

Coaching Leadership, Job Motivation and Employee Innovation Behavior

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Abstract. As globalization enters a new stage, innovation has become the primary driving force for development. How to motivate employees to conduct innovative behaviors has become a hot topic in the field of organization research. Coaching leadership is a new style of leadership in the field of organizational behavior that can improve the minds of employees. Based on the Self-determination Theory, this paper finds out that coaching leadership can effectively promote employees' innovative behavior and work motivation plays a partial intermediary role in middle. Future research can further explore other mediating effects and boundary conditions in the mechanism of coaching leadership and innovation behavior.

Introduction

At present, China's own economic development has entered a new normal, enterprises must adapt to the requirements of the environmental changes. Innovation is the core driving force for stable development and employee's innovative behavior is the key to building company's competitive strength. Therefore, how to motivate employees' innovative behavior has become a hot topic in the field of research. Coaching leadership, as a new type of leadership born in a dynamic organizational environment, has a unique advantage in improving employee mental models and inspiring innovation potential ^[1]. However, the current research on innovation generally focuses on mature leadership styles such as transformational leadership and empowerment leadership. The research on the relationship between coaching leadership and employee innovation behavior is rare. Meanwhile, motivation is the core force that drives individuals to make specific behaviors. According to the of self-determination theory (SDT), the leaders' own attitudes and behaviors will influence employee's psychological needs and influence recognition of positions and organizations. So it's important to explore the influence of work motivation between coaching leadership and innovation. Therefore, based on the SDT, this study trying to analyze the intrinsic influence mechanism of coaching leadership on employee innovation behavior, in order to provide advice on improving the level of innovation and competitiveness.

Literature Review

Coaching Leadership and Innovative Behavior

Coaching leadership is a new type of leadership that has received much attention in recent years. It emphasizes leaders use their coaching skills to help employees identify deeper needs, set goals, and further improve their skill and performance. In the 1980s, AT&T introduced the coach as a training method in the field of manager training, which proved that management coaching is an effective strategy to improve organizational performance, develop managers and leaders. In 2001, Gloeman officially presented the coaching leadership in the article "Effective Leadership" published in the Harvard Business Review. This leadership style and behavior is also considered to be the core of effective management.

Early scholars defined coaching leadership as a management practice that helps employees improve their learning ability and performance [2], as the research deepens, coaching leadership is

defined as a manager as a coach to demonstrate management effectiveness, which is expressed as feedback on employee performance, tolerance to uncertainty, emphasis on learning and cooperation, etc.[3] Although the definition of coaching leadership is inconsistent, There is a consensus on the identification of constituent elements: coaching leadership will show open communication with employees, focus on teamwork, pay attention to the characteristics of employees' learning and self-growth while accepting environment. It is worth noting that coaching leadership is different from other positive leadership styles, such as inclusive leadership and servant leadership. In the process of interaction, it emphasizes inspiration and motivation to guide employees. Achieve common development through open communication and positive interaction. Existing research has found that coaching leadership's work behaviors has positive impact on learning behavior, performance [4], organizational commitment and professional commitment [5], work safety and employee self-efficacy Produce [6].

In the current dynamic environment, innovation is the key to the company's response to development and change, and employee is a crucial factor in the improvement of corporate innovation performance and overall innovation capability. The factors affecting innovative behavior can be divided into three levels: individual, groups and organizations [7], Such as the innovation requirements perceived, team atmosphere, human resource management practices. Studies have shown that the key to employee innovation behavior is the improvement and breakthrough of personal mental model. Coaching leadership emphasis on employee inspiration and emphasis on guiding employees to learn and solve problems independently will help improve mental model, which promotes innovative behavior. With the support of leaders, the open and interactive atmosphere created in organization will also provide more resources and help for employees to practice innovative ideas, and further promote employee innovation behavior. Therefore, this paper proposes the following research hypotheses:

H1: Coaching leadership has a positive impact on employee innovation behavior.

Work Motivation

Motivation is the core driving force that drives individuals to make specific behaviors. Work motivation stimulates individuals to conduct a series of behaviors related to job performance and determine the form, duration and intensity of these behaviors. The research on motivation in the organizational field can be traced back to the expectancy valence theory proposed by Vroom in 1964. Later, Porter and Lawler proposed a traditional motivation model, which divided the motivations into intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. At present, a large number of studies have confirmed that motivation can effectively predict employee's job performance, learning behavior, job adaptability, and job satisfaction [8]. More companies begin to pay attention to the motivation of employees and hope to improve organizational performance through more effective employee incentives.

Self-determination Theory is a motivation theory proposed by Deci and Ryan. Based on the research of traditional motivation model. It can be applied to many fields and has been widely recognized. SDT believes that motivation is a continuum, including external regulation, introjection, integration, identification and intrinsic. The process of transition from external regulation to intrinsic motivation is called "internalization" of motivation, that is, the degree of acceptance of the behavioral norms of individuals and the recognition of values [9]. Previous studies have found that the influencing factors of motivation mainly involve the characteristics of the task itself, interest needs and emotional factors, goal setting, motivation and feedback.

