

Experimental psychology on leader integrity



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Leader Integrity

ABSTRACT

Experimental psychology provides information and results of the experimental researches, in the study of a different mental processes, experimental method in guiding students and young researchers to assimilate and use this investigation method (Anitei, 2007).

Some researches use experimental psychology to studies leader integrity and reveal if the leader integrity have an important impact in the organizations and if this can improve performance in organizations.

I present this subject at Experimental Psychology because this year I prepare my license degree which is about leader integrity and in this way I will understand and will inform better for my license degree .

Introduction

Leader integrity has been defined over time in many ways by scientists.

Baum studies from an historical, philosophical, and business-related perspective the term “ integrity” to demonstrate that meaning of the word integrity comes from a form of moral action. Then he suggests that moral integrity shall include the identity conferred by the engagement. (Simon, 2013).

Baum constructs his theory about integrity using the idea of integrity as values conferred by identity. He divided integrity in three ways.

Substantive integrity which refers to moral values and that means that leader must to respect basic characteristics of organization or of the social environmental of which he belongs like honesty, respect, rightness trust and that means the leader is trusted.

Leaders who have *formal* integrity have an identity that allows them to act in accordance with their values and adjust them. What is unique and monstrous about these leaders is that they confer their identity immoral values so that their integrity is a form or a shadow of moral integrity. A good example in this case can be a murderer hired who can have formal integrity in his assassin job because he works and acting in accordance with his tasks for achieve his purpose, but this is an immoral action.

Personal integrity represent personal values that the individual decides they are important to him, but the moral community he makes part of it does not need or is not necessarily the leader or anyone else to respect them.

Baum's paradigm of integrity is important from two points of view. In the first place, using the idea of values or engagements conferred by identity, he offers an instrument to differentiate between important and less important things. A good example concerned about less important things correlate with integrity is the following case: a person decides to cook with margarine even if that person prefers butter. This fact do not degraded the person's integrity or morality, but a person who proclaims an important valuable like honesty and uses lies to cover for a scandal is in danger to alter his integrity.

Secondarily, by describing the three instances of integrity, he offers a way to classify moral, immoral and amoral integrity.

Gentry et al. (Simons, 2013) describes integrity of the leader like a construct of social capital commonly in the form of confidence. They also used integrity to describe moral and behavior.

Martin et al. (Simon, 2013) shows that leader integrity from countries like Ireland, US, China, Germany and Austria coincide and refers to the values underlying the behavior like honesty, consideration, loyalty, etc.

Studies about leader integrity

Martin, Keating, Resick, Szabo, Kwan, Peng (2013), started a *study* to compare the meaning of leader integrity in countries like Ireland, United States of America, Germany, Austria and China.

They start from the hypothesis that leader have shown trust and gain credibility from devotees. (Brown, 2005).

This study try to investigate how the leader is perceived in and beyond every of these cultures. This study focuses on two general questions. First question is " *How do managers in six societies understand leader integrity?*" Second question is " *Are there attributes and behaviors that convey leader integrity across societies and are there attributes and behaviors that are culturally unique?*". Cultural clusters of Anglo, Germanic Europe and Asian were incorporate in Project GLOBE (House et al., 2004, apud Martin et al., 2013) is a counterpoise from the prevailing of the Anglo culture researches focus on of integrity and ethical management. What is good to keep in mind is the idea that, even if the members of the groups were part of a cohort and it discovered they support the same characteristics of the leader (Dorfman et

al., 2004), these divisions are general and must to be explained by cultural justifications.

It was used a qualitative methodology which allows to the researchers to understand the meaning of the integrity for every culture by the analysis of the respondent's word from their mother tongue. Qualitative methods are particularly useful when the depth, breadth or interpretive insights of participants are essential for answering the research questions (Bachiochi & Weiner, 2002, apud Martin et al., 2013).

