

Negative Emotions (subordinate measure). To measure negative emotions at work, we used the eight negative emotions included on the Job Emotions Scale (Fisher, 2000). The terms adopted for negative emotions were: depressed, frustrated, angry, disgusted, unhappy, disappointed, embarrassed and worried (Fisher 2000, p. 191). Each term was rated on a five point scale, from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a great deal). Finally, the instructions were: "During the past few months, how often have you experienced these emotions experienced at work? (Sample 1 – α = .86; Sample 2 – α = .85).

Subordinates' Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (supervisor measure). Supervisors evaluated their subordinates' OCBs with 8 items used by Eisenberger et al. (2010) (e.g. 'This employee looks for ways to make this organization more successful'; 'This employee takes action to protect this organization from potential problems). These items assess employees' behaviors in four categories of organizational spontaneity: making constructive suggestions, enhancing one's own knowledge and skills in ways that will help the organization, protecting the organization from potential problems, and helping coworkers (Sample 1 – α = .90; Sample 2 – α = .88).

Results

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and zero-order correlations.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables [a][b]

	Sample 1		Sample 2		1[a]	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD										
1. Subordinates' education	2.76	1.08	3.67	.81	-	.15*	.19*	-.04	.04	-.00	-.01	.03	-.14	.27**
2. Subordinates' organizational tenure	3.22	2.49	3.80	1.14	-.21**	-	.53**	.50	-.04	-.10	-.16*	.04	-.05	.19**
3. Subordinates' tenure with supervisor	2.74	1.17	2.93	.83	-.18**	.77**	-	.16*	-.00	-.09	-.12	-.02	.05	.09
4. Conscientiousness	5.55	0.84	5.61	.79	-.03	.08	.09		.35**	.22**	.22**	.25**	-.20**	.19*
5. Agreeableness	5.35	.78	5.28	.77	.09	-.09	-.09	.37**		.25**	.17*	.23**	-22**	.19
6. Ethical leadership	5.03	.94	4.91	1.11	.07	.03	.07	.26**	.24**	-	.24**	.46**	-.49**	.32**
7. Proactive personality	5.76	.95	4.97	.72	-.00	.16**	.16**	.29**	.25**	.30**	-	.58**	-.27**	.41**
8. Positive emotions	5.11	1.07	5.25	.94	.07	.04	.12*	.23**	.24**	.41**	.24**	-	-.57**	.18*
9. Negative emotions	1.83	1.04	3.09	1.27	-.00	.05	-.00	-.23**	-.23**	-.21**	-.50**	-.19**	-	-.26**
10. OCBs	4.93	1.17	5.30	1.86	.19**	.15**	.19**	.28**	.19**	.34**	.63**	.31**	-.28**	-

Notes. Correlations for Sample 1 are below diagonal. Correlations for Sample 2 are above diagonal. [a] 7-point scales; [b] Education (1= primary education; 2 = ninth grade; 3 = completed high school; 4 = undergraduate degree; 5 = graduate degree); Organizational tenure and tenure with supervisor (1 = less than 6 months, 2 = between 6 months and 1 year, 3 = between 1 and 5 years, 4 = between 5 and 10 years, 5 = between 10 and 20 years, 6 = over 20 years); * p< .05; ** p < .01, all two-tailed tests.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

In order to examine whether our measurement model had an acceptable fit, we conducted a series of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS 23. We compared our theoretical five-factor model with three alternative models. First, we compared it with a three-factor model, where positive and negative emotions were aggregate into a single factor. We then compared it with a two-factor model, where the data collected from subordinates were combined into a single factor, separated from the supervisor's evaluations of OCBs. Finally, we compared it with a single-factor model that combined all five constructs into one single factor.

For both samples, the hypothesized five-factor model was the best fitting model (Sample 1: $\chi^2(892) = 1740,850^{**}$; CFI = .91; TLI = .91; RMSEA = .04; SRMR = .05; Sample 2: $\chi^2(892) = 1636,553^{**}$; CFI = .90; TLI = .90; RMSEA = .04; SRMR = .05), so the five constructs were treated separately in subsequent statistical tests of our hypotheses (Table 2); ethical leadership presented factor loadings ranging from .42 to .79 (Sample 1) and from .53 to .87 (Sample 2); positive emotions presented factor loadings ranging from .45 to .87 (Sample 1) and from .58 to .86 (Sample 2); negative emotions presented factor loadings ranging from .50 to .81 (Sample 1) and from .52 to .81 (Sample 2); proactive personality presented factor loadings ranging from .44 to .74 (Sample 1) and from .48 to .70 (Sample 2); and finally, OCBs presented factor loadings ranging from .64 to .84 (Sample 1) and from .64 to .88 (Sample 2).

Table 2

CFAs for the hypothesized and alternative models

	df	X^2	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Sample 1						
Five-factor model	892	1740,850**	.91	.91	.04	.05
Four-factor model [a]	896	1955,656**	.85	.84	.07	.06
Two-factor model [b]	901	3758,414**	.66	.65	.10	.11
One-factor model	902	5760,365**	.46	.44	.11	.12
Sample 2						
Five-factor model	892	1636,553**	.90	.90	.04	.05
Four-factor model [a]	896	1843,921**	.83	.83	.06	.06
Two-factor model [b]	901	3854,210**	.64	.63	.09	.10
One-factor model	902	5858,268**	.44	.42	.10	.11

Notes. [a] Merge positive emotions and negative emotions; [b] merge ethical leadership, proactive personality. CFAs = confirmatory factor analyses; *df* = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root-mean- square error residual; ** p < .01.

Test of Hypotheses

We used simple linear regression to test hypothesis 1 by regressing OCBs on ethical leadership, after entering the control variables as a block. According to our expectations, ethical leadership presented a significant relationship with OCBs (Sample 1: B=.43, p <.01; Sample 2: B=.40, p <.01). Therefore, hypothesis 1 was supported.

To test the remaining hypotheses, we employed Hayes' (2013) PROCESS bootstrap macro for SPSS (model 7). Bootstrapping methods offer a straightforward and robust strategy for assessing indirect effects in mediated-moderation models (e.g. Preacher, Rucker & Hayes, 2007; Shrout & Bolger, 2002), as is the case of the present study. Additionally, and following Aiken and West´s recommendation (1991), predictors (ethical leadership and proactive personality) were mean-centered.

In accordance with hypotheses 2a and 2b, we found that ethical leadership was significantly related to positive emotions (Sample 1: B= .41, p<.01; Sample 2: B= .43; p<.01) and to negative emotions (Sample 1: B= -.22, p<.01; Sample 2: B= -20; p<.01).

Also according to our prediction, we found that ethical leadership was significantly related to positive emotions (Sample 1: B= .40, p<.01; Sample 2: B= .43; p<.01) and to negative emotions (Sample 1: B= -.23, p<.01; Sample 2: B= -21; p<.01). Moreover, positive emotions (Sample 1: B= .22, p<.01; Sample 2: B= .15; p<.05 and negative emotions (Sample 1: B= .-26, p<.05; Sample 2: B= .-15; p<.05) were significantly related to OCBs. Taken together, and given the fact that the predictor variable (i.e. ethical leadership) is related to both mediators (i.e. positive and negative emotions), which in turn impacts the outcome variable (i.e. OCBs) (MacKinnon, Krull & Lockwood, 2000), these results support hypotheses 3a and 3b. Specifically, the indirect effect via positive emotions was significant for both samples (Sample 1: B= .05; 95% CI [.008, .126]; Sample 2: B= .06; 95% CI [.002, .076]). The indirect effect of ethical leadership on OCBs through negative emotions was also significant for the two samples (Sample 1: B= .03; 95% CI [.007, .086]; Sample 2: B= .03; 95% CI [.001, .077]) (see Tables 3 and 4 for path coefficients and main results).

To examine our mediated-moderation hypotheses (Preacher et al., 2007) (hypotheses 4a and 4b), in which we suggested that the interaction effect of ethical

leadership and proactive personality extended to OCBs through its relationship with positive and negative emotions, we first examined the simple interaction effects. Concerning positive emotions, the interaction term between ethical leadership and proactive personality was not significant (Sample 1: B= -.05; p> .05; Sample 2: B= -.02; p> .05). Therefore, hypothesis 4a was not confirmed.

We found a significant interaction effect between ethical leadership and proactive personality on negative emotions in both samples (Sample 1: B= .17; p< .01; Sample 2: B= .16; p< .05). Using simple slope analysis, we found that the negative relationship between ethical leadership and negative emotions was significant when proactive personality was low (Sample 1: t= -2.43; p<.05; Sample 2: t= -2.35; p<.05), but not when it was high (Sample 1: t=- 1.39; ns; Sample 2: t=- 1.57; ns) (Figures 2 and 3), partially supporting the role of proactive personality as a substitute for ethical leadership. As a second step, we then analyzed the conditional indirect effect of ethical leadership on OCBs through negative emotions at specific values of the moderator, i.e., proactive personality. In support of hypothesis 4b, the indirect effect of ethical leadership on OCBs through negative emotions was significant for low (Sample 1: B = .06, 95% CI [.015, .119]; Sample 2: B = .04, 95% CI [.002, .105]) but not for high levels of proactive personality (Sample 1: B = .-.02, 95% CI [.-066, .010]; Sample 2: B = -.01, 95% CI [-.053, .014]). That is, the lack of ethical leadership was related to lower OCBs through heightened negative emotions, but only when proactive personality was low. When proactive personality was high, the lack of ethical leadership was not related to changes in negative emotions or OCBs, as these remained at a stable low level (i.e. substituting the effect of ethical leadership).