Coaching leaders emphasize encouragement and support to help employees discover and solve problems by themselves. At the same time, they decentralize their power and attach importance to the cultivation and professional development of employees so that they can get more chances in work. The level of employee's work skill will also be enhanced under the guidance of coaching leaders. On the one hand, employees' psychological needs for relatedness, competence and autonomy are met, thus showing strong interest and confidence in the activities, showing creativity and vitality promoting innovative behavior [10]. On the other hand, studies have shown that, the

flexibility and complexity of individual cognition will reach the highest level driven by motivation, the identification and analysis of the states will be more comprehensive, and more ideas can be proposed. Employees will have greater passion to participate in innovation activities and promote innovation. Therefore, this paper proposes the following assumptions:

H2a: Coaching leadership has a significant positive impact on work motivation.

H2b: Work motivation has a significant positive impact on innovative behavior.

H2c: Work motivation plays a mediating role in the relationship between coaching leadership and innovative behavior.

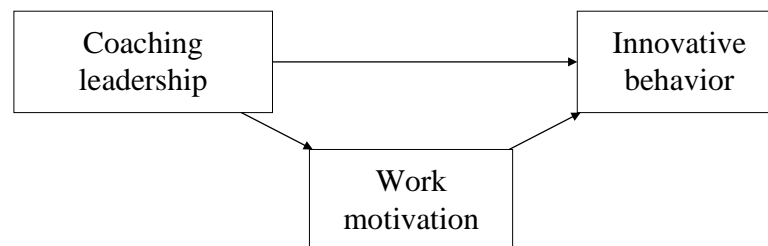


Fig. 1 Theoretical model

Method

This study used a questionnaire survey to collect data from EMU drivers in China, and a total of 342 paper questionnaires were distributed. 334 questionnaires were retrieved, and 320 valid questionnaires were selected. The effective recovery rate of the questionnaire was 93.6%. The basic situation of the sample was as follows: in terms of age, 88.1% of the respondents were between 26-35 years old, and 8.8% of the respondents were between 36-45 years old; in terms of academic level, high school or secondary school accounted for 14.1%, college graduates accounted for 71.3%, undergraduate and above accounted for 14.1%; in terms of working years, 1-5 years accounted for 25.6%, 6-10 years accounted for 58.8%, 11 years or more accounted for 14.4%.

Measures

All of the items were scored on 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 7(strongly agree).

Coaching leadership: using the single dimension scale developed by Ellinger (2003), 8 items. The scale has been widely used in empirical measurements on coaching leadership [1]. For example: "My supervisor uses analogies, scenarios, and examples to help me learn."

Work Motivation: using the scale compiled by Gagne (2010). There are 12 items in total and includes four dimensions. The internal consistency reliability of the four subscales in the English version are 0.89, 0.83, 0.75, 0.69 respectively. Specific items such as "I do this work because I enjoy this work very much."

Employee innovative behavior: using the scale compiled by Zhang Zhengang, which was revised on the basis of Zhou and Wang Yanfei, combined with the actual situation of Chinese enterprises. There are 8 items in total, and the internal consistency reliability is 0.844. For example, "I often recommend new ways of working in the company."

Data Processing and Analysis

Reliability Test and Common Method Biases Test

The reliability of questionnaire was tested using SPSS 22.0. The data showed that the overall Cronbach's α coefficient was 0.940, the Cronbach's α coefficient of the coaching leadership scale was 0.915, the Cronbach's α coefficient of the work motivation scale was 0.893, and the Cronbach's α coefficient of employee innovative behavior was 0.877. The AMOS 22 software was used to perform confirmatory factor analysis on the single factor model, the two-factor model and the

three-factor model, the results are shown in Table 1. The fitting index of the three-factor model ($\chi^2=91.282$, $df=51$, $\chi^2/df=1.79$, $CFI=0.964$, $TLI=0.953$, $RMSEA=0.07$, $SRMR=0.042$) is better than others. Based on this, the relationship between the coaching leadership, work motivation, and employees' innovative behavior is independent, which indicates that the questionnaire used in this study is efficient.

Table 1. Confirmatory factor analysis

model	X ²	df	X ² /df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
M1: JL+CX +DJ	370.595	54	6.86	0.717	0.655	0.191	0.094
M2: JL+DJ, CX	162.260	53	3.06	0.902	0.879	0.114	0.07
M3: JL, CX, DJ	91.282	51	1.79	0.964	0.953	0.07	0.042

Note: N=187, JL=coaching leadership, CX=innovative behavior, DJ=work motivation

In this study, the Harman single factor test was used to perform a common method deviation test on the collected data. When the eigenvalue is greater than 1 and not rotated, the first principal component load is 38.17%, which is lower than the highest standard of 40%. It indicates that the homology error of this study is within the acceptable range and will not have a significant impact on the analysis results.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

The matrix of mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient of each variable are shown in Table 2. Coaching leadership was significantly positively correlated with employee innovative behavior ($r=0.588$, $p<0.01$), and was significantly positively correlated with work motivation ($r=0.623$, $p<0.01$). The above results are in line with theoretical expectations and provide initial support for subsequent hypothesis testing.