Method

Sample

Participants were 189 managers who were native citizens of and worked full-time within one of six societies, like the U. S, Ireland, Germany, Austria, China and Hong Kong. The respondents were predominantly male (55. 1%), with a mean age of 39. 5 years and had completed a post-secondary school education. Almost all respondents reported 10 or more years of work experience and worked in middle or upper management.

Some of the respondents' demographic characteristics were as well: *Mean age : Highest education : Undergraduate degree ; Post-graduate degree ; Other ; Unidentified ; Professional level: Senior manager; Middle manager ; First-line manager ; Other; Years of experience: 20+years 10-20 years 5-9 years : 1-4 years: Unidentified ;* (Martin et al., pp. 447, 2013)

Open-ended questionnaire

The scientists constructed an open-ended questionnaire to find out manager's opinion about leader integrity in their own words and in their mother tongue. Members of the studies were to be asked to answer to three questions using free response : 1 *How you would define integrity?* 2) *Which behaviors and personal characteristics do you associate most closely with leader integrity?* and (3) *Please describe a situation where you consider a leader to have acted with integrity.* (Martin et al., pp. 448, 2013). These questions ordered to get a better apprehension of respondent's opinion about the sense of leader integrity, about the integrity through leader behavior, and accommodation of integrity through practice example. After this step, scientists conducted a matter analysis of the responses to identify principal themes and to explain the sense.(Boyatzis, 1998; Duriau, Reger, & Pfarrer, 2007; Woodrum, 1984, apud Martin et al., 2013).

Taking into consideration the importance of language to their research methodology, they first created an English language version of the questionnaire, translated into German and Chinese (traditional and simple), and then re-translated it to be sure of the precision of translation and equivalent semantic (Brislin, 1980, apud Martin, 2013). Any difference of the meaning were discussed and were included the modifications to create the final version of the German and Chinese language questionnaire.

Procedure

Potential respondent were graduated directors and program managers of graduated business scholarships that researchers personal knew and completed this manner by contacting their personal contacts and asked

them to give an invitation to their manager or to them. Potential respondents received a brief invitation, edited into English, and translated in German and Chinese (traditional and simple) which included a link to an online survey. Respondents from China and Hong Kong received the version both in English and Chinese (simple and traditional) and were asked to respond at either version they want. Respondents were ensured of anonymity and privacy of the response. This way of testing (on-line and free response questionnaire) has provides many advantages for researchers and for respondents. For scientists, this way eases the obtaining of thoroughly descriptions from the participants in their manner of expression and their mother tongue. Further, this form of questioning assured standardization in the presentation of the research question among growth and cultures. It also gave the possibility to the participants to respond privately and anonymous at a location and a time they had choose and to spend time as long as they want for each question.

Findings

Across U. S., integrity of the leader is reflecting in his own behavior (both leader's actions and personal values). Characteristics of the leader in this culture are: *Value-Behavior Consistency; Honest; Word-Action Consistency; Consideration and Respect for Others; Openness and Transparency; Guided by Strong Personal Moral Code/ Values; and Fair and Just.*

Like the U. S. managers, the Irish managers choose the same characteristics of the leader: *Value -Behavior Consistency; Honest; Word-Action Consistency; Consideration and Respect for Others; Openness and Transparency; Guided by Strong Personal Moral Code/ Values; and Fair and*

Just. But for these, personal values including *Value–Behavior Consistency*, are strong connected to the leader integrity and were choose by 85. 2% of Irish managers.

German managers had choose eight themes for describe leader integrity: *Value–Behavior Consistency; Honest; Sense of Responsibility for/toward Others; Guided by Strong Personal Moral Code/Values; Word–Action Consistency; Fair and Just; Abides by Rules and Regulations; and Consideration and Respect for Others*. There, integrity is proved by *Sense of Responsibility for/toward Others* (55. 6% choose this values) from leader.