Table 3

Bootstrapping results for Sample1

Predictors	Mediator				Mediator				Outcome			
	Positive Emotions				Negative Emotions				OCB			
	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1: Control Variables												
Subordinates' education	.04	.66			.00	.07			.20	3.45**		
Organizational tenure	.03	.78			.13	2.11*			.12	1.75		
Tenure with supervisor	.12	1.47			-.07	-.91			.08	1.03		
Conscientiousness	.14	2.35**			-.15	-1.68			.05	.56		
Agreeableness	.09	.89	.02	.02	-.17	2.82**	.05	.05	-.01	-.11	.00	.00
Step 2: Main effects												
Ethical Leadership	.40	6.52**			-.23	-3.66**			.43	2.99**		
Proactive Personality	.11	-1.13	.19	.17	-.43	-7.09**	.24	.19	.19	3.39**	.27	.27
Step 3: Interaction term												
EL X PP	-.05	-1.13	.19	.00	.17	2.78**	.25	.01	.06	1.07	.28	.01
Step 4: Mediator												
Positive Emotions									.22	3.11**	.25	.03
Negative Emotions									-.26	-4.22*	.31	.03

Notes. * p < .05; ** p < .01; Tabled values are unstandardized regression coefficients; EL – Ethical Leadership; PP – Proactive

Personality; OCB – Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

Table 4

Bootstrapping results for Sample 2

Predictors	Mediator				Mediator				Outcome			
	Positive Emotions				Negative Emotions				OCB			
	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1: Control Variables												
Subordinates' education	.06	.78			.00	.07			.19	2.76**		
Organizational tenure	.03	.58		.	.13	2.11			.14	2.89**		
Conscientiousness	.18	2.43**			-.10	-1.42			.13	2.26*		
Agreeableness	.13	1.74	.03	.03	-13	-2.12	.02	.02	-.07	-.77	.03	.03
Step 2: Main effects												
Ethical Leadership	.43	5.64**			-.21	-2.78**			.40	2.99**		
Proactive Personality	.10	1.28	.19	.16	-.39	-4.86**	.21	.19	.18	3.17**	.27	.24
Step 3: Interaction term												
EL X PP	-.02	-.21	.19	.00	.16	2.03*	.23	.02	.11	1.75	.28	.01
Step 4: Mediator												
Positive Emotions									.15	3.31*	.25	.02
Negative Emotions									-.15	-2.10*	.31	.03

Notes. * p < .05; ** p < .01; Tabled values are unstandardized regression coefficients; EL – Ethical Leadership; PP – Proactive

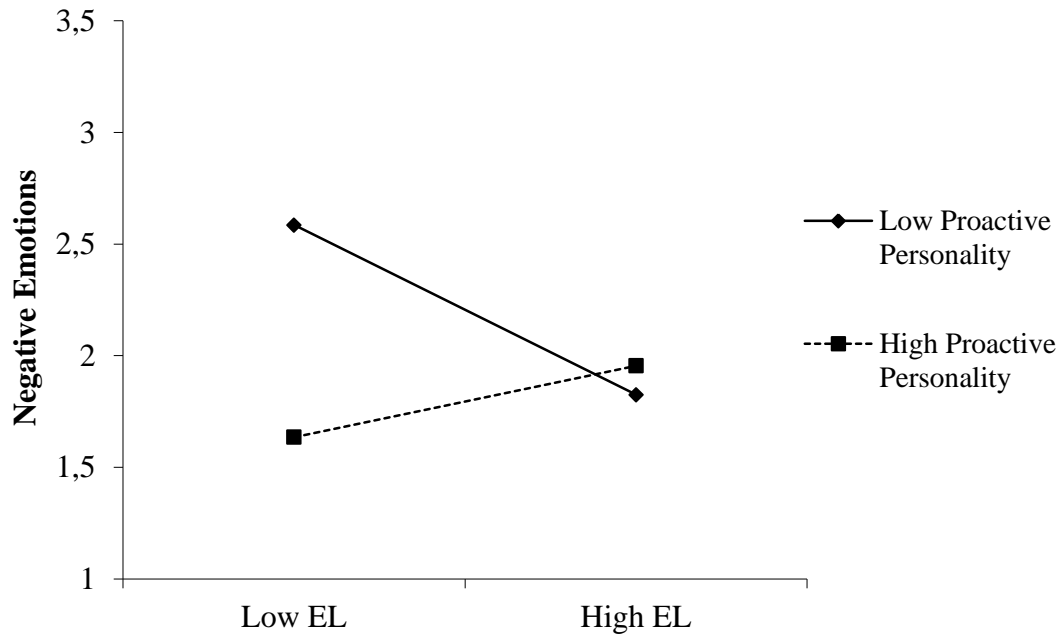Personality; OCB – Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

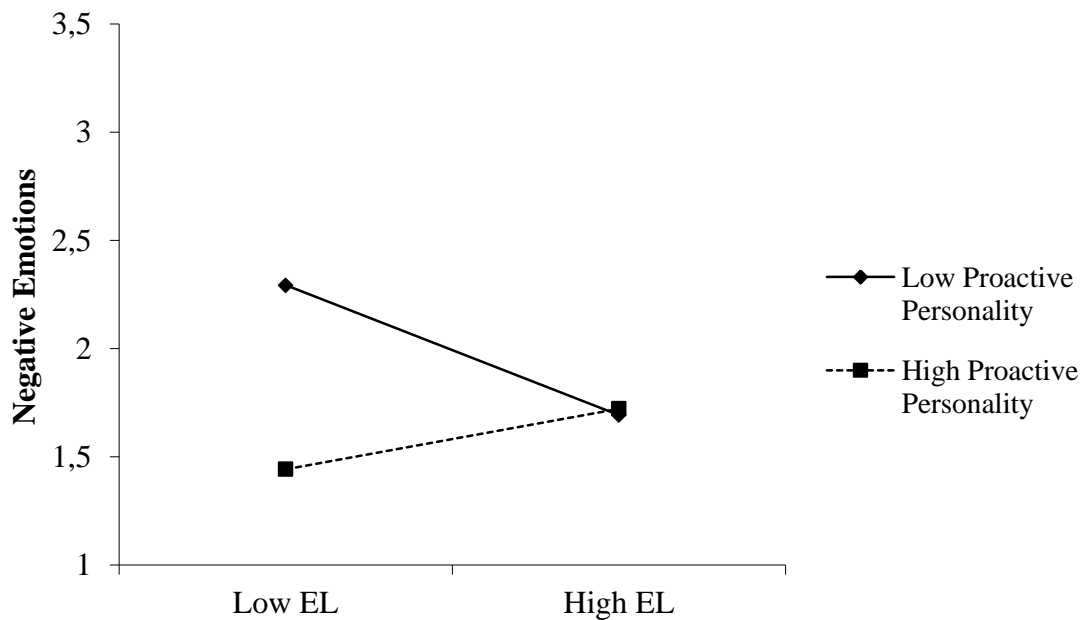*Figure 2.* Sample 1 - Interaction between Ethical Leadership (EL) and Proactive

Personality

Figure 3. Sample 2 - Interaction between Ethical Leadership (EL) and Proactive

Personality

Discussion

The focus of the present study was to test the moderating role of employee proactive personality on the relationship between ethical leadership and emotions (both positive and negative) and its carry-over effect on OCBs. We also examined a boundary condition (i.e. moderator) of the emotional mechanism that links ethical leadership to employee OCBs. First, drawing on affective events theory (AET: Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), we found that ethical leadership is significantly related do OCBs and that the relationship between ethical leadership and OCBs was mediated by both positive and negative emotions. Second, proactive personality moderated the relationship between ethical leadership and OCBs via negative, but not positive emotions. When proactive personality is high, perceptions of low ethical behaviors from the supervisor fails to increase negative emotions or decrease OCBs, since proactive employees constantly look for what they see as better ways to do things and champion for their ideas, even against others' opposition, and they also proceed to act and seek to effect changes in the situation if they see something they do not like (Chan, 2006).

Interestingly, our results failed to confirm the role of proactive personality on the indirect relationship between ethical leadership and OCBs through positive emotions. Because emotion research has highlighted that positive and negative emotions are not two ends of a bipolar continuum but rather orthogonal dimensions (Watson & Tellegen, 1985; Watson et al., 1999), such difference can be explained based on the evidence that positive and negative emotion composites are independent of each other (Fisher, 2000) and may be differentially caused and distinctively linked to behavior (Diener, Smith & Frujita, 1995). Previous studies have shown that positive and negative emotions often correlate differently with personality variables (Diener, Larsen, Levine & Emmons, 1985). For example, the relationship between extraversion and positive (but not

negative) affect and between neuroticism and negative (but not positive) affect is well documented (McNiel & Fleeson, 2006). Research on negative work events (such as a lack of ethical supervisory behaviors) also suggests a greater role for negative over positive events in evoking emotional reactions (Taylor, 1991), which are likely to be labeled negatively and experienced far more intensely than positive emotions. Thus, the degree of arousal, which signals that action needs to be taken, seems to be higher for negative emotions than for positive emotions (Schwarz, 1990).

Implications for Theory and Practice

This study makes several contributions to the existing body of literature. First, this study contributes to a growing body of research concerned with ethical leadership in organizations by testing follower characteristics that may enhance or mitigate the influence of ethical leader behaviors. Thus, our findings also expand the content domain of ethical leadership research by examining employee characteristics (i.e. proactive personality) as a moderator of the relationship between ethical leadership and employee emotions and performance. As Mayer et al. (2009) point out, ethical leadership research is still in its infancy and therefore work is needed to identify the myriad of moderators that promote or impede its effectiveness (Walumbwa et al., 2011). Proactive employees are characterized by initiative, perseverance and attempt to shape their work environment (Bateman & Crant, 1993). These characteristics are even more important when employees are facing low ethical leadership because proactive employees challenge the status quo, initiate change and respond more adaptively to their environments, being relatively unconstrained by situational forces rather than merely accepting externally imposed rules and norms (Seibert, Crant & Kraimer, 1999).

Second, these findings also contribute to the substitutes for leadership literature (Kerr & Jermier, 1978) and specifically substitutes for ethical leadership literature

(Neves, Rego & Cunha, 2014) by identifying one additional substitute (i.e. employee proactive personality) to the list of (ethical) leadership substitutes originally proposed. Subordinate proactive personality serves as a substitute for leadership as it meets the three criteria indicated by Howell, Dorfman and Kerr (1986). First, there is a strong logical reasoning that supports the relationship between ethical leadership, subordinate proactive personality and negative emotions. Second, proactive personality operates as a moderator, i.e., when proactive personality was high, the effect of ethical supervisory behaviors on negative emotions was weakened. Third, proactive personality has a direct impact on negative emotions.

Third, our findings advance previous research by further explaining the relationship between ethical leadership and OCBs (e.g. Avey, Palanski, & Walumbwa, 2011; Kacmar et al, 2011; Mayer et al., 2012; Piccolo et al., 2010). Although the mediating effect of employee emotions between an array of leadership styles and OCBs had been confirmed in previous research (e.g. Avolio et al., 2004; McColl-Kennedy & Anderson, 2002; Rowold & Rohmann, 2009), the present uses the AET framework (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) to describe potential alternative mechanisms through which ethical leadership influences OCBs. In line with Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) our results suggest that emotions serve as a generative conduit that transmits the effects of ethical leadership to OCBs. That is, subordinates' experiences of positive or negative emotions stemming from ethical supervisory behaviors influence their OCBs.

This research also provides some guidance for managerial practice. Since ethical leadership is related to employee emotions and OCBs, managers should make efforts to facilitate the development of ethical leadership by, for example, ensuring that young leaders learn from proximate ethical role models at work (Brown & Treviño, 2006b). Additionally, organizational ethics codes also constitute an attempt to foster an ethical

climate, since they communicate corporate moral and values and send powerful messages about the organizations' expectations regarding supervisors' ethical conduct (Adams, Tashchian & Shore, 2001). However, it might be difficult to ensure that all direct supervisors are acting in an ethical way (and this highlights the importance of examining potential substitutes), since these behaviors also have deep roots in supervisor's own personality (Brown & Treviño, 2006a).

