The Effect of Inclusive Leadership on Subordinate Behaviors Via
The Mediating Roles of Relational Identity and Trust in Chengdu, China

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Abstract

This Article aimed to (1) study the effect between inclusive leadership, relational identity, trust, and subordinate behaviors, (2) analyst the inclusive leadership, relational identity, trust effect subordinate behaviors, (3) testify the trust and relational identity play a mediating role between inclusive leadership and subordinate behaviors. This research was quantitative research, collected data from executives of the companies in Chengdu, China sample of 409 respondents via simple random sampling, Analysis of data via SEM by AMOS. The research result was found as follow: 1). the factors that influence inclusive leadership were leadership effectiveness, leadership openness, and leadership accessibility. Factors that influence relational identity were relational identity individual cognition, individual understanding, and individual concentrate. Factors influence Trust were trust cognitive, behavioral, and trust affective.2) the impact of Inclusive leadership, relational identity, and trust of the companies was insignificant. Still, the impact of pay on subordinate behaviors has been found insignificant. 3) The mediating relational identity, and trust impact of subordinate behaviors factors play impact between the independent variables inclusive leadership to pay on subordinate behaviors the dependent variable.

Keywords: Inclusive Leadership; Relational Identity; Trust; Subordinate Behaviors

Introduction

In the formal hierarchy of the enterprise, employees are subordinates of the leader, and subordinate behaviors are the way they behave as followers (Carsten Uhl-Bien, 2013). Subordinate behavior indicates that subordinate employees recognize and give leadership and influence to the other

party in the superior–subordinate relationship in a specific way (DeRue Ashford, 2010). Examining the impact of inclusive leadership from the perspective of followers is the most important proposition in current leadership research (Uhl–Bien et al, 2014). The research based on social information processing theory suggests that inclusive leadership can promote the service innovation behavior of frontline employees through the mediation of psychological security (Xiao et al., 2017). However, some studies based on social exchange theory point out that even if employees perceive that the organization is supportive and safe, there are still a considerable number of people who are unwilling to take positive actions to give back to the organization (Detert Edmondson, 2011).

Social identity theory provides an explanation for the relationship mechanism between inclusive leadership and subordinate behavior, and relational identity and trust may play a mediating role between inclusive leadership and subordinate behavior. However, relational identity and trust are only necessary conditions for leaders to exert their influence, and it is necessary to empirically test whether inclusive leadership can stimulate relational identity and trust, and then affect the behavior of subordinates.

Research Objectives

Following are the objectives of the study are:

1. To study the effect between inclusive leadership, relational identity, trust, and subordinate behaviors. .

2. To analyst the inclusive leadership, relational identity, trust effect on subordinate behaviors.

3. To testify the trust and relational identity pay a mediating role impact between inclusive leadership and subordinate behaviors.

Research Hyprothesis

H1: Inclusive Leadership has a direct effect on Rational Identity.

H2: Inclusive Leadership has a direct effect on Trust.

H3: Rational Identity has a direct effect on Subordinate Behaviors.

H4. Trust has a direct effect on Subordinate Behaviors.

H5. Relational Identity plays a mediating role between Inclusive Leadership and Subordinate Behaviors.

H6. Trust plays a mediating role between Inclusive Leadership and Subordinate Behaviors.

The research study will address the contrary findings of the previous literature studies regarding the role of inclusive leadership, relational identity, and trust, and subordinate behaviors. Moreover, the study will provide empirical evidence for the role of individual determinant in inclusive leadership and subordinate behaviors practices in China. Thus, the study will contribute in the theoretical development in this sector.

Review of the Literature

Theoretical background

(1) Relational leadership theory

Relational leadership emphasizes good interpersonal relationship between leaders and followers, emphasizes leaders' concern for followers and promotes their development, and shows caring, fairness, tolerance and other behaviors in management practice. Other scholars propose from the perspective of social constructivism that leadership is a process of social interaction and relationship interaction, which is jointly created by relevant parties (Fairhurst Uhl-Bien, 2012), and call for the study of followers and their following behavior as a key element of this process (Uhl-Bien, 2014). The research progress of these relational leadership theories shows that: 1) Relational leadership not only pays attention to the binary relationship between leaders and followers, but also emphasizes the interaction process between them, and advocates understanding the influence of leaders in the interaction process between leaders and others, which is the constructivist perspective of relational leadership theory. 2) Under the guidance of this view focusing on the process of relational interaction, followers are regarded as symbiotic with leaders and leadership, they are not passive recipients, but important contributors in the organization, which is the follower-centered perspective of relational leadership theory.