Austrian managers have chosen nine themes : *Sense of Responsibility for/toward Others; Guided by Strong Personal Moral Code/Values; Value–Behavior Consistency; Word–Action Consistency; Consideration and Respect for Others; Fair and Just; Honest; Non-Hierarchical; and Abides by Rules and Regulations*. Approximately 50 % Austrian participants understand integrity like having and acting according to some personal values (Guided by Strong Personal Moral Code/Values, 52. 0%; Value–Behavior Consistency, 52. 0%, Martin, p. 451, 2013).

Chinese managers have chosen eight themes: *Fair and Just; Sense of Responsibility*

for/toward Others; Word–Action Consistency; Guided by Strong Personal Moral Code/Values; Abides by Rules and Regulations; Honest; Value–Behavior Consistency; and Consideration and Respect for Others. Rates of 75% of Chinese managers have chosen the theme *Fair and Just*.

Managers from Hong Kong have chosen eight themes: Fair and Just; Sense of Responsibility for/toward Others; Honest; Word-Action Consistency; Abides by Rules and Regulations; Selfless; Openness and Transparency; and Consideration and Respect for Others. Fair and Just, Sense of Responsibility for/toward Others, and Honest were chosen by 51.6% to defining characteristics of leader integrity.

Moorman, Darnold, Priesemuth (2013) conducted a *longitudinal study*. There was a multi-dimensional measure in two samples.

At first study with 146 participants who were junior or senior student at management courses during the study were used two moment of testing: Time 1, was hypothesized the three dimensions of the integrity and were measured how much the participants knew the leader. And Time 2 (a week later) the participants were asked to assess the leader from Time 1. The result shows that factors were highly correlated: "*moral behavior was correlated 0.87 with behavioral integrity and 0.78 with consistency across contexts. Behavioral integrity and consistency across contexts were correlated 0.82*" (Moorman, Darnold, Priesemuth, 2013).

Participants from second study were members of Chamber of Commerce from a city. They received an email with a link to an on-line survey. 261 members clicked on the survey link, but only 207 people answer to the questions. The average age of respondents was 44, 3 and the years of experience has a rate of 23 years (Idem)." *Results shows that moral behavior was correlated 0.95 with behavioral integrity and 0.90 with*

consistency across contexts. Behavioral integrity and consistency across contexts were correlated 0.92 " (Idem).

Vogelgesang, Leroy and Avolio conducted a *longitudinal study* during three months. They hypothesized that ratings of leader behavioral integrity is a connection of relationship between leader transparent communication and follower work engagement and performance. Participants were 451 military cadets who evaluated their own leader. The results showed that behavioral integrity was positively correlate with leader communication transparency ($b=.89$), with engagement ($b=.21$) and with performance ($b=.11$).

The study of Gentry, Cullen, Sosik, Chun, Leupold, and Tonidandel revealed that middle-level manager's integrity were positively correlated with top level executive performance. Result showed also that integrity of middle managers is taken too little account of promotion, not actual important for their actual performance. However, middle managers may lack strong features to become senior managers, such as integrity, in order to perform in the organization.

Conclusion

Result of several studies (Vogelgesang Leroy and Avolio, 2013; Moorman, Darnold, Priesemuth, 2013) have shown that the leader integrity has a major and measurable relation with work engagement and performance in organizations. Martin, Keating, Resick, Szabo, Kwan, Peng showed that integrity across Ireland, US, China, Germany and Austria coincide and refers to the values underlying the behavior. There are nine common themes that were support in all or a majority of the cultures: " *these include Guided by*

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Strong Personal Moral Code/Values, Value-Behavior Consistency, Word-Action Consistency, Honest, Fair and Just, Openness and Transparency, Consideration and Respect for Others, Sense of Responsibility for/toward Others, and Abiding by Rules and Regulations” (Martin, Keating, Szabo, Kwan, Peng, pp. 445, 2013). Gentry et al., 2013 revealed that integrity of middle managers is less important than integrity between top-level managers.