

Abstract

This study explored individual- and macroscopic- level consequences of supervisors' use of influence tactics. Influence tactics were factor analyzed and were divided into forcing and non-forcing types. Two hundred Hong Kong white-collar employees were asked to assess the types of influence tactics employed by their direct supervisors and to also report on hypothesized outcomes, including their perception of their supervisors' managerial competence, their satisfaction with their supervisors and their perception of organizational politics in their workplaces. As predicted, regression analyses suggested that supervisors' use of non-forcing influence tactics increases subordinates' perception of their managerial competence, both directly and indirectly through the mediator of their satisfaction with their supervisors. Supervisors' use of non-forcing tactics was also found to reduce subordinates' perception of organizational politics. Generally, non-forcing tactics was found to have a superior effect over forcing tactics in shaping subordinates' attitudes and perceptions about their supervisors and organizations. Forcing tactics, as contrasted with non-forcing ones, appeared to have little effect on outcomes measured. The superior effect of non-forcing influence tactics and the negligible impact of forcing influence tactics are discussed within a Chinese context. Supervisors' use of forcing influence tactics is regarded as ineffective in affecting subordinates' behaviors in Chinese organizations. Implications and suggestions on how supervisors might be trained as effective non-forcing influencers, who are adept at using ingratiation, rationality, exchange and coalition, are provided.