(2) Social identity theory

Social identity theory originated from the observation of people's behavior in groups. The core idea of this theory is that individuals have the need for self-esteem and strive to meet this need through positive social identity perception. DeRue Ashford (2010) proposed the "identity" of leaders and followers, arguing that the process of leadership construction is formed in the interactive process of" claiming" and" granting" mutual identity. The individual's perception of inclusion is defined as the degree

of respect perceived after both the needs of seeking common ground and seeking differences are met (Shore et al, 2011). It can be seen that the social identity theory also provides a theoretical basis for inclusive leadership. Inclusive leadership can make subordinates feel treated equally and meet their needs for seeking common ground, and also make subordinates feel valued by leaders and meet their needs for seeking differences; Subordinates perceive the inclusion of leadership behavior, which means that they get signals from the leader that they are an important member of the role relationship and the organization represented by the leader.

2. Literature reviews

2.1 Inclusive Leadership

Hollander (2012) pointed out from the perspective of relationship interaction that inclusive leadership aims at achieving a win-win relationship. On this basis, Carmeli et al (2010) further improves and refines the interaction between superiors and subordinates, and holds that inclusive leadership is a specific form of relational leadership, which is the accessibility, openness and effectiveness of the interaction between leaders and subordinates. Zhu and Qian (2014) believe that inclusive leadership emphasizes equal opportunities, fair participation and reasonable sharing, and includes all people in the development process of the organization to achieve organizational development together Dimensions and measurement Inclusive Leadership was Inclusive Leadership Openness; effectiveness; and accessibility.

2.2 Relational Identity

The concept of relational identity was proposed by Sluss Ashforth (2007), which refers to the degree to which individuals internalize their self-concept according to their role relationships.The concept of relational identity defined by scholars also includes "the process of changing individual identity", or "the process of internalizing role relationship into self-concept" (Ashforth et al, 2008). The definition of Sluss Ashforth (2007) focuses on individual cognition, while the latter two focus on changing States and processes, reflecting its abstraction and complexity. To sum up, the basis and starting point of relational identity is relational identity, which reflects the individual's understanding and cognition of the essential characteristics of role relationship. Dimensions and measurement relational Identity was individual cognition, individual's understanding and comprehensive

2.3 Trust

(1) Definition Different scholars have different definitions of trust. Wang et al (2014) argues that trust is not only a subjective evaluation of employees' perception of whether the organizational environment is safe and friendly, but also an atmosphere in the organization. Song LL and Liu (2014) considered trust as employees' trust that the organization or leaders will protect their interests from being violated, thus recognizing and supporting the behavior of the organization, leaders and colleagues. Measurement dimensions of the trust scale were Cognitive, affective, behavioral

2.4 Subordinate behaviors

(1) Definition Subordinate behaviors refer to a series of behaviors in the process of interaction between followers and leaders, which does not include individual work activities and interactions with other colleagues it has six-dimensional scale, including respect and learning, loyalty and dedication, upholding authority, intent to understand, communicate effectively, and positive execution (Carsten et al, 2010). Zhao (2013)

2.5 Relationship between Inclusive Leadership and Trust

Chen (2015) found that the three dimensions of transformational leadership can significantly affect trust. The research of Yang (2021) shows that inclusive leadership has a significant impact on team performance, which indicates that employees may be more likely to trust and cooperate more actively. The research of Tian (2019) focuses on how inclusive leadership stimulates employees' constructive deviance and may be related to trust building. To sum up, the research on the relationship between inclusive leadership and trust covers many aspects, including employee performance, deviant behavior and the fairness of the work environment, which are closely related to the establishment and maintenance of trust.

2.6 Relationship between Relational Identity and Subordinate Behaviors

Upholding Authority, Intent to Understand, Communicate Effectively, Positive Execution On the one hand, relational identity makes individuals more willing to learn to lead and improves motivation. On the other hand, it brings trust, loyalty and cooperation between subordinates and leaders, which leads to higher self-efficacy. The higher the relational identity is, the more likely the subordinates are to link the interests of both sides closely, thus bringing higher motivation to the interests and success of the other side of the relationship (Qu et al, 2015), or to the organizational citizenship behavior of the other side (Zhang et al, 2014). Chinese scholars have also verified that relational identity can significantly

promote positive behaviors (Yan and Lin, 2019). It can be seen that relational identity may have an impact on subordinate behaviors.

