

The Oppressive Boss and Employees' Authoritarianism: The Relation between Suppression of Voice by Employers and Employees' Preferences for Authoritarian Political Leadership

Authors : Antonia Stanojević, Agnes Akkerman

Abstract : In contemporary society, economically active people typically spend most of their waking hours doing their job. Having that in mind, this research examines how socialization at the workplace shapes political preferences. Innovatively, it examines, in particular, the possible relationship between employees' voice suppression by the employer and the formation of their political preferences. Since the employer is perceived as an authority figure, their behavior might induce spillovers to attitudes about political authorities and authoritarian governance. Therefore, a positive effect of suppression of voice by employers on employees' preference for authoritarian governance is expected. Furthermore, this relation is expected to be mediated by two mechanisms: system justification and power distance. Namely, it is expected that suppression of voice would create a power distance organizational climate and increase employees' acceptance of unequal distribution of power, as well as evoke attempts of oppression rationalization through system justification. The hypotheses will be tested on the data gathered within the first wave of Work and Politics Dataset 2017 (N=6000), which allows for a wide range of demographic and psychological control variables. Although a cross-sectional analysis to be used at this point does not allow for causal inferences, the confirmation of expected relationships would encourage and justify further longitudinal research on the same panel dataset, in order to get a clearer image of the causal relationship between employers' suppression of voice and workers' political preferences.

Keywords : authoritarian values, political preferences, power distance, system justification, voice suppression

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