

Distributed leadership agency and innovative behaviour

Motivational mediation in the relationship between distributed leadership and employee innovation

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ABSTRACT

Intro:

Distributed leadership agency (DLA) is a specific form of employee agency, in which employees participate actively in undertaking leadership tasks in different domains.

The present study assumes a distributed leadership paradigm that focuses on employees as potential leadership agents per se.

We propose that this approach to leadership may provide a substantial understanding of employees' engagement in innovation at work.

PREDICTIONS

Hypothesis 1:

- More distributed leadership agency is related with more innovative behavior.
- Attitude to employee involvement moderates (enhances) the relationship between DLA and innovative behavior.

Hypothesis 2:

- Self efficacy mediates in the relationship between distributed leadership agency and innovative behavior.
- Intrinsic motivation mediates in the relationship between distributed leadership agency and innovative behavior.
- The relationships between DLA and the mediators are mediated by attitude to involvement

METHOD

Sample

As a part of a larger project on Distributed Leadership in a Danish hospital organization, we surveyed all employees (4880). We had 1210 replies, which made up a 25% response rate. Most of the participants had no leader position with formal leadership responsibility, and we were interested in and applied responses from these persons. We controlled for occupational group membership.

Measurement

- Distributed leadership agency was measured as an extended version of Jønsson et al. (2016).
- Job Self-Efficacy was measured by a scale by Schyns & von Collani (2008).
- Intrinsic motivation was measured as three items focused on the positive, satisfactory feelings elicited by doing the work, including feelings of challenge and joy (Ryan and Deci, 2000).
- Innovative behavior was measured by Jansen's (2000) scale.

RESULTS

Figure 1: Model displaying the moderated mediation between distributed leadership agency and Innovation Behavior

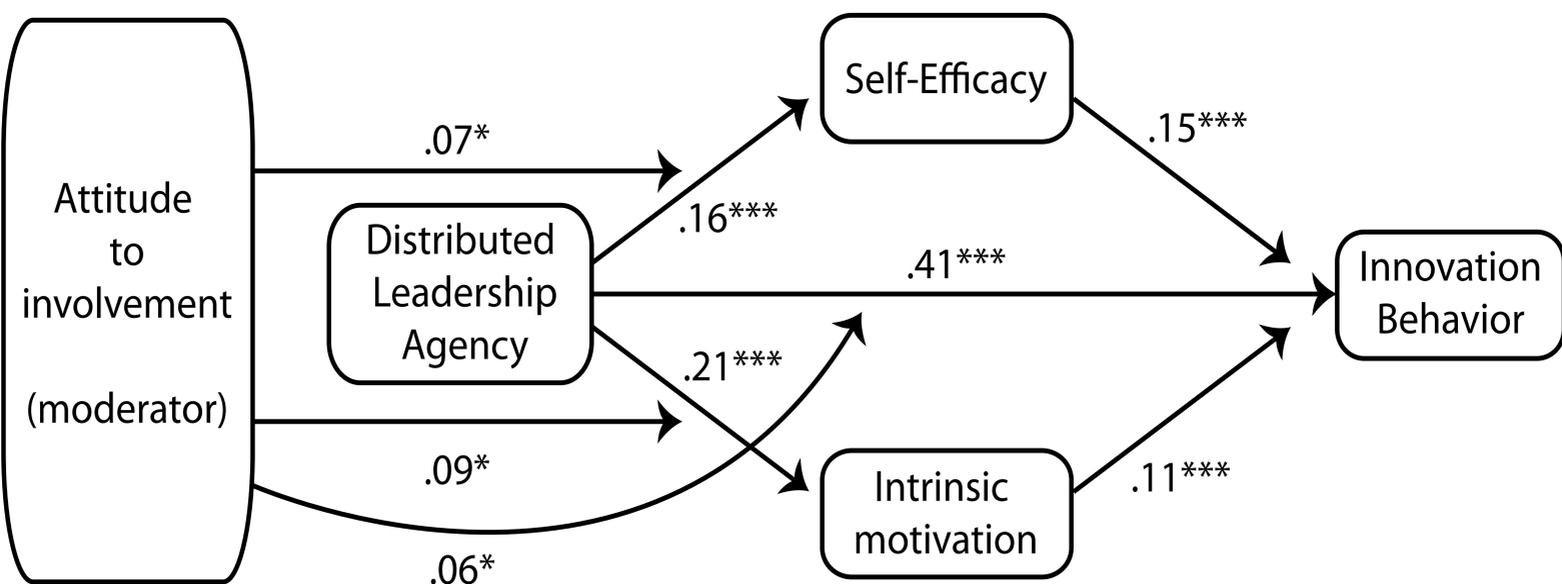


Table 1: Descriptives (cronbach's alpha listed diagonally)

	Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5
1. Distributed leadership agency	2.87 (.82)	(.92)				
2. Self-efficacy	4.03 (.52)	.26**	(.89)			
3. Attitude to involvement	4.45 (.69)	.19**	.07*	(.93)		
4. Intrinsic motivation	4.16 (.66)	.27**	.35**	.07**	(.88)	
5. Innovation behavior	3.39 (.68)	.55**	.28**	.14**	.28**	(.94)

** Significant at the level of 0.01, n = 1210

Table 2: Conditioned effects

	Direct		Indirect	
	Distributed leadership agency	Self-efficacy	Intrinsic motivation	
Low (-1 SD)	.37	.016	.016	
Mean	.41	.023	.023	
High (+1 SD)	.44	.029	.028	

MAIN FINDINGS

There was a significant relationship between Distributed Leadership Agency and Innovative Behavior ($\beta = .41, p < .001$) – **hypothesis 1a**. This relationship was moderated by employees' Attitude to Involvement (interaction's $\beta = .059, p = .020$) – **hypothesis 1b**.

The relationship between DLA and Self-Efficacy was significant ($\beta = .155, p < .001$), and between Self-efficacy and Innovative behavior ($\beta = .148,$

$p < .001$) – **hypothesis H2a**. The same pattern was found for intrinsic motivation, where DLA and Intrinsic motivation was positively related ($\beta = .213, p < .001$) as was Intrinsic Motivation and innovative behavior ($\beta = .106, p < .001$). The interaction term in the moderation of the relationship between DLA and Self-Efficacy was significant ($\beta = .072, p = .015$) as was the case for DLA and Intrinsic Motivation ($\beta = .089, p = .038$), which confirms **hypotheses H2a and H2b**.

IMPLICATIONS

The results showed that it was partial mediations, i.e. the direct relationship between DLA and innovative behavior accounted for significant effect size beyond the indirect effect sizes. The effect sizes also show that the mediational effect of both mediators is small quite compared to the direct effect.

The study's results may suggest that encouraging employees to participate in leading tasks, relations and change in workplaces will strengthen innovation at the workplace.