2.7 Relationship between Trust and Subordinate Behaviors

The relationship between trust and subordinate behaviors are an important area of leadership and organizational psychology. Liu (2013) found that trust positively affects employee performance. Vanhala, Mika and Graham (2019) found that trust in employers can ease the relationship between human resource management and unit performance through empirical research. Mozumder (2018) finds that there is a positive relationship between moral leadership and employee leadership trust, which also affects employee attitude, behavior and cognition. These studies highlight the important role of trust in leading versus subordinate behaviors and the value of building trust in organizations and work environments.

2.8 The Mediating Role of Relational Identity between Inclusive Leadership and Subordinate Behaviors

Inclusive leaders respect and recognize subordinates, listen to their voices, positively pay attention to, respond to and meet their differentiated needs, and their openness, accessibility and availability provide support and help for subordinates in their work, so subordinates often show higher positive attitudes such as organizational commitment, job engagement and job satisfaction (Choi et al, 2015). Subordinates in the Chinese context will show respect and learning, loyalty and dedication, upholding authority, intent to understand, communicate effectively and positive execution (Zhou et al., 2015), which is essentially different from obedience, conformity and ingratiation. This paper infers that subordinates take the leader's goals, emotions, and values and so on into consideration in their self-concept to form the relational identity, which may lead to the following behavior of the leader.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual model constructed in this paper is shown in the following picture:
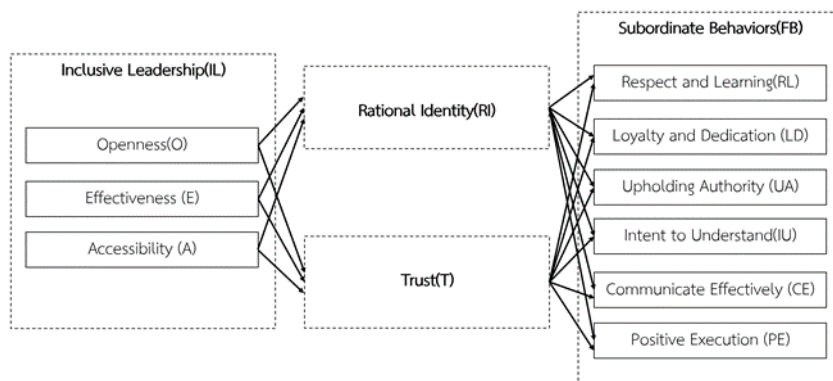
Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Sampling and data collection

Data collected for thus study is actually the input obtained from different companies in Chengdu of China and all the data collected from these firms was then accumulated together. The data has been collected from 409 executive of companies in Chengdu of China. The simple random sampling technique has been employed by the researcher so that an appropriate sample may be selected for research and questionnaire filling. The indicators that have been used by the researcher in this study are obtained from the past studies and thus the validity of the measures can be made sure. The executive from which the questionnaire was filled include the manager and senior management of companies. All of them were selected on the basis of their enough and appropriate knowledge about the concerned topic of the study. The questionnaire used for the research process was carefully designed by using appropriate order of questions and the content easily understood by the respondents.

Statistical analysis

In order to analyze the collected data, SEM by Amos26 have been used by the researcher. Different tests and techniques have been employed through these software and the analysis results have been obtained by the researcher. Factor analysis have been obtained from SPSS. In the similar way, confirmatory factor analysis and structure equation modeling have been obtained by using AMOS.

Research Results

KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's test are used in order to find out if the factor analysis of a particular study is useful or not. In this regard, it is estimated that if the value of KMO test is very close to 1.00, it will be beneficial for the study. In addition, it has also been estimated that if the value of Bartlett's test is less than 0.05, it will also be beneficial for the study. The fulfillment of both conditions can be seen in the table 1

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test.

