

**The role of identity leadership in promoting collective action:**

**A social identity approach**

by

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## Declaration

I, Nonhlanhla Khumalo (student number 55665780), declare that *The role of identity leadership in promoting collective action: A social identity approach* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

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## Summary

Due to the rise of social protests in South Africa, it is crucial to study how collective action is organised towards common group goals. In the present research, collective action was conceptualised as the social pattern of group members who give priority to the goals of the group over their own individual goals (Triandis, 1995, p. 2). Based on previous research, the present studies asked whether in-group identification influences collective action indirectly via identity leadership and whether this mediated relationship is dependent on social group context (i.e., political party, civic society, workgroup). Three studies were conducted which aimed to address this question. Study 1 replicated the four dimensional structure of the identity leadership inventory, but also indicated that the dimensions had strong intercorrelations. Study 2 found that identity leadership mediated the relationship between in-group identification and collective action in two group contexts (e.g., civic society and workgroup). Study 3 replicated the results of Study 2. Moreover it was found that the aforementioned mediation was indeed conditional on social group context. Implications of the present research are outlined in detail, with regards to the current discourses on collective action and identity leadership.

Keywords: Collective action, identity leadership, social protest, leadership, social identity, social context

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## **Abstract**

Based on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011), the present research addressed the question of how collective action is coordinated. Three studies are reported, which address the interplay between in-group identification, identity leadership and collective action in three social group contexts (i.e., political parties, civic society and workgroup). The results of Study 1 replicated that identity leadership is a four dimensional construct. However, these four dimensions had strong intercorrelations. Study 2 and 3 supported the hypotheses that the more people identify with the group, the more they will engage in collective action (Hypothesis 1) and in-group identification results in the perception of identity leadership which, in turn leads to collective action in certain group contexts (Hypothesis 2-5). Study 3 demonstrated that the relationship between in-group identification and collective action, via identity leadership is indeed context dependent (Hypothesis 6). Implications of the current research are outlined in relation to the discourse on collective action and identity leadership.

## Introduction

Social protests have a long history in South Africa. Social protesting is a way in which people show their discontent and grievance, and is fuelled by a need to change social conditions (van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010) such as intergroup injustice. As Desmond Tutu put it, “if you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor” (cited from Brown, 1984, p. 19). South Africans have always felt the need to stand up collectively to overcome social injustice and thus improve their social conditions. Historically, this was done in the form of anti-apartheid protests, which aimed to address intergroup injustices and inequalities. A case in point was the 1976 Soweto Uprising which resulted in nationwide mobilisations of people. The Soweto Uprising started as protests by students against the apartheid government’s language policy, but soon became a revolt against the entire apartheid system (Kane-Berman, 2015). Forty years later South Africa is having student protests again, in the form of “Rhodes must fall” and “Fees must fall” movements. However, the current protests differ from the anti-apartheid protests in that they are not predominantly based on intergroup conflict but rather on in-group goals as they are fuelled by the need to improve group conditions.

McKinley (2004) argued that the new social movements in South Africa have arisen out of direct opposition to certain state policies and actions which are not representative of democracy itself; and because of this, people feel the need to mobilise and to act as a collective. Social movements represent alternative avenues for democratic expression where people feel as though they are not heard. For instance, in many poor and marginalised South African communities, people might only experience a meaningful democracy through social movement participation. Thus, it might not be surprising that social protests have been on the rise in South Africa since the first democratic election in 1994. Alexander, Runciman and Maruping (2015) showed, based on the South African Police Service’s Incident Registration

Information System, that the majority (90 %) of the 156,230 “crowd incidents” that occurred between 1997 and 2013 were peaceful events and most importantly, the number of peaceful “crowd incidents” increased steadily during this period. For instance, incidents that were related to labour issues went up from 1952 incidents in 1997 to 2579 incidents in 2013; community issues (including transport, crime and policing) went up from 1780 to 2880 in the same period; educational issues from 184 to 264, and incidents related to elections and political parties went from 63 to 426. Only crowd incidents related to racism and xenophobia decreased from 44 to 26 in the same period (Alexander et al., 2015). As these examples suggest, collective discontent is expressed by different groups of people and within different contexts, be it political, civic, organisational, or labour related. Given the eminent role of social protests within the current South African context it is pertinent to extend our understanding of collective action. Consequently, the present research aims to contribute to this need by addressing the overall question of how collective action is coordinated in the service of group goals.