From an applied perspective, the current study also sheds some light on what organizations can do to minimize or overcome the negative impact of low levels of leader ethicality. Firstly, personality variables that affect emotional experiences and OCBs may also have selection applications. For example, when hiring for positions that benefit from OCBs, organizations may wish to target individuals whose personality traits are predictive of proactivity, regardless of leadership styles, That is, measuring proactive personality could be a cost-effective method for identifying those most likely to experience less negative emotional experiences, as well to report increased OCBs, even when their leaders do not demonstrate ethical behaviors. Secondly, organizations could benefit from training interventions that are designed to enhance employees' level of proactivity. Despite being conceptualized as a relatively stable individual characteristic, evidence indicates that training interventions can foster proactive behaviors (e.g. Kirby, Kirby & Lewis, 2002). By doing so, organizations are protecting themselves (and their employees) from the negative effects that stem from the lack of ethical leadership on employees' emotional reactions and behaviors.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The first limitation is related to the potential for the occurrence of common method variance (CMV), since employees provided ratings of ethical leadership, proactive personality, and positive and negative emotions. However, there are some

aspects of our research that suggest that CMV is not a pervasive problem in our study. Firstly, we collected data from multiple raters (supervisors and subordinates) to reduce the likelihood that results are due to the influence of common method variance effects (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2003). Secondly, it is worth to mention that there are no strikingly high correlations among variables and that interaction effects are not likely artifacts of CMV, since interaction effects will be deflated by unique measurement error, making them more difficult to detect (Busemeyer & Jones, 1983). Nonetheless, future research might benefit from other methodological precautions, such as collecting data from different sources (for example coworkers' ratings of ethical leadership).

Second, the cross-sectional research design precludes any inference of causality. Longitudinal research designs would complement these results and aid in eliminating suspicions of reverse causality. For example, employees' negative emotions could drive perceptions of lower ethical leadership as opposed to the model we put forth. Research designs that measure antecedents and consequences at multiple points in time can help establish the temporality of study variables.

Third, our measure of workplace emotions also warrants some attention. We measured it through eight positive emotions (liking for someone or something, happy, enthusiastic, pleased, proud, optimistic, enjoying something and content) and eight negative emotions (depressed, frustrated, angry, disgusted, unhappy, disappointed, embarrassed and worried) (Fisher 2000, p. 191). Each term was rated on a five point scale, from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a great deal), with the following instruction: "During the past few months, how often have you experienced these emotions experienced at work?" However, because emotions are transient states and difficult to measure accurately long after they have occurred, people tend to over-estimate the frequency

with which they have experienced both positive and negative emotions when reporting retrospectively (Fisher, 2000). Future research should strive to report workplace emotions in real time, that is, to obtain reports of current emotions at the time they are being experienced (Diener et al., 1995).

This study's findings also suggest additional directions for future research. For example, scholars may wish to explore other substitutes for leadership. The substitutes for leadership perspective (Kerr & Jermier, 1978) includes other relevant characteristics and additional substitutes for ethical leadership may operate. Extending on Nübold, Muck, and Maier's (2013) work, future research could explore state employee core self-evaluations as a possible substitute for ethical leadership. We hypothesize that individuals with high core self-evaluations perceive their jobs as more challenging and enriching (when compared to individuals with low core self-evaluations) and, consequently, are intrinsically motivated to perform well (Judge, Bono & Locke, 2000), regardless of ethical leadership.

The link between ethical leadership and (positive or negative) emotions is also likely to be stronger for individuals who are more attentive or sensitive to and influenced by ethical (or unethical) information in the workplace (as proposed by Piccolo et al., 2010). For example, individuals with high levels of cognitive moral development could be more attentive and influenced by (un)ethical supervisory behaviors, which in turn should more intensely shape their emotional reactions and behaviors. In this sense, future research could examine the moderating impact of individual differences regarding employees' attentiveness or sensitiveness to ethics or fairness in this relationship.

Finally, drawing on AET, another logical extension of our study would be to examine in more detail the mediating effect of emotions, moods and other affect-related

variables in the relationship between ethical leadership and different followers' attitudes and behaviors. Future research could benefit by including other criterion variables such as creativity, innovation and initiative, which have been found to result from positive affect (Rank & Frese, 2008) or counterproductive work behaviors and absenteeism, which have been found to result from negative affect (Judge & Kammeyer-Muelle, 2008; Penney & Spector, 2008).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current study extends research on ethical leadership by combining two approaches, AET and substitutes for leadership, and examining the moderating effect of employee personal characteristics in the indirect relationship between ethical leadership and OCBs through employee emotions. The negative personal and organizational effects associated with the lack of ethical leadership are evident. However, organizations have at their disposal effective strategies to minimize these adverse consequences, particularly through the enhancement of employees' proactivity. Although much work remains to be done, we hope our study will stimulate additional research to further explore the active role that followers play in enhancing or minimizing the effects of leaders' behaviors.

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STUDY 4: A FOLLOWERSHIP APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP: THE

INTERPLAY BETWEEN LEADERSHIP, CONTEXT AND FOLLOWER

BEHAVIORS

Abstract

Leadership research has privileged the leaders' active role in shaping leader/follower interactions (Baker, 2007) whereas much less attention has been given to how followers interact relative to those with higher status (i.e. leaders) (Carsten et al., 2010). Therefore, drawing on a followership perspective, we propose that LMX mediates the relationship between followership (proactive and passive) and employee behaviors. Because interactions between organizational actors (i.e. leaders and followers) do not take place in a vacuum and the organizational context influences their attitudes, behaviors and outcomes, we also suggest that top management openness moderates these relationships. In a sample of 769 supervisor-subordinate dyads from a variety of organizational settings, we found that LMX mediates the relationship between proactive followership and proactive and voice behaviors and that this relationship was significant only when top management openness was high. These findings suggest that followers play an active role in the leadership process and that in order to stimulate proactive and voice behaviors in organizations, one should take into account all three levels: followers, leaders and top management.

Keywords: Followership, LMX, top management openness, proactive behaviors, voice

Introduction

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997) focuses on how high quality relationships between leaders and followers bind them together in the mutual pursuit of effective organizational outcomes (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Although this theory acknowledges followers in the relational process, emphasizing their role as active partners (Schyns, & Day, 2010; Uhl-Bien, Graen & Scandura, 2000); it still privileges the leader as the main driver of the relationship-building process (Crossman & Crossman, 2011; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

In fact, leadership literature has over-emphasized the leader as the central source of influence in the leadership process and therefore failed to give enough attention to the role played by followers (e.g. Gooty, Connelly, Griffith, & Gupta, 2010; Tee, Paulsen & Ashkanasy, 2013). The role of followers in leadership processes has remained underestimated mainly because they are usually defined as "subordinates who have less power, authority, and influence than do their superiors" and also as subordinates "who go along with someone else's wants and intends" (Kellerman, 2008, p. xix). However, because without followers there can be no leaders, scholars have recently broadened leadership research to include follower-centered approaches (e.g. Howell, & Shamir, 2005; Shamir, Pillai, Bligh & Uhl-Bien, 2007), which assume that followers should constitute the primary focus of the leadership process and started to explore how follower attitudes and behaviors impact organizational outcomes of interest (e.g. innovation or task performance) (Carsten et al., 2010).

Despite promising progress in the followership literature, several questions are still open to further investigation. Modern organizations, in order to compete in the global economy, are shifting responsibility downward and require proactive employees who voice their ideas and opinions, show flexibility, go beyond narrow task

requirements and take initiative (Sonnentag, 2003). These behaviors constitute undoubtedly a key-driver of high-quality decisions and organizational effectiveness (Burris, 2012). Nevertheless, the linkage between followership schemas and important follower behaviors, such as proactive and voice behaviors, has remained understudied. Followership schemas are generalized knowledge structures that provide the foundation for creating social constructions of different roles (i.e., leader or follower) and influence how individuals behave in their followership roles (Carsten et al., 2010).

Furthermore, individuals who maintain a schema of proactive followership believe their role is to engage interactively with leaders and that leadership is achieved through mutual influence (Carsten et al., 2010). Thus, proactive followership should enhance high LMX (Gooty et al., 2014; Oc & Bashshur, 2013), which presupposes greater responsibility, delegation of authority for job-related decisions, involvement in making decisions or use of followers' ideas and suggestions (Yukl, O'Donnell & Taber, 2009). On the other hand, followers who hold more passive schemas, characterized by subordination and obedience, believe that leadership is achieved through authority and control (Carsten et al., 2010). Therefore, passive followership behaviors should contribute to low quality relationships, which are defined by contractual exchanges between the leader and followers, where influence is primarily downward and relations are largely defined by formal job roles (Cogliser et al, 2009).

Previous evidence also suggests that the organizational context may influence followership schema and behaviors (Carsten et al., 2010). Thus, we expect that an open and participative climate, as set up by top management, can strengthen proactive followership behaviors characterized by innovation and personal initiative taking. Conversely, a bureaucratic and more authoritarian climate reinforces passive followership behaviors characterized by obedience and deference.

This study extends previous research in two ways. First, additional research is needed to examine the role that followers play as active participants in the leadership process dynamics (Conger, 2004; Riggio, Chaleff, & Lipman-Blumen, 2008; Zhu, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2009). Thus, we set out to examine the role of follower schema (i.e. proactive or passive) in determining the effects of LMX perceptions on follower work behaviors. Second, we assume that leadership is a social process comprised of a collection of interacting components: top management, direct supervisors and employees. In this sense, our model includes these three levels of analysis by examining the linkages between followership and LMX quality that can, in combination with top management openness, enhance follower work behaviors.

Followership and proactive and voice behaviors

As previously mentioned, leadership research has mostly neglected the active role of followers in the leadership process (e.g. Carsten et al., 2010; Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2012; Hoption, Christie & Barling, 2012; Kellerman, 2008; Oc & Bashshur, 2013; Tee, Paulsen & Ashkanasy, 2013), supporting the belief that good or bad leaders largely explain organizational outcomes. Thus, there is little empirical evidence on the fact that leaders need followers to accomplish their goals (Hoption, Christie & Barling, 2012).

There have been a number of calls over the years to examine the active role that followers play as co-participants in the leadership process (e.g. Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009; Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2012). For example, even though LMX theory distinguishes followers based on the dyadic relationship that they establish with a particular leader (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), it neglects how followers in these relationships actively contribute to leadership outcomes (Weber & Moore, 2014).