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.901
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi–Square	4433.361
	Df	140
	Sig.	.000

Validity test

Convergent and discriminant validity

Convergent validity refers to the classification obtained when two different measurement tools are used to measure the same concept and are highly correlated. This study tested convergent validity by constructing reliability (CR) and extracting mean variance (AVE). Construct reliability was generally > 0.7, and AVE > 0.5 was considered to be up to standard. The factor loadings, combined reliability, and average variance extraction (AVE) of each variable observation value are shown in the table. The factor loading value of each item is between 0.6and 0.9, indicating that the convergent validity is high. The combined reliability of each dimension is greater than 0.7 to meet the standard, and the AVE is greater than 0.5 to meet the standard. The significance probability is P 0.001, which means that the latent variable has a significant relationship with each of the measurement index variables and that the structural model for inclusive leadership, relational identity, trust, and subordinate behaviors has very good convergence.

Research results of objective 1, found that:

1.1 The result of inclusive leadership

Table 2 Confirmatory factors analysis of inclusive leadership

Latent variables	Observation variable	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	CR	AVE
Inclusive Leadership(IL)	Openness	.816	0.045	16.172	***	0.822	0.565
	Effectiveness	.843	0.059	14.764	***		
	Accessibility	.801	0.065	17.657	***		

Note: *** means P<0.001

Table 3 Fitting index of the Model inclusive leadership

CMIN/DF	GFI	CFI	IFI	RMSEA
1.957	.927	.984	.982	.054
Standard <3	standard >0.8	standard >0.9	standard >0.9	standard<0.08

The result found that factors influence inclusive leadership were leadership effectiveness (.843), leadership openness (.816), and leadership accessibility (.801) respectively.

1.2 The result of Relational Identity

Table 4 Confirmatory factors analysis of Relational Identity

Latent variables	Observation variable	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	CR	AVE
Relational Identity (RI)	individual cognition	.763	0.055	17.224	***	0.742	0.623
	Individual understanding	.731	0.069	15.423	***		
	Individual concentrate	.722	0.065	16.513	***		

Note: *** means P<0.001

Table 5 Fitting index of the Model Relational Identity

CMIN/DF	GFI	CFI	IFI	RMSEA
1.768	.920	.938	.961	.062
Standard <3	standard >0.8	standard >0.9	standard >0.9	standard<0.08

The result found that factors influence relational identity (RI) were relational identity individual cognition (.763), individual understanding (.731), and individual concentrate (.722)

1.3 The result of Trust

Table 6 Confirmatory factors analysis of Trust

Latent variables	Observation variable	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	CR	AVE
Trust	Trust cognitive	.837	0.065	16.412	***	0.802	0.615
	Trust affective	.816	0.059	15.531	***		
	Trust behavioral	.824	0.033	14.134	***		

Note: *** means P<0.001

Table 7 Fitting index of the Model Relational Identity

CMIN/DF	GFI	CFI	IFI	RMSEA
2.363	.905	.923	.918	.062
Standard <3	standard >0.8	standard >0.9	standard >0.9	standard<0.08

The result found that factors influence Trust (T) were trust cognitive (.837), trust behavioral (.824), and trust affective (.816).

1.3 The result of Subordinate Behaviors

Table 6 Confirmatory factors analysis of Subordinate Behaviors

Latent variables	Observation variable	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	CR	AVE
Subordinate Behaviors (SB)	loyalty and dedication LD	.874	0.045	14.412	***	0.815	0.661
	upholding authority UA	.862	0.049	14.531	***		
	intent to understand IU	.843	0.043	15.134	***		
	communicate effectively CE	.824	0.049	14.531	***		
	positive execution PE	.855	0.043	15.134	***		

Note: *** means P<0.001

Table 7 Fitting index of the Model Subordinate Behaviors

CMIN/DF	GFI	CFI	IFI	RMSEA
2.136	.928	.935	.951	.065
Standard <3	standard >0.8	standard >0.9	standard >0.9	standard<0.08

The result found that factors influence were subordinate behaviors loyalty and dedication (.874), upholding authority (.862), intent to understand (.843), communicate effectively (.824)

Path analysis in this research

Structural Equation Modeling was used to analyze the path of the structural equation model to obtain the path coefficient value and CR value of the structural equation model. The path coefficient reflects the relationship and degree of influence between variables, and the critical ratio CR (Critical Ratio) can judge the regression. Whether the coefficient is significant or not, it is generally believed that the CR value is greater than or equal to 1.96, which means that there is a significant difference at the 0.05 significant level. The standardized regression coefficients and variance parameter estimates of the structural equation model in this study are shown in the table.

