
Followers' Active Engagement: Between Personal and Organizational Dimensions

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✎ **ABSTRACT.** Il contributo presenta una ricerca sul tema della followership nelle organizzazioni, proponendosi di individuare alcuni possibili antecedenti del coinvolgimento attivo dei follower nella relazione con il leader. La ricerca, che ha coinvolto 390 soggetti provenienti da diversi contesti lavorativi, mette in evidenza il ruolo di alcune dimensioni personali (strategie di coping e apertura all'esperienza) e organizzative (comportamenti di cittadinanza organizzativa) nelle dinamiche di followership, e consente di formulare importanti indicazioni per le politiche di gestione delle risorse umane e, nello specifico, per la formazione aziendale.

✎ **SUMMARY.** *Introduction:* An increasing number of scholars argue that followers are a precondition for "successful" organizations. Nevertheless, followership has received scant attention in the literature. Starting from a theoretical analysis of the issue, this contribution aims to answer some questions regarding possible antecedents of *Followers' Active Engagement (FAE)*, a specific followership behavior described by Kelley (1988, 1992), described in previous works, which implies the propensity to take initiative, participate actively and be self-starters. *Methods.* A questionnaire was administered to 390 respondents from heterogeneous work settings. The questionnaire includes a personal data section and eight measures: FAE; three personal/dispositional variables (extraversion, intellect, and avoiding coping), three individual-organization interaction variables (organizational citizenship behaviors directed at individuals – OCBI – and the organization – OCBO –, leader-member exchange), and a Lie scale as control variable. Data was analyzed with PASW 18. After analyzing reliability and descriptives, the relationship between the variables was explored using correlations and hierarchical multiple regression. *Results.* FAE is related to six variables (25% explained variance). Three were positively related: in decreasing order, OCBO, intellect, OCBI, and Lie scale. Conversely, avoiding coping and gender were negatively related. Gender becomes significant only in the second step of the regression when dispositional variables are included. *Conclusions.* This study adds to the understanding of followers' Active Engagement, for example by measuring some organizational dimensions as its antecedents, and has practical implications for training and human resource management policies. Further studies should clarify the dynamics that influence followers' behavior and the dynamics of the mutual relationship between the leader's and followers' behavior, shedding light on the possible consequences for the organization, in terms of quality of work life and productivity.

Keywords: *Followership, Active Engagement, Leadership*