Followership research recognizes the active role of followers in the leadership process and explores how they view their own behaviors and roles when engaging with

leaders (Carsten et al., 2010). It can be defined as "a relational role in which followers have the ability to influence leaders and contribute to the improvement and attainment of group and organizational objectives" (Carsten et al., 2010, p. 559) and explores how followers actively and explicitly influence leader perceptions, attitudes, behaviors or decisions, choose to take responsibility relative to leaders, communicate with leaders or approach problem-solving (Carsten et al., 2010; Oc & Bashshur, 2013).

Despite variations in the typology of descriptive followership behaviors (e.g. Blanchard, Welbourne, Gilmore & Bullock, 2009; Kelly, 1992; Potter & Rosebach, 2006), a general consensus exists in relation to some key ideas (Crossman & Crossman, 2011). Besides recognizing the active role that followers play in shaping the interdependence of leader/follower interactions (Baker, 2007), followership perspectives also assume that leadership is not just a top down process between the formal leader and team members. Furthermore, a team can be composed by multiple leaders, some with and some without formal leadership positions (Mehra et al., 2006), showing that responsibility for leadership routines involves multiple individuals, rather than being focused on a single leader. Finally, followers establish unique relationships with their leaders and play differentiated roles, making some followers more critical or valuable to the leadership process than others (Weber & Moore, 2014). For example, Carsten et al. (2010) showed that followers maintain schemas that could be more passive in nature, i.e. characterized by obedience, deference and low levels of responsibility, or more proactive, i.e. characterized by initiative taking and advancing the goals of the organization (Epitropaki et al., 2013).

Proactive followership is linked to a host of benefits in organizational contexts (Benson, Hardy & Eys, 2015; Dooley & Fryxell, 1999; Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran, 2010; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000), since the current labor

market is characterized by flexibility, rapid innovation and continuous change. Therefore, organizations are looking for innovative and spontaneous activity beyond employees' prescribed roles, i.e., specific behaviors that facilitate adaptation to these new labor requirements, such as voice and proactive behaviors (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008). As such, it is expected that proactive followers show proactivity directed toward the task, displaying proactive behaviors such as taking initiative in improving current circumstances or creating new ones; anticipating and solving problems, taking change initiatives, social network-building, feedback seeking, and issue selling (e.g. Crant, 2000; Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012; Sonnentag, 2003). In the same way, proactive followership should be related to the expression of constructive challenge intended to improve how things are done (Van Dyne & LePine (1998), as defined by voice.

In turn, passive followers should be less likely to demonstrate an active approach toward work (Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996; Parker, 2000), being less prone to improve work methods and procedures or to develop personal prerequisites for meeting future work demands, rather preferring to passively adapt to the status quo (Crant, 2000). Similarly, passive followers should refrain from expressing their opinions or suggestions since they believe that their role does not include actively seeking to improve their organization's work procedures, methods or the organizational functioning (Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014).

Therefore, the current study proposes that followership constitutes an antecedent of both proactive and voice behaviors. Proactive followers are more prone to engage in innovative activity beyond their specified roles and feel more comfortable to express their ideas (Ilies, Nahrgang & Morgeson, 2007), displaying anticipatory, change-oriented, active, self-starting, and persistent work behaviors that benefit their employing

organization (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Fay & Sonnentag, 2012; Ilies et al., 2007; Li, Liang & Crant, 2010).

Thus, we hypothesized as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Proactive followership is positively related to *(a)* proactive behaviors and *(b)* voice.

Hypothesis 2: Passive followership is negatively related to *(a)* proactive behaviors and *(b)* voice.

The Role of LMX

Previous research has long recognized that leadership constitutes a process of social influence through which diverse leadership behaviors affect subordinates' emotions, perceptions and behaviors. These include supervisory authentic behaviors (Avolio et al, 2004), perceived supervisor support (Cole, Bruch, Vogel, 2006), transformational behaviors (Humphrey, 2002; Pirola-Merlo, Härtel, Mann & Hirst, 2002), leaders' affective displays (Kafetsios, Nezlek, & Vassiou, 2011; Miller, Considine, & Garner, 2007; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, van Kleef & Damen, 2008), supervisory mistreatment (Kim & Shapiro, 2008), destructive leader behavior (Schyns & Schilling, 2012) or LMX quality (Bono & Yoon, 2012; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

LMX theory proposes that leaders establish unique relationships with each of their subordinates (Bauer & Erdogan, 2006; Bauer & Green, 1996; Suazo, Turnley & Mai-Dalton, 2005) that range on a continuum from those exchanges defined for the most part in the employment contract, to those founded on mutual trust, respect, interaction, support, and formal and informal rewards (Ilies, Nahrgang & Morgeson, 2007; Restubog, Bordia, Krebs & Tang, 2005). These relationships are quickly formed and tend to remain stable over time (Colella & Varma, 2001). The quality of these

emotional and resource-based exchanges is predictive of performance-related and attitudinal job outcomes, especially for employees (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ilies, Nahrgang & Morgeson, 2007). LMX builds on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which assumes that social exchanges presuppose a generalized norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), where parties provide benefits to one another, with an expectation of repayment for the benefits received. In support of the theory, empirical research has demonstrated that a favorable exchange relationship is associated with a multitude of performance and motivational outcomes (e.g. Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ilies, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007; Johnson, Truxillo, Erdogan, Bauer & Hammer, 2009; Tierney, Farmer, & Graen, 1999; Volmer, Spurk & Niessen, 2012). These include performance ratings and objective performance, overall satisfaction and satisfaction with supervisor, affective organizational commitment, role perceptions and clarity, and citizenship behaviors (Culbertson, Huffman & Alden-Anderson, 2010; Eisenberger et al, 2010; Gerstner & Day, 1997).

In essence, an important way in which LMX contributes to organizational effectiveness is through the fact that high-quality relationships are likely avenues for reciprocation because employees "pay back" their leaders by engaging in citizenship (i.e. discretionary) behaviors, which benefit the leader and others in the work setting (Deluga, 1994; Ilies, Nahrgang, Morgeson; Wayne et al., 2002).

The role of leaders for employee proactive and voice behavior has been recently acknowledged (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Burris, Detert & Chiaburu, 2008; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2012). Leaders can constitute a useful source of support and are able to induce positive motivational states in employees, making them more likely to reciprocate this support by displaying proactive behaviors or engaging in voice (e.g. Detert; & Burris 2007; Venkataramani, Green & Schleicher, 2010). For example,

specific behaviors, such as individualized consideration and inspirational motivation, displayed by transformational leaders, can stimulate both proactive and voice behaviors by developing and empowering employees and by stimulating them intellectually (Den Hartog and Belschak, 2012; Detert and Burris, 2007). In the same vein, both supportive (by enhancing self-efficacy and promoting positive orientations toward change) and ethical leadership (by listening to employee concerns and being trusted to a greater degree) promote proactive behaviors and facilitate speaking up more often (Avey, Wernsing and Palanski, 2012; Parker, Williams & Turner, 2006).

Because the leadership process takes form in the interactions between leaders and followers, thus creating a reciprocal interdependence between their actions, it is important to identify the role of follower approaches, which are more passive or proactive in nature, in the relationship between leaders and followers' behaviors (Carsten et al., 2010).

Thus, we suggest that proactive followership promotes a high quality relationship that, in turn, enhance followers' proactive and voice behaviors. That is, proactive followership, which is characterized by extra effort in the work environment, greater responsibility, participation in the decision-making process, engagement with the leader and autonomy (Oc & Bashsur, 2014), should lead to higher quality LMX (Liden & Graen, 1980), and, consequently, show more proactive behaviors at work and voice their ideas or suggest solutions to problems (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009; Volmer, Spurk & Niessen, 2012; Yukl, 2013). Conversely, passive followership schema, characterized by little communication and information sharing, as well as lack of participation in the leadership process, should lead to low-quality LMX relationships, through which followers experience limited emotional support, trust and receive few benefits outside the employment contract (Harris, Wheeler & Kacmar, 2009).

Accordingly, these followers will report less proactive and voice behaviors, since they tend to limit their roles to contractual-type obligations and refrain from taking an active and self-starting approach to work or from expressing their ideas or opinions. Based on these assumptions, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 3: LMX mediates the positive relationship between proactive followership and *(a)* proactive behaviors and *(b)* voice.

Hypothesis 4: LMX mediates the negative relationship between passive followership and *(a)* proactive behaviors and *(b)* voice.

Top Management Openness as a Boundary Condition

Organizational context has been identified by many scholars as being a critical determinant of the behavior that takes place within organizations (e.g., Johns, 2001; Johns, 2006; Spillane, 2005). Those at high levels of the organization, such as top management, play a crucial role in defining and communicating the corporate values and mission, i.e., in determining the organizational culture (Tsui et al., 2006). Therefore, top management openness constitutes an important variable that influences follower behavior, since organizations set norms and standards of behavior for individuals in different hierarchical roles (characterized by power differentials) and reinforce these standards (Carsten et al., 2010). For example, bureaucratic and authoritarian organizations usually impose top-down decision making that reinforce a schema of followership defined by obedience, deference, silence and lack of power (e.g. Courpasson & Dany, 2003). Consequently, and in alignment with the organization's culture followers would most likely refrain from proactively making a contribution to organizational processes or voicing their own opinions or ideas upward. In turn, some organizations, usually characterized by climates of empowerment, initiative and autonomy, support proactive followership schema and the display of personal initiative

(Carsten et al., 2010). In these organizations, top managers stimulate collaboration and provide opportunities for followers to be proactive and to get involved in decision making processes.

Because the ability of followers to act consistently with their followership beliefs is dependent on the context created by direct leaders and top management (Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2012), we propose that top management openness creates favorable conditions for upward communication, as well as for engagement with leaders, thus strengthening the relationship between followership and LMX. Top management openness is defined as the degree to which top management is believed to encourage and support suggestions and change initiatives from below (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). It refers to subordinates' perceptions that their top managers listen to them, are interested and give fair consideration to their ideas (Detert, & Burris, 2007). These behaviors demonstrate openness to employee input and decrease the power differences between leaders and followers in such a way that subordinates perceive fewer costs from voicing potentially risky ideas (Edmonson, 2003).

We propose that when top management openness is high, employees are more willing to exchange their thoughts and ideas, involving themselves in the support of organizational goals (Thomas, Zolin & Hartman, 2009). In other words, employees will be more likely to engage in individual innovation if they perceive that the different hierarchical levels support new ideas and change efforts (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). For example, Edmonson (2003) reported that leaders who showed openness and took action on others' ideas had followers who were more willing to voice their ideas and opinions despite the inherent risks of speaking up.

In sum, followership may have a differential effect on LMX perceptions, depending on whether they are accompanied by high or low top management openness.