Research Result of Objective 2 found that:

Test hypothesis

Table 9 the Path Coefficients of Structural Equation Models Test

Path hypothesis	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
IL　　RI	0.287	0.081	4.633	0.001*
IL　　T	0.279	0.047	3.398	0.001*
RI → SB	0. 152	0.034	3.238	0.001*
T　　SB	0.143	0.049	3.894	0.000*

Note: * means P<0.001

Table 10 hypothesis test result

Hypothesis	Expected	result
H1: Inclusive Leadership has a direct effect on Rational Identity.	direct effect	Accepted
H2: Inclusive Leadership has a direct effect on Trust.	direct effect	Accepted
H3: Rational Identity has a direct effect on Subordinate Behaviors.	direct effect	Accepted
H4. Trust has a direct effect on Subordinate Behaviors.	direct effect	Accepted

Research Result objective 3, found that:

Mediation hypotheses testing

Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
H5 : IL⟶ RI ⟶SB	0.064	0.016	0.122	0.006
H6: IL⟶ T ⟶SB	0.068	0.028	0.144	0.008

H5. Relational Identity plays a mediating role between Inclusive Leadership and Subordinate.

The role of Relational Identity in mediating the Inclusive relationship between Inclusive Leadership, Subordinate Behaviors. The mediating effect of Inclusive Leadership, Relational Identity and Subordinate Behaviors is 0.006 corresponding to a 95% confidence interval of 0.016, 0.122, and the upper and lower interval values do not contain 0, indicating that the mediating effect of Relational Identity between Inclusive Leadership and Subordinate is significant, so the hypothesis is established

H6. Trust plays a mediating role between Inclusive Leadership and Subordinate Behaviors.

The role of trust in mediating the relationship between Inclusive Leadership, and Subordinate Behaviors. The mediating effect of Inclusive Leadership, Relational Identity and Subordinate Behaviors is 0.008 corresponding to a 95% confidence interval of 0.028, 0.144, and the upper and lower interval values do not contain 0, indicating that the mediating effect of trust between Inclusive Leadership and Subordinate is significant, so the hypothesis is established

Mediating role test found that: mediating relational identity, and trust impact of subordinate behaviors factors between the independent variables inclusive leadership to pay on subordinate behaviors the dependent variable, has been found as significant

Conclusion

1. The factors that influence inclusive leadership were leadership effectiveness, leadership openness, and leadership accessibility. Factors that influence relational identity were relational identity individual cognition, individual understanding, and individual concentrate. Factors influence Trust were trust cognitive, behavioral, and trust affective.

2. The impact of Inclusive leadership, relational identity, and trust of the companies was insignificant. Still, the impact of pay on subordinate behaviors has been found insignificant.

3. The mediating relational identity, and trust impact of subordinate behaviors factors play impact between the independent variables inclusive leadership to pay on subordinate behaviors the dependent variable.

Discussion

Inclusive leadership has a direct effect on relational identity. This paper researches hypothesis H1 Inclusive leadership (ILO, ILE, ILA) has a direct effect on relational identity. After empirical research, it is found that the openness and effectiveness of inclusive leadership help to enhance the sense of participation and trust of employees, while accessibility helps to enhance the sense of belonging and happiness of employees, which together affect employees' sense of identity with leaders. Therefore, the results support the hypotheses H1.

Inclusive leadership has a direct effect on trust. This paper researches hypothesis H2 Inclusive leadership (ILO, ILE, and ILA) has a direct effect on trust. After empirical research, it is found that the openness and effectiveness of inclusive leadership help to establish and maintain the trust relationship between employees and leaders, while accessibility helps to enhance this trust. Therefore, the results support the hypotheses H2.

Relational identity has a direct effect on subordinate behaviors. This paper researches hypothesis H3 : Relational identity has a direct effect on subordinate behaviors (, LD, UA, IU, CE, PE). After empirical research, it is found that relational identity has a positive effect on subordinate behaviors, mainly through enhancing employees' sense of belonging and organizational identity to affect subordinates' behavior. These factors have an important impact on employee motivation and job performance. Therefore, the results support the hypotheses H3.

