

Ethical Leadership Mediates Subordinates' Likeness for Leader and Affective Commitment to Squads among Police Cadets

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Abstract : There is a blur as to whether subordinates' sheer fondness for a leader or the ethical behaviours demonstrated by such a leader is what engenders subordinates' affective commitment to the group. This study aimed to depict and clarify that perceived ethical leadership by subordinates outweighs their likeness for a leader in determining their level of affective commitment to the group using a sample of police cadets. Subordinate cadets were asked to rate the ethical leadership behaviours displayed by their cadet Leaders; their likeness for their leaders and also rate their own affective commitment to their squads (N = 252, Mean Age = 22.70, Age range = 17 to 29 years, SD = 2.264, 75% males). A mediation analysis was conducted to test hypotheses. Results showed that there was a significant indirect effect between likeness for leaders and affective commitment through ethical leadership behaviour (b = .734, 95% BCa CI [.413, 1.146], p = .000); and a nonsignificant direct effect between likeness for leader and subordinates' affective commitment (b = .526, 95% BCa CI [-.106, 1.157], p = .10), this indicated a full mediation. The results strongly suggested that the positive relationship between subordinates' likeness for their leaders and their affective commitment to the squad is produced by perceived leaders' ethical behaviours. Therefore, leaders should exhibit and prioritize ethical behaviours over the need to be liked by their subordinates to guarantee their affective commitment to group goals and aspirations.

Keywords : affective commitment, ethical leadership, leader cadets, likeness for leader, subordinate cadets

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