High levels of top management openness should strengthen the relationship between followership schema and LMX (positive for proactive followership and negative for passive followership). An organizational climate characterized by top management openness may blur the lines between leaders and followers and validate the existing schema: high top management openness should encourage follower behaviors that are more participative in nature (Collinson, 2006). Conversely, low top management openness should endorse passive followership schema and thus contribute to low quality LMX relationships and lower proactive and voice behaviors. Technically, we are describing mediated moderation, the "interactive influence of two variables [proactive and passive followership and top management openness] on a mediator [LMX], which in turn, affects an outcome" [proactive behaviors and voice] (Morgan-Lopez & MacKinnon, 2006, p. 77). Therefore, we argue:

Hypothesis 5: The positive indirect relationship between proactive followership and *(a)* proactive behaviors and *(b)* voice through LMX is moderated by top management openness such that, when top management openness is high, this relationship is stronger.

Hypothesis 6: The negative indirect relationship between passive followership and *(a)* proactive behaviors and *(b)* voice through LMX is moderated by top management openness such that, when top management openness is low this relationship is stronger.

The proposed model is represented in Figure 1.
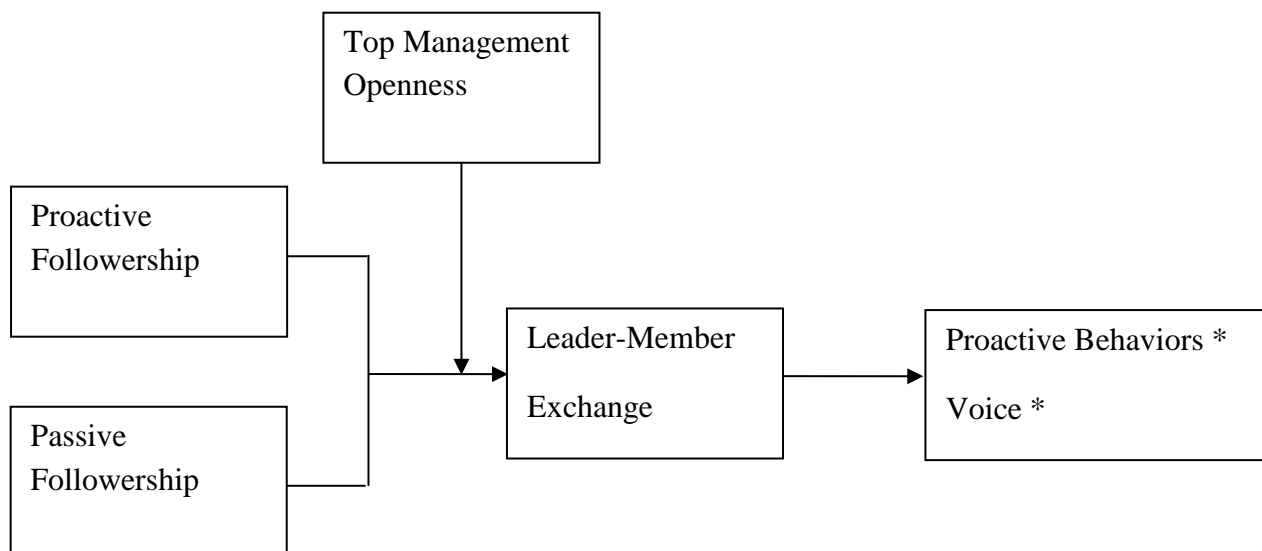
Figure 1. Hypothesized mediated moderation model

* Assessed from supervisors

Method

Sample and Procedure

We contacted 1122 employee-supervisor dyads from 54 organizations with the help of research assistants. The dyads came from a variety of organizational settings, including health (26%), services (24%), education (20%), financial (17%) and industry (13%). With respect to organizational size, 28% of our sample came from organizations with less than 10 employees, 28% from organizations with between 10 and 100 employees, and 44% from organizations with more than 100 employees.

Two sets of questionnaires were used in the study: one for subordinates and another for their immediate supervisors. Each questionnaire was coded in advance with a researcher-assigned identification number in order to match employees' responses with their immediate supervisors' evaluations. The research assistants contacted the subordinates first. If the subordinates agreed to participate, then they asked the

immediate supervisor if he or she were willing to participate. If both were willing to participate, they administered the subordinate survey and the supervisor evaluation form in person in order to guarantee confidentiality. Nine hundred and eighty five dyads (87.8% of the total number of individuals contacted) agreed to participate and returned the surveys. After dropping 216 dyads due to lack of completion by one of the participants, our final sample consisted of 769 dyads, with a usable response rate of 68.54% of those originally contacted. The second set of questionnaires was delivered to 185 supervisors. The average number of employee responses per supervisor was 4.2, ranging from 1 to 39 responses per supervisor.

Overall, 14% of the surveyed employees did not complete high school, 37% of the participants had completed high school and 49% had a university degree. Average organizational tenure was approximately 11.6 years, 54% of employees were under 40 years old and 55.7% were women. For supervisors, 14% did not complete high school, 16% of the participants had completed high school and 70% had a university degree. Average organizational tenure was 15.2 years, 48% of supervisors were under 40 years old and 52% were men.

Measures

For all measures, with the exception of control variables, respondents rated their agreement with each statement using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). We present the source of the measures, supervisors or subordinates, in parentheses.

Control Variables. Gender, age, organizational tenure, education and tenure with the supervisor have been found to be related to LMX or proactivity (e.g. Bertolino, Truxillo & Fraccaroli, 2011; Epitropaki & Martin, 1999; Gerhardt, Ashenbaum & Newman, 2009; Green, Anderson & Shivers, 1996; Van Veldhoven & Dorenbosch,

2008) and therefore we analyzed whether we should control for their influence in our model. According to the recommendations offered by Becker (2005), we controlled for subordinates' education and organizational tenure in our analysis because these were significantly correlated with our outcome variables. We coded education as 1= primary education; 2 = ninth grade; 3 = high school; 4 = university attendance; 5 = undergraduate degree; 6 = master degree (or higher).

Followership (subordinate measure). We used the 10-item scale developed by Carsten, Uhl-Bien and West (2008) for measuring proactive (5 items) and passive (5 items) followership behaviors. Sample items for proactive followership include 'I question my manager's decisions when I feel it is necessary'; 'I provide feedback to my manager about how his/her actions affect others' (α = .78) and example items for passive followership include 'I go along with my manager's directives even when I think they are problematic'; 'I do what my manager tells me to do without question' (α = .70). We conducted an exploratory factor analysis of the followership items using a principal axis factor analysis method and a promax rotation, which provided support for proactive and passive followership as separate followership dimensions.

Leader-Member Exchange (subordinate measure). We assessed leader-member relationship quality using the LMX-7 (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Sample items include 'I usually know where I stand with my supervisor'; 'My supervisor understands my problems and needs.' Cronbach alpha was .85.

Top Management Openness (subordinate measure). Top management openness was assessed with a six-item scale used by Ashford and colleagues (1998), which they adapted from House and Rizzo's (1972) top management receptiveness measure. Example items include 'Upper management is interested in ideas and suggestions from

people at my level in the organization'; 'I feel free to make recommendations to upper management to change existing practices'. Cronbach's alpha was .80.

Proactive Behaviors (supervisor measure). Supervisors rated employees' proactive behaviors using the three highest loading items from the nine-item proactivity scale developed by Griffin, Neal and Parker (2007). Sample items include 'Initiates better ways of doing his/her core tasks'; 'Makes changes to the way his/her core tasks are done.' Cronbach's alpha was .81.

Voice (supervisor measure). Supervisors evaluated their subordinates' voice behaviors with the three highest loading items from Van Dyne and LePine's (1998) voice scale (e.g. 'This particular co-worker develops and makes recommendations concerning issues that affect this work group'; 'This particular co-worker communicates his/her opinions about work issues to others in this group even if his/her opinion is different and others in the group disagree with him/her'). Cronbach's alpha was .77.

Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables in the study. Reliability coefficients are reported along the main diagonal in the table.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables [a] [b] [c]

	Mean[a]	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Subordinates' education	3.99	1.31	-								
2. Subordinates' organizational tenure	11.60	9.71	-.26**	-							
3. Proactive Followership	3.76	.66	.28**	.09*	(.78)						
4. Passive Followership	2.98	.71	-.31**	-.12**	-.31**	(.70)					
5. Top management openness	4.09	.73	.06	-.08*	.40**	-.01	(.80)				
6. Leader member-exchange	3.89	.66	.02	-.08*	.41**	-.00	.72**	(.85)			
7. Proactive behaviors	3.60	.85	.30**	-.03	.27**	-.20**	.26**	.26**	(.81)		
8. Voice	3.60	.85	.26**	-.02	.28**	-.22**	.28**	.28**	.68**	(.77)	

Notes. [a] 5-point scales; [b] Cronbach's alphas are displayed on the diagonal in parentheses; [c] Education (1= primary education; 2 = ninth grade; 3 = high school; 4 = university attendance; 5 = undergraduate degree; 6 = master degree (or higher)); * p< .05; ** p < .01, all two-tailed tests.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS 24 to examine whether our measurement model had an acceptable fit. We compared our theoretical six-factor model with a five-factor model, where supervisors' evaluations of proactive behaviors and voice were combined into a single factor; a four-factor model, where proactive and passive followership were also combined into a single factor; a three-factor model that merges LMX and top management openness; a two-factor model that separated all the variables collected from subordinates (merged into one factor) from the data collected from supervisors; and finally, a single-factor model that combined all six constructs into one single factor.

The hypothesized six-factor model was the best fitting model ($\chi^2(362) =$ 1806,287**; CFI = .91; TLI = .91; RMSEA = .04; SRMR = .04), so the six constructs were treated separately in subsequent statistical tests of our hypotheses (Table 2); the first factor (proactive followership) presented factor loadings ranging from .67 to .81; the second factor (passive followership) presented factor loadings ranging from .53 to .77; the third factor (top management openness) presented factor loadings ranging from .74 to .87; the fourth factor (LMX) presented factor loadings ranging from .67 to .82; the fifth factor (proactive behaviors) presented factor loadings ranging from .80 to .88; and finally, the sixth factor (voice) presented factor loadings ranging from .80 to .86.

Table 2

CFAs for the hypothesized and alternative models

	df	X^2	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Six-factor model	362	1806,287**	.91	.91	.04	.04
Five-factor model [a]	371	1851,195**	.90	.91	.04	.05
Four-factor model [b]	374	1889,908**	.85	.84	.07	.08
Three-factor model [c]	377	2694,178**	.77	.76	.09	.10
Two-factor model [d]	379	2744,005	.77	.76	.09	.11
One-factor model	380	4343,412**	.61	.58	.12	.13

Notes. [a] Merge proactive behaviors and voice; [b] merge proactive and passive followership; [c] merge leader-member-exchange and top management openness; [d] merge leader-member-exchange, top management openness, proactive and passive followership. CFAs = confirmatory factor analyses; *df* = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root-mean- square error residual; ** p < .01.