Trust has a direct effect on subordinate behaviors. This paper researches hypothesis H4: Trust has a direct effect on subordinate behaviors (, LD, UA, IU, CE, PE). After empirical research, it is found that trust has a positive impact on subordinate behaviors. Trust has an important impact on the enthusiasm and performance of employees. Therefore, the results support the hypotheses H4a–f.

Relational identity plays a mediating role between inclusive leadership and subordinate behaviors. This paper researches hypothesis H5: Relational identity plays a mediating role between Inclusive leadership (ILO, ILE, ILA) and subordinate behaviors (LD, UA, IU, CE, PE). After empirical

testing, it is found that relational identity may play a mediating role between inclusive leadership and subordinate behaviors. That is to say, the openness, effectiveness and accessibility of inclusive leadership can promote employees' recognition of leadership, which can further affect employees' work behavior and performance. Therefore, the results support the hypotheses H5a–r.

Trust plays a mediating role between inclusive leadership and subordinate behaviors. This paper researches hypothesis H6: Trust plays a mediating role between Inclusive leadership (ILO, ILE, ILA) and subordinate behaviors (LD, UA, IU, CE, PE). After empirical testing, it is found that trust plays a mediating role between inclusive leadership and subordinate behaviors. That is to say, the openness, effectiveness and accessibility of inclusive leadership can establish a trust environment, which can further affect the behavior and performance of employees. Therefore, the results support the hypotheses H6.

Sugession and Recommendation

Cultivate inclusive leadership. According to the traditional Chinese concept, leaders often strictly require subordinates to obey in their work, and subordinates themselves have formed the concept of absolute obedience. This seemingly harmonious and orderly relationship between superiors and subordinates may actually lurk in various crises. Therefore, when selecting managers, enterprises should pay attention to the selection of people with inclusive leadership characteristics, and take inclusive leadership and working methods as an important part of training leaders, advocating that leaders should often reflect on themselves in their work, and use positive attitude and emotional infection to stimulate the enthusiasm of subordinates.

Promote subordinate behaviors. With the change of business environment, enterprise organizational structure and management mode, the behavior of subordinates increasingly has a very important impact on the good operation of enterprises and the realization of leader effectiveness. Therefore, leaders should clearly recognize the impact of these changes in organizational work, and actively make corresponding changes and adjustments to ensure better leadership and leadership effectiveness. At the same time, inclusive leaders should not only pay attention to the work and career development of their subordinates, but also give help and care to their subordinates' lives, build a rich platform for communication, establish a harmonious and friendly relationship between superiors and subordinates, and infect subordinates with positive influence, so as to cultivate their recognition and

trust in leaders. Stimulate the willingness of subordinates to follow the leader and the generation of positive subordinate behaviors.

Improve the relational identity of subordinates and gain their trust. Enterprises can play its role through the following points: First, make full use of the openness, effectiveness and accessibility of inclusive leadership, so that subordinates can effectively participate in the decision-making process and improve their recognition and trust of leaders; The second is to fully provide personalized and diversified support, so that employees feel valued and cared for, and improve their relational identity and trust; the third is to strengthen the humanistic care for employees, so that employees recognize the values and codes of conduct of the enterprise, thereby improving their sense of belonging, promoting employees to more actively perceive their membership of the enterprise, thereby stimulating more relational identity and trust. Therefore, leaders can gain trust and active support of their subordinates by cultivating their identity and trust, establishing a good reciprocal relationship with their subordinates.

Recognize the importance of subordinate behaviors. Subordinate behaviors play a positive and important role in the development of enterprises. Therefore, leaders and subordinates may have to abandon the traditional prejudice and misunderstanding of subordinate behaviors, and realize the importance and value of the symbiosis and co-prosperity of leadership and following relationship. Establish an open, standardized and orderly formal communication network, strengthen the guidance and utilization of informal communication network, promote regular communication between followers and leaders, fully understand each other's needs, and timely adjust their behavior and direction of efforts, so as to continuously improve the quality of superior-subordinate relationship and jointly build a harmonious superior-subordinate relationship. Work together to improve leadership effectiveness and business management performance.

Research Benefit

These results has a model of subordinate behaviors of employees companies in Chengdu, China, propose inclusive leadership, relational identity, trust effect subordinate behaviors and the approach of various theoretical, practical, and policy-making implications as discussed by the author.

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