

Charismatic Leadership and Self-Leadership: A Relationship of Substitution or
Supplementation in the Contexts of Internalization and Identification ?

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Abstract

Purpose

– The purpose of this paper is to propose that self-leadership has a complementary relationship with charismatic leadership, thus not substituting for the influence of charismatic leadership in the contexts of internalization and identification.

Design/methodology/approach

– Data were collected from 991 employees of 20 organizations. The research hypotheses were tested using regression analysis.

Findings – The results demonstrated that many self-leadership skills acted as supplement/enhancer of charismatic leadership behaviors, except for self-talk. The authors' interpretation was that self-talk had a very different functional quality from the other self-leadership skills, such as visualizing successful performance and evaluating beliefs and assumptions.

Research limitations/implications

– The authors recommend that the self-talk scale should be modified by specifying a constructive content to make it compatible with the other self-leadership subscales. Finally, more research should be devoted to determining whether leaders' unconventional behavior becomes dysfunctional in the presence of employees' self-leadership, especially in Confucian countries that place emphasis on tradition and harmony.

Practical implications

– The neutralizing effects of self-talk point to the fact that past bad experience counts. Thus, the authors suggest that management takes responsibility for explaining change failure and seeking employees' feedback to prevent employees from developing negative self-talk.

Originality/value

– Based on self-concept theory, the paper parallels self-leadership to charismatic leadership in terms of their influence on the individual's value and identity and proposes and tests for a complementary relationship between both leadership capabilities.

Key words : Charisma; Employee relations; Individual psychology; Leadership