Table 2. Descriptive statistical analysis table

	Mean	Standard deviation	Age	Working years	Academic level	Coaching leadership	Work motivation	Innovative behavior
Age	2.04	0.32	1					
Working years	2.88	0.62	0.497**	1				
Academic level	2.98	0.55	-0.275**	-0.227**	1			
Coaching leadership	5.57	0.89	-0.54*	0.028	0.134	1		
Work motivation	5.66	0.81	-0.089*	0.0091	0.105	0.623**	1	
Innovative behavior	5.32	0.93	-0.091	-0.077	0.186	0.588**	0.574 **	1

Note: N=187, * means $p<0.05$, ** means $p<0.01$

Hypothesis Test

In order to verify whether coaching leadership will positively influence work motivation and employee innovation behavior, this study uses multiple linear regression models to test hypothesis. The results are shown in Table 3. From model 1, the path coefficient between coaching leadership and innovation behavior is 0.60 ($p<0.001$), indicating that coaching leaders have a significant positive impact on innovation behavior, and hypothesis 1 is supported. Similarly, the path coefficient between and the innovative behavior is 0.66 ($p<0.001$) form Model 2, hypothesis 2b is supported. The mediating effect of work motivation was further tested by step-by-step regression. From model 5, the path coefficient between coaching leadership and work motivation is 0.56 ($p<0.001$), indicating that coaching leadership have a significant positive impact on job motivation, hypothesis 2a is supported; constructing Model 3 of the relationship between coaching leadership, work motivation and innovative behavior, in which the regression coefficient of work motivation is

0.39 ($p < 0.001$), and the coefficient of coach leadership is 0.38 ($p < 0.001$), which is smaller than the regression coefficient of 0.60 in model 1. Therefore, work motivation plays a part mediating the relationship between coaching leadership and innovative behavior, hypothesis 2c is supported.

Table 3. Hierarchical regression

	Innovative behavior				Work motivation
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	1.80 ^{**}	1.14	0.72	4.74 ^{***}	2.76 ^{***}
Age	0.01	0.08	0.07	-0.09	-0.17
Working years	-0.11	-0.10	-0.12	-0.03	0.04
Academic level	0.16	0.19	0.15	0.29 [*]	0.01
Coaching leadership	0.60 ^{***}		0.38 ^{***}		0.56 ^{***}
Work motivation		0.66 ^{***}	0.39 ^{***}		
ΔR^2	0.35 ^{***}	0.33 ^{***}		0.02 [*]	0.38 ^{***}
F	21.84 ^{***}	20.80 ^{***}		1.97 [*]	25.24 ^{***}

Note: N=187, * means $p < 0.05$, ** means $p < 0.01$, *** means $p < 0.001$

Discussion

As a new style of leadership in the field of organizational behavior that can improve the minds of employees, coaching leadership is widely concerned about the relationship between employees' innovative behaviors, but the academic community is not sufficient to

explore the intermediary mechanism between the two. The existing research focuses on the main effect of coaching leadership, and the research on the role of intermediaries is mostly in the field of psychological capital. Motivation is the most critical psychological factor affecting individual behavior, and its role should not be ignored. Therefore, this study attempts to construct a model of coaching leadership and innovative behavior based on work motivation as a mediator from the perspective of SDT, in order to make a contribution to follow-up theoretical research and enterprise practice management.

The study found that coaching leadership can significantly promote the occurrence of employee innovative behavior, and for the first time confirmed that work motivation plays a part in mediating role, which to a certain extent enriches society's coaching leadership and innovation behavior and its impact mechanism. Coaching leadership's active guidance, encouragement of cooperation, and emphasis on communication and other behaviors while improving the minds of employees, will also enhance their self-determination by meeting their own psychological needs. The greater enthusiasm of employees for work, more willing to take the initiative to participate in teamwork and missions, willing to actively explore problems and promote the occurrence of innovative behavior.

There are still deficiencies and limitations in this study. First, the study of data from the same data source, using the self-assessment method has certain limitations in its objectivity and accuracy. Future research may consider using leader and employee pairing survey methods to collect data and improve the accuracy of results. Secondly, this study only reveals the mediating role of work motivation, followers can expand relevant research from other theoretical perspectives. Third, this study does not consider the role of individual personality characteristics in the process of impact, such as individual values, regulatory focus. Future researchers may consider further research on the boundary conditions in the mechanism of coaching leadership and innovative behavior.

Conclusion

Based on the self-determination theory, this study conducts hierarchical regression analysis on 320 employee data. After controlling age, academic level and working years, it is found that coaching leaders can indirectly influence employee innovation behavior through work motivation, which plays a partial intermediary role.

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