The question as to what mobilises people to initiate or participate in social protest has mainly been studied through two social psychological approaches. The one perspective conceptualises social protest as intergroup conflict and thus aims to understand what causes collective action aimed at addressing intergroup inequalities. The other perspective conceptualises social protest as social movement and thus aims to understand what causes collective action in the service of group goals (see van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008; Simon et al., 1998; Klandermans, 1984). In the following these two perspectives will briefly be discussed.

## **Two social psychological perspectives on social protest**

Social psychological research, that conceptualises social protest as intergroup conflict, has identified among others three important psychological variables: perceived injustice, perceived group efficacy and a sense of social identity (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008. p. 505). Perceived injustice refers to people's subjective sense of disadvantage which does not necessarily need to correspond with objective conditions (van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010). Research on perceived injustice as a predictor of collective action is derived mainly from relative deprivation theory (Runciman, 1966). Relative deprivation theory proposes that the subjective perception of deprivation results from either social comparison processes with relevant others or over time. More precisely, fraternal (or group-based) rather than egoistic (interpersonal) deprivation experiences predict collective action on the one hand, and on the other hand the affective rather than cognitive components of relative deprivation predict collective action (see van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). Relative deprivation theory is not only considered as one of the classical theories of collective action but also as a grievance theory, since it is assumed that people participate in collective action to express a grievance/unfair treatment which results from perceived injustice or relative deprivation (van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010).

In the 1970s scholars increasingly started to question the direct effects of grievances/perceived injustice on collective action (see van Zomeren, Postmes, Spears, 2008). Although, there is agreement that perceived injustice is a necessary condition for people to act collectively, there is equal agreement that it is not sufficient on its own. Equally important seems to be the condition of perceived group efficacy which refers to people's shared belief that one's group can resolve the grievance and/or achieve justice through unified efforts (Mummendey, Kessler, Klink, & Mielke, 1999). Thus, perceived group efficacy gives people a sense of "we" power and thus the certainty that they can collectively

change and/or transform their current situation. For instance, for people to believe that political change is possible, they need to believe that political actions can impact the political process, which refers to political efficacy (van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010). Political efficacy has two dimensions: internal and external. Internal political efficacy refers to the extent to which someone believes in politics and therefore participates in political activities, whereas external political efficacy refers to the citizens' faith and trust in political leadership and the government (van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010). For instance, Lubell (2002) stressed the importance of external political efficacy because if citizens do not trust the decisions of government leaders and elected officials they might believe that their grievances will fall on deaf ears and this might discourage them from acting collectively.

That people are able to experience fraternal (or group-based) deprivation as a result of perceived injustice and envision that they could change the situation through unified effort, requires that they share a sense of social identity, which is also considered as the “conceptual bridge” between perceived injustice and group efficacy (see Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). The concept of social identity derives from social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) which proposes that people apply social identity management strategies to maintain or restore their positive social identity, which might be questioned as a result of comparison processes with relevant out-groups with regard to salient comparison dimensions. Depending on whether intergroup boundaries and intergroup differences are perceived as permeable, (un)stable and (il)legitimate, people might apply either individual (e.g., social mobility) or collective strategies (e.g., collective action, see Ellemers, 1993). Collective action as a social identity management strategy is most likely to occur when people perceive intergroup differences as unstable and/or illegitimate (Ellemers, 1993). Thus collective action is a strategy to achieve social change which is based on the belief that the only way to move

from a disadvantaged position is with the group as a whole (Tajfel, 1981; Simon, et al., 1998).

The second perspective of social protest conceptualises collective action as social movement participation to improve group conditions. According to Simon and colleagues (1998) one of the ways in which people take part in collective action is through social movements. There are various reasons why people join social movements. There could be individual experiences or motives that lead people to engage in collective action. One theoretical explanation for individual motives promoting collective action is the expectancy value theory of social movement participation and mobilisation (Klandermans, 1984). This theory suggests that people's willingness to participate in collective action is a function of weighing the perceived costs against the benefits of participation. The theory asserts that what is important to people are the expected outcomes of the behaviour and the value of these outcomes. Those who participate in social movements perceive participation as a means to reaching valued goals (Klandermans, 1984). This approach, which conceptualises a person who participates in collective action as someone who weighs costs and benefits, has however been criticised as rather individualistic (Simon et al., 1998).