Test of Hypotheses

We used simple linear regression to test hypotheses 1 and 2 by regressing proactive behaviors and voice on proactive and passive followership, after entering the control variables as a block. According to our expectations, proactive followership presented a significant and positive relationship with proactive behaviors (B=.19; p <.01) and voice (B= .17; p<.01). Conversely, passive followership presented a significant and negative relationship with proactive behaviors (B= -.15; p <.01) and voice (B= -.14; p <.01). Therefore, hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported.

To test the remaining hypotheses, we employed Hayes' (2013) PROCESS bootstrap macro for SPSS (models 4 and 7). That is, a bootstrap-based bias corrected

and accelerated confidence interval (95%) for the indirect effect was generated by creating 1,000 bootstrap samples (Hayes, 2012). Bootstrapping methods have been considered to have many desirable features, such as robustness and accuracy, which make them particularly useful in studying indirect effects in mediated-moderation models (e.g. Preacher, Rucker & Hayes, 2007; Shrout & Bolger, 2002). Additionally, and following Aiken and West´s recommendation (1991), we centered the predictor variables prior to entering them into the equation.

To test hypotheses 3 and 4, a mediational analysis was conducted to calculate estimates of the indirect effect of proactive followership on proactive behaviors (hypothesis 3a) and on voice (hypothesis 3b) through LMX. In accordance with our prediction, we found that proactive followership was significantly related to LMX (B = .10, p<.01) and that LMX was significantly related to proactive behaviors (B = .26, p< .01) and voice (B = .25, p< .01). The cut off value in the lower-tail of the bootstrap distribution of the indirect effect does not include zero (B= .10; 95% CI [.060, .151]) supporting hypothesis 3a. Hypothesis 3b (the indirect effect of LMX on voice through proactive followership), was also confirmed (B= .13; 95% CI [.087, .179]).

Regarding the indirect effect of passive followership on proactive behaviors through LMX (hypothesis 4a) and the indirect effect of passive followership on voice through LMX (hypothesis 4b), we found that LMX was significantly related to proactive behaviors (B = .34; p<.01) and voice (B= .36, p<.01), but passive followership was not significantly related to LMX (B= -.01, n.s.), failing to confirm hypothesis 4a (B= -.01; 95% CI [-.033, .020]) and hypothesis 4b (B= -.01; 95% CI [-.036, .021]) (see Table 3 for path coefficients and main results)

.

Table 3

Bootstrapping results

| Predictors | Mediator | | | | Outcomes | | | | | | | |
| | LMX | | | | Voice | | | | | Proactive Behaviors | | | |
	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2	B	t	R^2	ΔR^2		B	t	R^2	ΔR^2
Control Variables													
Subordinates' education	-.02	-1.17			-.19	-9.69**				.15	6.31**		
Organizational tenure	.01	2.28*	.02	.02	-.01	-2.79**	.05	.05		.01	2.32*	.04	.04
Main effects													
Proactive followership	.10	3.92**			.17	3.41**				.19	3.82**		
Passive followership	-.01	-.25			-.14	-3,26**				-.15	-3.27		
Top management openness	.72	37.28**	.09	.07	-.01	-.09	.10	.05		.17	2.37*	.06	.02
Interaction term													
PRFXTMO	.08	.2.64**			.03	.51				.05	.94	.06	.00
PAFXTMO	-.04	-1.44	.11	.02	.05	.95	.10	.00		.04	.67		
Mediator													
LMX					.31	6.40**	.12	.02		.26	5.18**	.08	.02

Notes. * p < .05; ** p < .01; Tabled values are unstandardized regression coefficients; PRF – Proactive Followership; PAF – Passive

Followership; LMX – Leader-member exchange; TMO – Top management openness

The first step to analyze our mediated-moderation hypotheses (Preacher et al., 2007) was testing the simple interaction effects. The interaction term between proactive followership and top management openness (B= .08; p< .01) was significant. Using simple slope analysis, we found that the positive relationship between proactive personality and LMX was significant when top management openness was high (t=8.07; p<.05), but not when it was low (t=-.21; p>.05) (Figure 2). We then analyzed the conditional indirect effect of proactive followership on proactive behaviors (hypothesis 5a) and voice (hypothesis 5b) through LMX at specific values of the moderator, i.e., top management openness. In support of hypothesis 5a, the indirect effect of proactive followership on proactive behaviors through LMX was significant for high (B = .04, 95% CI [.020, .068]) but not for low levels of top management openness (B = .01, 95% CI [.-013, .033]). Also confirming hypothesis 5b, the indirect effect of proactive followership on voice through LMX was significant for high (B = .05, 95% CI [.023, .075]) but not for low levels of top management openness (B = .01, 95% CI [.-013, .044]). In sum, proactive followership was positively related to proactive behaviors and voice through LMX, but only when top management openness was high.

Our hypotheses 6a and 6b were not confirmed since the interaction term between passive followership and top management openness on LMX was not significant (B= -.03; p>.05).
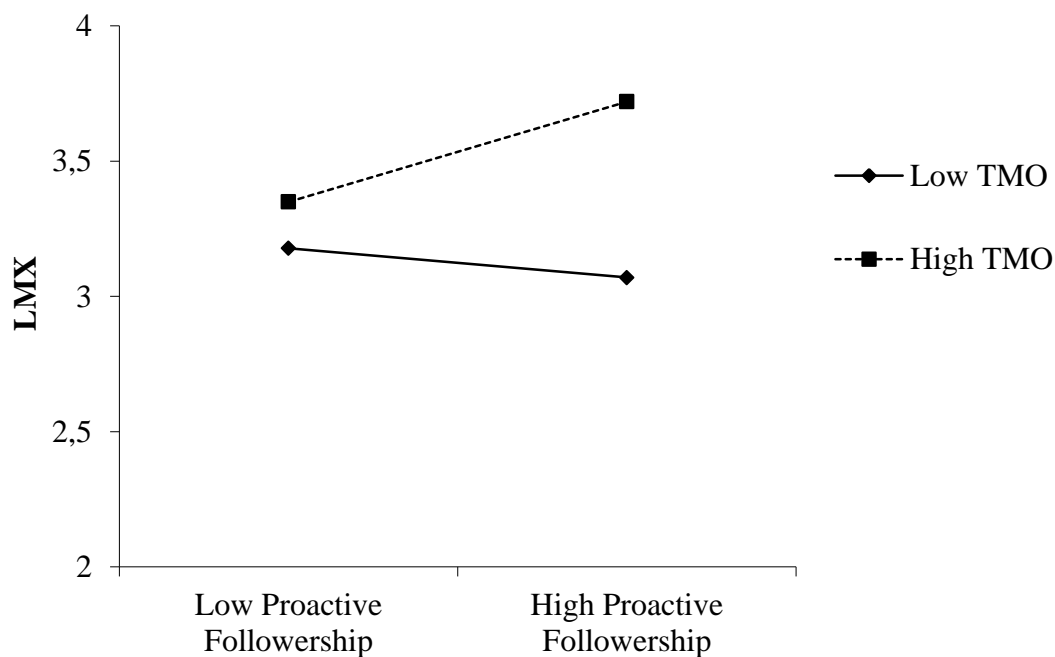
Figure 2. Interaction between Proactive Followership and Top Management Openness (TMO)

Discussion

Based on a followership approach, our study offers glimpses into the mechanisms by which followership relates to work outcomes and the boundary conditions surrounding its effectiveness. We examined a model linking followership (both proactive and passive) to proactive and voice behaviors that included the quality of LMX as a mediator and top management openness as a moderator. Our results showed that followership was significantly related to both proactive and voice behaviors, with the quality of LMX as the linking mechanism, providing an explanation to the process by which proactive followers actually display more proactive and voice behaviors. Furthermore, our results indicated that this relationship is conditional on top management openness since proactive followership was indirectly related to proactive

and voice behaviors via LMX only when top management openness was high but not when it was low. Interestingly, this pattern of results did not hold for passive followership.

These results can be explained by the assumption that proactive and passive followership may be differentially caused and differentially linked to behavior (Junker & van Dick, 2014). For example, instead of LMX quality, passive followership could be facilitated by negative leadership practices (such as petty tyranny or abusive supervision). Additionally, followers' personality characteristics (e.g. submissive, obedient or conformist personality style) may directly influence their followership schema, leading them to act consistently with their beliefs about their role responsibilities, regardless of whether the context does not overtly support their actions. The implications of our findings, the limitations of our research, as well as future research directions are discussed below.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The present study contributes to the leadership and followership literatures by highlighting the often overlooked active role of followers in the leadership process. It aimed to understand how leaders and followers interact in context, since leadership can only occur through combined acts of leading and following (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Followers' perceptions about their own roles in the leadership process largely determine their attitudes and behaviors and, subsequently, important subordinate outcomes (e.g. extra-role behaviors) (Epitropaki et al., 2013; Sy, 2010). According to our findings, the perceptual representations of followership roles are related to the quality of the exchange relationship between an employee and her or his supervisor; which is a central part of the process by which proactive followership fosters subordinate proactive and voice behaviors.

The plot of the interaction suggests that proactive followership is associated with high LMX quality only when top management openness exists. Thus, our results also contribute to identify the boundary conditions surrounding followership roles by illustrating that the ability of followers to act consistently with their followership belief is dependent on the context created by the organization (i.e. top management openness). One explanation for this finding is that, when top management openness is high, the organizational context conveys the message that followers should indeed demonstrate active engagement, challenge the status quo, go above and beyond expectations, proactively participate in decision making and voice their opinions and ideas, as characterized by proactive followership (Hoption, Christie & Barling, 2012). When top management openness is low, even employees with proactive followership schema are likely to shift their followership behaviors to exhibit less innovative and creative behaviors, refrain from providing constructive criticism and taking initiative, rather than displaying proactive and voice behaviors.

Finally, our findings also carry practical implications. In order to stimulate proactive behaviors, we highlight the importance of empowering subordinates and encouraging both bottom up and top down innovation. As empowerment strategies, managers may, among other initiatives, clearly articulate a vision that inspires followers to take greater responsibility for their work. Additionally, high performance managerial practices (i.e., extensive use of training, open information sharing, decentralization, participative decision making, and contingent compensation) should be used to empower employees (e.g. Burke, 1986; Menon, 2001; Seibert, Wang & Courtright, 2011; Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Consistent with job characteristics theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), the design of the work itself can also be used to promote employee empowerment.

Organizations could also benefit from creating an organizational context that encourages followers to engage with leaders. Creating favorable conditions for upward communication through alignment between top management and direct leaders in expressing openness to ideas from below (e.g. encouraging more employee-directed change by conveying that they are open to recommendations and by behaving in a way that signals this openness) may also help organizations to become more innovative and competitive (Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2012). In fact, our results show that organizations only reap the benefits of top management openness and proactive followership when these are combined.

