Managerial Motivational Profiles: Composition, Antecedents, and Consequences

Laura M. Graves, Kristin L. Cullen, Houston F. Lester, Marian N. Ruderman and William A. Gentry

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Using a person-centered approach, we identified managers’ \((N = 321)\) motivational profiles and tested a model of the antecedents and consequences of these profiles. The profiles were based on four motivational types delineated by self-determination theory (i.e., external, introjected, identified, intrinsic). Latent profile analysis revealed six distinct motivational profiles. One of these was a self-determined profile (high identified and intrinsic motivation, moderately low introjected motivation, and low external motivation). Four other profiles combined average levels of external motivation with either very low, low, moderately low, or high internal (i.e., introjected, identified, and intrinsic) motivation. The final profile involved moderately high levels of all four motives. The antecedents of profile membership examined were perceived supervisor support and perceived organizational politics. The career-related outcomes of profile membership were work attitudes and promotability. The self-determined and high internal motivation profiles were associated with the most favorable work attitudes, followed by the moderately high motivation profile. The low internal motivation profiles were associated with the least favorable attitudes. Promotability did not differ across the profiles. With respect to the antecedents, low levels of supervisor support and high levels of politics increased the odds that a manager would exhibit profiles that were less desirable than the self-determined profile. Our findings provide initial information about managers’ motivational profiles, as well as the antecedents and consequences of these profiles. Further, these results demonstrate the promise of a person-centered approach for advancing motivation research and management development.