Impact of a health promoting leadership intervention on emotional self-efficacy and work engagement

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Self-efficacy in organizational settings

Vast support for positive outcomes in everyday work life

- Commitment
- Control
- Goal setting
- Mood
- Motivation
- Performance
- Well-being

About self-efficacy beliefs:
"Among psychological structures attesting to individuals’ agentic power, none has proved to exert a more pervasive influence over thought, motivation and action than people’s judgments about their capacity to cope effectively with life challenges and to face demanding situations" – Caprara, ECP, 2013
Previous research on self-efficacy training

- Reemployment (Eden & Aviram, 1993)

Looking at the unemployed who initially had low self-efficacy in both experiment- and control group two months after the self-efficacy training:

- 23% in the control group were reemployed
- 63% in the experiment group were reemployed

For those with high initial self-efficacy – no significant differences between control- (82%) and experimental group (63%)
To investigate changes in occupational emotional self-efficacy before and after an intervention and how it may affects work engagement of employees.
Research questions and hypotheses

1. Are there differences between the intervention- and control group in emotional self-efficacy?
   Hyp 1. The intervention group is expected to obtain an increase in emotional self-efficacy from T1 to T2

2. Are there differences in work engagement between the intervention- and control group?
   Hyp 2. The intervention group is expected to have higher level of work engagement than the control group after the intervention

3. Who benefits from participating in the intervention, in terms of well being (work engagement) when comparing individuals with initial low and high emotional self-efficacy?
   Hyp 3. Individuals with low initial emotional self-efficacy benefit the most from participating in the intervention
Longitudinal study, including an intervention/control group design

Involve team members

Regular team meetings used for workshops, observations and feedback

Action plans based on questionnaire results

Leaders get support from other leaders

Involve different activities (lectures, workshops, observation, feedback, coaching, diary writing to increase self reflection)

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1. Theoretical background  
2. Aim  
3. Hypothesis  
3. Method  
4. Results  
5. Discussion
## Sample size at T1 and T2

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>1258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>1320</td>
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Measures used

- **Dependent variable**
  - Well being (Work engagement – Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006)
  - Emotional self-efficacy

- **Independent variables:**
  - Emotional self-efficacy (low/high)
  - Group (control/intervention)
  - Time (T1/T2)

- **Control variable:**
  - Country (Germany/Sweden)
Occupational emotional self-efficacy

- Definition: *An employee’s confidence in his or her ability to perceive, understand, regulate and use emotional information at work*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Other-oriented</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 (perceive)</td>
<td>Correctly identify when other people are feeling negative emotions at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (understand)</td>
<td>Realize what causes other people to feel negative emotions at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (regulate)</td>
<td>Help other people at work tackle their negative emotions</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 (facilitate)</td>
<td>Help other people at work get into the mood that best suits the situation</td>
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Emotional self-efficacy at T1 and T2

Covariate: Country (Germany/Sweden)
Main effect for Time (p < .001, $\eta^2 = .059$)
Main effect for Group (P < .05, $\eta^2 = .004$)
Interaction effect for Time x Group (p < 0.001, $\eta^2 = .028$)

Hypothesis 1
Work engagement at T1 and T2

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Covariate: Country (Germany/Sweden)
No Main effect for Time
Main effect for Group (P < .001, $\eta^2 = 0.010$)
No Interaction effect for Time x Group

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Work engagement at T2 among Experimental and Control participants of Low and High initial emotional self-efficacy (T1)

![Graph showing work engagement at T2 among Experimental and Control participants of Low and High initial emotional self-efficacy (T1).]

Scale 0-6

Covariate: Country (Germany/Sweden)
Main effect for Emotional self-efficacy (p < .05, η² = 0.004)
Main effect for Group (P < .001, η² = 0.013)
Interaction effect for Time x Group (p < 0.05, η² = 0.005)
Conclusions

The intervention seems to have had an influence on the participants level of emotional self-efficacy in a positive direction.

The intervention group had higher levels of work engagement both at T1 and T2.

Individuals with low initial emotional self-efficacy seems to benefit the most from participating in the intervention.
Limitations and implications

Limitations:
● Initial differences between intervention and control group
● Self-reported data
● It was not a self-efficacy training program

Implications
1. Emotional self-efficacy can be useful in applied psychological research and it seems that planned interventions can alter it in a positive direction
2. Some training methods work better for some individuals due to their level of self-efficacy – individuals with low confidence in certain areas could be the ones that benefits the most
3. For leaders it could be desirable paying extra attention to employees with lower emotional self-efficacy
Thank you for your attention!

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Re-Su-Lead web page
www.uta.fi/projects/resulead
Appendix

- Literature


The Re-Su-Lead project is a collaboration between researchers from the University of Leipzig (Germany), University of Mälardalen (Sweden), and University of Tampere (Finland) – funded by national authorities within the NEW-OSH-ERA-framework.

**General Aims and Goals:**

- How can rewarding, sustainable health promoting leadership be described and measured?
- Explore causal links, processes, and important moderating, and mediating variables linking leadership behavior with employees' health and well-being.
- Develop an intervention program to enhance health promoting leadership and evaluate it in two countries (Germany and Sweden).
- Investigate cultural, and gender differences.