From an applied perspective, followership schema may also have selection and training applications. For example, when hiring for positions that benefit from proactivity and voice, organizations may wish to target individuals whose followership constructions are predictive of these behaviors. That is, assessing followership constructions could be a cost-effective method for identifying those most likely to report increased proactive and voice behaviors, especially when their organization supports new ideas, change efforts, independence and innovative responses from employees.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Like any research, this study is not without some limitations. The first limitation is related to common method variance (CMV), since employees provided ratings of followership, top management openness and LMX perceptions. In order to reduce this potential limitation, we obtained evaluations of proactive and voice behaviors evaluations from reports of direct supervisors. We also employed statistical remedies to partial out common method variance in our analyses. Using AMOS 24, we estimated a model that included a seventh latent variable to represent a method factor and allowed

all 29 indicators to load on this uncorrelated factor (Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012). According to Williams, Cote and Buckley (1989), if the fit of the measurement model is significantly improved by the addition of an uncorrelated method factor then CMV may be present. Fit statistics after adding an uncorrelated method factor improved slightly (χ^2(352) =1565.902**; CFI = .92; TLI = .93; RMSEA = .04; SRMR = .04). To determine the extent of the influence of CMV, the variance explained by the method factor can be calculated by summing the squared loadings, in order to index the total amount of variation due to the method factor. In our case, CMV accounted for 6% of the total variance, which is considerably less than the 25% threshold observed by Williams et al. (1989). The results of these analyses suggest that CMV accounts for little variation in the data. Finally, research has shown that common method bias deflates interaction effects, making them more difficult to detect (Busemeyer & Jones, 1983). Nonetheless, future research should strive to include other sources of information (for example, coworkers' ratings of top management openness).

Second, because our study is cross-sectional by design, we cannot infer causality. Indeed, it is possible that the relationship is bidirectional. Despite this possibility, previous studies have made evident the importance of followership schemas and perceptions for leader-follower relationships (e.g. Hollander, 1992), and LMX was found to influence organizational-targeted behaviors (see Ilies, Nahrgang & Morgeson, 2007, for a review). However, we invite future researchers to examine our hypotheses in a longitudinal study. This would help to answer questions related to how followership constructions and LMX relationships change over time and how the moderating effect of top management openness becomes either more or less pronounced. Another possible direction is to examine these phenomena at different levels (namely work groups, teams or organizations) (Yammarino, Dionne, Chun & Dansereau, 2005).

This study's findings also suggest additional directions for future research. It would be interesting to examine how a supervisor's LMX relationship with his/her own supervisor plays a role in their subordinate's LMX relationship with him/herself (Tangirala, Green, & Ramanujam, 2007). Some studies concluded that a leader's upward dyadic relationship affects downward dyadic relationships (Cashman, Dansereau, Graen & Haga, 1976; Graen, Cashman, Ginsburgh, & Schiemann, 1977) in a trickle-down effect.

Future research may want to focus on whether other organizational variables (such as organizational formalization or organizational flexibility) interact with co-production of leadership beliefs (i.e. beliefs about the degree followers should be proactive in the leadership process) in predicting proactive followership behaviors. We also believe that research on other outcome variables is warranted. Although the organizational outcomes investigated in this study are important for organizational effectiveness, it would be insightful to determine if LMX similarly mediates the relationship between, for example, followership and creativity, actual turnover or job performance.

Moreover, future research may also wish to explore the scope and the antecedents of passive followership, including the interplay between previous experience of family undermining (what could increase the likelihood that an individual will learn that the most appropriate behavior in the workplace is to show submissiveness and receptiveness to the leader's opinion, given the power asymmetry inherent in supervisory relationships) organizational and environmental factors (such as centralization of control and external instability) or followers' personal characteristics (e.g. low core self-evaluations).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current study extends research on the leadership process by using a followership approach and examining how bottom-up and top-down processes combine to explain the indirect relationship between proactive followership schema and proactive and voice behaviors through LMX quality. Leadership research has largely ignored the role of followers in the leadership process; however, their active influence is essential in increasing positive organizational outcomes and effectiveness. In fact, organizations have at their disposal effective strategies for promoting proactive followership schema, particularly through top management openness. Our findings have implications for both research and practice since they move away from leader-centric approaches and include bottom-up processes, acknowledging that without followers there is indeed no leadership.

PART III: GENERAL DISCUSSION

General Discussion

The purpose of the next discussion is not to repeat extensively the implications and conclusions already discussed throughout the four papers that compose this thesis, but rather we intent to summarize the main contributions to the following emergent themes: abusive supervision, ethical leadership and followership.

The present thesis aimed to contribute to the leadership and followership literatures by exploring the active role played by subordinate characteristics, job resources and contextual variables in the leadership process and by attempting to shift the focus from leaders as main drivers of organizational outcomes. In fact, traditional conceptions and forms of leadership consider leadership synonymous with 'esteem', 'charisma', 'heroism' and 'effectiveness' and emphasize leader traits and behaviors as antecedents to leadership processes and outcomes (Meindl, Ehrlich & Dukerich, 1985; Hansbrough & Schyns, 2010). More recently, scholarly attention has shifted to the dark side of leadership (Popper, 2001). Although research recognizes that destructive leadership reflects a follower's subjectively-held perception and "acknowledges that leadership is not always positive, the leader remains the primary focus of such efforts" (Hansbrough & Schyns, 2010, p.514). Therefore, the primary purpose of studies 1, 2 and 3 was to examine individual-level factors capable of attenuating the deleterious effects of abusive supervision (studies 1 and 2) and low ethical leadership (study 3), by enabling individuals to concurrently perceive negative supervisory behaviors and maintain adequate levels of psychological and behavioral functioning. Thus, these studies add to the limited body of research that examines factors capable of mitigating the negative effects of destructive leadership. Drawing on two different theoretical frameworks, i.e., the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R model: Demerouti et al.,

2001) and the substitutes for leadership perspective (Kerr & Jermier, 1978), these studies set out to explain why certain job resources (i.e., job autonomy), task characteristics (i.e., job resources adequacy and role clarity) and personality characteristics (i.e., proactive personality) enable individuals to better cope with the "dark side" of their leaders' behavior.

In study 1, relying on the JD-R model (Demerouti et al., 2001) we examined the effect of job autonomy (a job resource that guarantees decision latitude) in relation to perceived abusive supervision (i.e., a job demand). Hence, individuals who perceived job resources available to them (i.e., job autonomy) were hypothesized to experience lower levels of psychosomatic symptoms in response to the demands of perceived abusive supervision than those who reported less independence in making job related decisions. The results provided support for the corresponding hypotheses. Moreover, abusive supervision demonstrated a harmful effect on production deviance, what was consistent with past literature (e.g. Harvey et al., 2014; Tepper et al., 2009; Thau & Mitchell, 2010; Thau et al., 2009; Wheeler, Halbesleben & Whitman, 2013). Additionally, the interaction effect was as hypothesized. Specifically, when high levels of abusive supervision were perceived, subordinates who reported high job autonomy demonstrated the lowest levels of psychosomatic symptoms (and consequently the lowest levels of production deviance). Thus, our findings support the buffering hypothesis advanced by Bakker, Demerouti and Euwema (2005) that states that job resources (i.e., job autonomy) play a role in buffering the impact of job demands (i.e., abusive supervision) on burnout (that includes psychosomatic symptoms).

Study 2 expands Tepper's (2000) seminal model by proposing that the relationship between abusive supervision and job satisfaction via distributive justice perceptions is conditional on job resources adequacy and role clarity. Thus, we drew on

the substitutes for leadership perspective developed by Kerr and Jermier (1978) to propose two task characteristics (i.e. job resources adequacy and role clarity) as potential moderators of the abusive supervision process. According to this model, a variety of subordinate, task and organizational characteristics have the potential "to negate the leader's ability to either improve or impair subordinate satisfaction and performance (Kerr & Jermier, 1978, p. 377). Furthermore, we proposed that abusive supervision may have a differential effect on subordinates' distributive justice perceptions (and consequently on job satisfaction), depending on whether job resources adequacy or role clarity is currently high or low. Thus, our second study also argues that when employees possess a clear understanding of their requirements (i.e. role clarity) and have the means at their disposal to perform their tasks (i.e. job resources adequacy), they are less dependent on their abusive supervisors and are more able to ward off the negative effects of abusive supervision.

Study 3 also contributes to the substitutes for leadership literature (Kerr & Jermier, 1978) and specifically to the substitutes for ethical leadership literature (Neves, Rego & Cunha, 2014) by identifying one additional individual characteristic (i.e. employee proactive personality) to the list of (ethical) leadership substitutes originally proposed. Specifically, the focus of this study was to test the moderating role of employee proactive personality on the relationship between ethical leadership and emotions (both positive and negative) and its carry-over effect on OCBs.

We also aimed to contribute to the ethical leadership literature by examining an overlooked mechanism, since previous research on ethical leadership has not fully considered the role that employees' emotions may play as a result of ethical leadership (Brown & Mitchell, 2010). In this sense, we investigated an important, yet understudied mechanism of the ethical leadership-OCBs relationship. We relied on AET (Weiss &

Cropanzano, 1996) to propose that ethical leadership should be perceived by subordinates as a source of affective events that creates uplifts (i.e. positive emotional experience) or hassles (i.e. negative emotional experience), which, in turn, would enhance or lessen OCBs, respectively. Moreover, this study endeavors to provide a better understanding of under what conditions ethical leadership my impact follower outcomes (i.e. OCBs) to a greater or lesser extent. Because ethical leadership research has not fully considered follower characteristics as a key contextual variable in influencing leader behavior, we sought to contribute to this underexplored field by suggesting that followers' personality (i.e., proactivity) may significantly influence how or even if followers are affected by ethical leadership.

Many researchers acknowledge that leadership is co-produced by leaders and followers (e.g., Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Hollander, 1993; Jermier, 1993; Klein & House, 1995; Yukl & Van Fleet, 1992), however, "few scholars have attempted to theoretically specify and empirically assess the role of followers in the leadership process" (Howell & Shamir, 2005, p. 96). Thus, study 4 seeks to address these calls, by proposing that followers' schema (more proactive or passive in nature) play an active role in shaping the type of relationship they form with the leader (i.e. LMX quality), and therefore in shaping followers' outcomes (i.e. proactive behaviors and voice). It's important to highlight that we reject a unidirectional explanation for LMX quality; rather, we intend to reinforce empirically that the quality of leader-member exchanges are jointly produced by leaders and followers by giving followers a much more central role than they have had traditionally on leadership research (Howell & Shamir, 2005).