An alternative explanation is that people engage in collective action through social movements to improve the conditions of the in-group (Deaux, Reid, Martin, & Bikmen, 2006). Again, through identification with a group, people engage collectively to change in-group conditions (Simon et al., 1998). Social identification is conceptualised here as the basic social psychological process underlying collective action. Moreover, "[...] social movements should be understood on the psychological level as efforts by large numbers of people who define themselves and are also often defined by others as a group to solve collectively a problem they feel they have in common" (Tajfel 1981, cited in Simon et al., 1998, p. 647).

The two outlined social psychological perspectives on social protest are not in contradiction to each other. Both stress the role of grievances for social protest to occur as well as the role of in-group identification. However, the differences might lie in the focus of the outcome. Social protest resulting from grievances related to intergroup conflicts might aim at changing the intergroup relations, while social protest resulting from grievances related to in-group conditions might aim at improving those in-group conditions without necessarily changing the in-group's status relative to an out-group (Deaux et al., 2006). Therefore, the definition of collective action used in the present research is more in line with the understanding of Triandis who defined it as “[...] a social pattern of closely linked individuals who are willing to give priority to the goals of the group over their own personal goals” (Triandis, 1995, p. 2).

### **The role of in-group identification**

Identification with a social group is a well-known predictor of collective action (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008; Simon et al., 1998; Deaux et al., 2006, Blader, 2007, De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999). In-group identification can be described as the values and emotional significance tied to a specific group membership (Kawakami & Dion, 1995). It is not surprising that identification with a social group is relevant for collective action, because the very concept of collective action indicates a behaviour that individuals undertake collectively with other group members, and thus the definition already implies some degree of social identification (De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999).

Correlative and experimental research on in-group identification and collective action has been conducted in different social contexts (e.g., gays and senior citizens, see Simon et al., 1998; farmers, see De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999; trade unions, see Blader, 2007, and Cregan, Bartram, & Stanton, 2009); it addressed possible inter-individual difference variables

such as shared beliefs (Deaux et al., 2006); and it controlled for possible competing variables such as perceived injustice and group efficacy (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). These studies showed for instance, that the influence of in-group identification on collective action depends on whether the group is transformed to a more politicised form and participants adopted a distinct “activist identity” (Simon et al., 1998, van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013). Similar results were found in the longitudinal study by De Weerd and Klandermans (1999) who showed that identification with an abstract social category (i.e., farmers in general) had no impact on collective action, but identification on a more concrete level (i.e., farmers on a national or regional level) had a significant effect due to the politicising of these groups. Consequently, the concreteness of the social category and the degree to which these social categories are politicised are important for collective actions to occur.

The relationship between in-group identification and collective action also depends on inter-individual differences as well as situational factors. For instance, Deaux et al. (2006) showed that inter-individual differences in social orientations (e.g., support for status inequalities – i.e., Social Dominance Orientation; and support for diversity – i.e., multiculturalism) predicted people’s willingness to engage in collective action via in-group identification. Moreover, the paths in the mediation models predicting collective action varied depending on group status. For instance, members of high status groups, who supported inequalities (i.e., high on SDO), were more likely to identify with their in-group, which in turn predicted willingness to act collectively. On the other hand, social diversity beliefs did not have an effect on members of high status groups at all (Deaux et al., 2006). In contrast, members of low status groups, who rejected social inequality beliefs (i.e., low on SDO), were most likely to identify with their in-group, which again predicted intentions to act collectively. Lastly, members of low status groups’ support for social diversity predicted



stronger identification which in turn predicted collective action (Deaux et al., 2006). The interplay between in-group identification and inter-individual differences was also shown by van Zomeren, Spears and Leach (2008), who found that high identifiers were motivated to engage in collective action to achieve social change whereas low identifiers only engaged in collective action when they anticipated that their participation will have a positive impact on their individual situation.

Previous research has not only shown that in-group identification may indeed lead to collective action but also that this relationship can possibly be found in different social groups and for different social contexts (e.g., farmers, see Simon et al., 1998; trade unions, see De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999, Blader, 2007, and Cregan et al., 2009; low and high status groups, see Deaux et al., 2006). Consequently, the basic assumption on which the present research is based is that the more people identify with a relevant in-group, the more they will be prepared to engage in collective action on behalf of that group (Hypothesis 1).