If we conceive leadership as a process, it should be viewed from a situational approach and framed as interplay between leaders and followers, within a particular context (Pierce & Newstrom, 2011). Notwithstanding, a number of voices have been

raised concerning the pivotal role of contextual variables on leadership (Porter & McLauglin, 2006). The need for more focus and research on organizational context in the leadership field was noted by Shamir and Howell (1999) who stated that "the study of leadership needs to reflect not only leaders' personal characteristics and behaviors but also the situational factors which influence leadership emergence and effectiveness" (p. 279) and also by Boal and Hooijberg (2000) who added that "many of the new theories of leadership appear context free. That is, they do not consider how environmental and organizational context influence the process" (p. 528).

Theoretical implications

With the research questions previously formulated in mind, the studies that integrate the present thesis make several contributions to the existing body of literature. For example, study 1 and study 2 expand the content domain of abusive supervision research by demonstrating that job resources (i.e. job autonomy, job resources adequacy and role clarity) actively contribute to mitigate the deleterious effects of abusive supervision. Specifically, study 1 shows that job autonomy contribute to minimize the negative consequences of the abuse process on psychosomatic symptoms and deviance because job autonomy puts these abusive supervisory behaviors in perspective, by allowing employees to make decisions regarding the accomplishment of work tasks and to become less dependent on their supervisors, making them less vulnerable to supervisory mistreatment.

Although the mediating effect of subordinates' distributive justice perceptions between abusive supervision and their job satisfaction had been confirmed in Tepper's (2000) research, study 2 also contributes to a new perspective over abusive supervision by demonstrating that organizational practices actively contribute to minimize the negative consequences of the abuse process. Moreover, the findings obtained in study 2

are consistent with the leadership substitutes perspective developed by Kerr and Jermier (1978) by suggesting that job resources adequacy and role clarity neutralize the potentially damaging effects of abusive supervisory behaviors, since both constructs are sources of task guidance and support. So, high job resources adequacy and high role clarity should be effective substitutes of abusive supervision, and therefore should prevent a decrease in distributive justice perceptions as a result of abuse. Additionally, study 2 extends the list of potential substitutes for leadership, suggesting that job resources adequacy and role clarity constitute two additional task characteristics that "provide guidance and incentives to perform to such a degree that they virtually negate the leader's ability to (…) impair subordinate performance" (Howell et al., 1990, p. 27).

Study 3 also contributes to the substitutes for leadership literature (Kerr & Jermier, 1978) and specifically substitutes for ethical leadership literature (Neves, Rego & Cunha, 2014) by identifying one additional substitute (i.e. employee proactive personality) to the list of (ethical) leadership substitutes originally proposed. Therefore, this study contributes to a growing body of research concerned with ethical leadership in organizations by testing follower characteristics that may enhance or mitigate the influence of ethical leader behaviors. Furthermore, study 3 uses the AET framework (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) to describe potential alternative mechanisms through which ethical leadership influences OCBs. In line with Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) our results suggest that emotions serve as a generative conduit that transmits the effects of ethical leadership to OCBs.

Finally, study 4 suggested that the perceptual representations of followership roles are related to the quality of the exchange relationship between an employee and her or his supervisor; which is a central part of the process by which followership fosters subordinate proactive and voice behaviors. Our findings also contributed to

identify the boundary conditions surrounding followership roles by illustrating that the ability of followers to act consistently with their followership belief is dependent on the context created by the organization (i.e. top management openness). One explanation for this finding is that, when top management openness is high, the organizational context conveys the message that followers should indeed demonstrate active engagement, challenge the status quo, go above and beyond expectations, proactively participate in decision making and voice their opinions and ideas, as characterized by proactive followership. When top management openness is low, even employees with proactive followership schema are likely to shift their followership behaviors to exhibit less innovative and creative behaviors, refrain from providing constructive criticism and taking initiative, rather than displaying proactive and voice behaviors.

Practical implications

Our results hold practical implications for organizations wishing to reduce abusive supervision and low ethical leadership perceptions or to stimulate proactive followership schema. We summarize the main recommendations below:

Recommendations for strengthening employee ability to cope with abusive supervision

Our findings suggest that organizations may consider providing increased freedom and control to employees to schedule their own work, make operational decisions or determine the means to accomplish their objectives. By doing so, they are not only fostering employees' self-efficacy and personal initiative, but also minimizing the negative effects of abusive supervision on employees' health and, indirectly, on employees' performance. Organizations should also consider providing clarity of behavioral requirements, as well as the resources needed by employees to accomplish their tasks, including equipment, tools, materials, facilities, support services, space, and

time. Indeed, role clarity is likely to be a job characteristic that can be relatively easily enhanced through the improvement of formal organizational communication or clear communication of expectations.

Recommendations for fostering ethical leadership perceptions

Organizations should make efforts to foster an ethical climate by, for example, establishing organizational ethics codes, since they communicate corporate moral and values and send powerful messages about the organizations' expectations regarding supervisors' ethical conduct. Additionally, organizations should also develop strategies to minimize or overcome the negative impact of low levels of leader ethicality. For example, organizations may wish to target individuals whose personality traits are predictive of proactivity or to develop training interventions that are designed to enhance employees' level of proactivity. By doing so, organizations are protecting themselves (and their employees) from the negative effects that stem from the lack of ethical leadership on employees' emotional reactions and behaviors.

Recommendations for stimulating proactive followership

Based on our findings, organizations may consider encouraging both bottom up and top down innovation by implementing empowerment strategies. Moreover, organizations could also benefit from creating favorable conditions for upward communication through alignment between top management and direct leaders in expressing openness to ideas from below may also help organizations to become more innovative and competitive. Finally, followership schema may also have selection and training applications. That is, assessing followership constructions could be a cost-effective method for identifying those most likely to report increased proactive and voice behaviors, especially when their organization supports new ideas, change efforts, independence and innovative responses from employees.

General recommendations for organizations

Organizations should provide management skills training that aim at learning proper ways of interaction with subordinates, as well as abuse prevention training, in order to ensure that supervisors engage in appropriate management practices. However, since it might be difficult to control all negative behaviors (and this highlights the importance of examining potential substitutes or neutralizers), organizations should have explicit and strict policies for punishing individuals who violate these standards. For example, formalized HR practices should adopt a policy of zero tolerance for disruptive behaviors and enforce the policy consistently throughout the organization, while providing formal means for reporting those behaviors and, simultaneously recognizing and rewarding behaviors that demonstrate collaboration, respect and a high regard for interpersonal ethics.

Organizations should design jobs such that subordinates have some means of actual or perceived control. That is, our four studies highlight the importance of developing stronger followers by promoting a culture of empowerment that reinforces collaboration and employee initiative. By doing this, organizations maintain balance and control over destructive leaders and simultaneously improve the quality of the relationships with the immediate superior. Moreover, consensus is growing that employee initiative and proactivity are critical drivers of organizational effectiveness, consequence of heightened global competition and need for continuous innovation (Frese & Fay, 2001; Frese, Garst & Fay, 2007; Grant & Ashford, 2008). Therefore, promoting a more psychologically empowered workforce might constitute a significant competitive advantage for organizations. For example, at the organizational level, it appears that high-performance managerial practices, such as enabling employees to make decisions and implement actions without direct supervision or intervention,

stimulating employees through intellectually exciting ideas, extensive use of training or open information sharing, can be used to boost employee empowerment (e.g. Burke, 1986; Menon, 2001; Seibert, Wang & Courtright, 2011; Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

Directions for Future Research

Future research should try to provide a more holistic view on the leadership process by including the interaction among leaders, followers and work contexts. For example, future studies may examine the characteristics of leaders (such as emotional stability and emotional intelligence), followers (e.g. high core self-evaluations and proactivity), and work contexts (e.g., stability and decentralization of authority) connected with constructive leadership.

As previously noted, the organizational context in which the interactions between leaders and followers occur shapes these relationships. With few notable exceptions (e.g. Aryee et al, 2008; Mawritz et al., 2012; Neves, 2014), research has understudied the impact of contextual climate on destructive leadership (Martinko et al., 2011; Tepper, 2007). Hence, future research should explore the contextual conditions that exacerbate or mitigate the rise of destructive leadership. For example, economic crisis contexts are characterized by uncertainty, fear of downsizing, high unemployment rates and loss of job security, which could increase employees' vulnerability to supervisory mistreatment since they have scarce employment alternatives and feel they cannot separate themselves from their supervisory destructive behavior. Additionally, organizational climates for initiative and psychological safety, characterized by innovation, proactivity, open and trustful interactions (Baer & Frese, 2003) can deter unethical and destructive activities.

Previous research on destructive leadership has mainly focused on its deleterious consequences and few studies have examined the antecedents of destructive leadership. Even though some researchers have established that followers' perceptions of abusive supervision were influenced, for example, by their core self-evaluations (Wu & Hu, 2009), attribution style (Martinko et al., 2011), organization-based self-esteem (Kiazad et al., 2010) or social adaptability (Mackey et al., 2013), research on antecedents of destructive leadership is in its infancy. Thus, future research should continue to explore antecedents, particularly additional followers' individual differences, such as psychological capital or mindfulness, that account for significant proportions of the variance in their perceptions of destructive leadership. Following the suggestion raised by some authors (e.g., Frieder et al., 2015; Martinko et al., 2013) it would be interesting to examine whether subordinates' perceptions correspond to objective accounts of destructive leadership, aiming to examine, from a followership perspective, the extent to which subordinates' characteristics shape actual destructive supervisory behaviors.

Additionally, because our understanding of how Implicit Leadership Theories (ILTs) and Implicit Followership Theories (IFTs) operate in organizational settings remains limited (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005), research should also analyze the joint impact of ILTs and IFTs on destructive leadership. Specifically, it would be useful to explore the role of employees' ILTs on perceptions of destructive leadership and leaders' IFTs on the objective display of destructive behaviors. For example, discrepancies between the leadership prototypes and explicit leaders' behaviors could negatively affect the overall perception of the leaders' behaviors. Conversely, the mismatch between followership prototypes and explicit followers' characteristics and behaviors could make the "mismatched" followers likely targets of negative supervisory behaviors.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current dissertation extends research on the leadership process by examining the active role of organizational and employee personal characteristics in the relationship between leader behaviors and employee outcomes In fact, leadership research has largely ignored the role of followers and contextual variables in the leadership process; however, their active influence is essential in enhancing or attenuating the effects of leaders' behaviors. Organizations have at their disposal effective strategies to minimize the adverse consequences of negative supervisory behaviors and to promote proactive followership schema, particularly through the empowerment of employees, such as with increased levels of job autonomy, job resources adequacy and role clarity, through the enhancement of employees' proactivity or through top management openness. There is clearly more work to be done in this area, but we believe our findings have implications for both leadership research and practice since they take a much-needed step toward moving away from leader-centric approaches and exploring the important role that follower and organizational variables play in the leadership outcomes and effectiveness.

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