Kelly (1993) argued that social identity leads to collective behaviour because social identity processes may give rise to social influence. Group identification plays a role in determining how group members respond to social influence. Moreover, their response depends on whether the source of influence is an in-group or out-group member (Kelly, 1993). The stronger one identifies with the in-group the more one is likely to resist out-group influence and the more one is likely to accept social influence coming from the in-group (Kelly, 1993).

### **The role of leadership for collective action**

Leadership is often understood as “[...] a process of social influence, through which an individual enlists and mobilises the aid of others in the attainment of collective goals” (Chemers, 2001, p. 376). Leadership is not merely about getting people to do things, but

about getting people to want to do these things. In this way, a successful leader can shape the motivations, desires and beliefs of others (Haslam et al., 2011). This understanding of leadership corresponds with Kurt Lewin's proposal of the shift to democratic leadership which he defined as "[...] a positive change of the type of motivation behind the action, a shift from imposed goals to goals which the group has set for itself" (Lewin, 1944, p. 197). Moreover, Lewin (1944) already noted that any role of a leader would not be successful without followers playing a complementary role to a particular kind of leadership. In the past and currently, the master problem of social and organisational psychology as well as other social science disciplines, is the question of how leaders' wishes or ideas are translated into follower's efforts (Haslam & Platow, 2001).

Research on leadership in the 20<sup>th</sup> century focused mainly on personality measures which would assist organisations to identify future leaders (Haslam et al., 2011). Particularly after World War 2, numerous studies were conducted to establish personality correlates of leadership. One example is the study conducted by Stogdill (1948), in which he compiled a review of 124 studies. Based on these studies, he argued that five factors play a role in the development of leadership: (1) capacity (e.g., intelligence, alertness); (2) achievement (e.g., scholarship, knowledge); (3) responsibility (e.g., dependability, initiative); (4) participation (e.g., activity, sociability); and (5) status (e.g., socio-economic status, popularity; see Stogdill, 1948, p. 64; see also Haslam et al., 2011, p. 8). While there is evidence that personality traits explain some variance in leadership, they were found to be comparatively poor correlates (Hogg, 2001).

The personality approaches of the 1960s are what Haslam and colleagues (2011) have characterized as individualistic understandings of leadership, because such approaches focused on individual traits in order to understand leadership. Inherent to such approaches is the assumption that leadership is a process whereby leaders act in isolation. Already Sheriff

(1966, cited in Hogg, 2001, p. 185) amongst others, suggested that leadership is situational, and that almost anyone can be an effective leader if the circumstances are right. The situational aspects of leadership were addressed in a range of theoretical approaches since the mid-1960s. For instance, Fiedler's contingency theory (1965) which permeated mainstream research in both social and organisational psychology (Thomas, Martin, & Riggio, 2013), proposed an interactionist model which is still well supported in various scientific communities today. According to Fiedler's approach, leadership can only be effective if a particular behavioural style matches or corresponds to the situation or to the group that is being led (Hogg, 2001; Thomas et al., 2013).

Similarly, the leader member exchange theory (Graen, Novak, & Sommerkamp, 1982), which was among the first theories in organisational psychology, emphasised that leadership is not merely a hierarchical process; instead it is a mutual relationship between leaders and followers where each have an impact on the other (Thomas et al., 2013). The leader member exchange theory is based on the notion of a negotiated role by arguing that members of an organisation perform their duties through roles, and therefore it is necessary to study the nature of the different roles in organisations (Dienesch & Liden, 1986).

Another perspective which emerged from organisational psychology was the transactional leadership approach (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1990). This approach states that leadership is a product of transactions between leaders and followers. Leaders play a great role in helping followers to achieve their goals and to perform better on their tasks; whereas followers in turn give power and status to leaders (see Hogg, 2001). Bass (1990) argued that there was a shift in management style in that managers could no longer rely on their authoritative power; neither could they depend on their coercive power to influence subordinates. Instead leadership was characterised by a relationship where managers

explained the expectations required from followers and the compensation that they would receive if they completed the expected duties. Transactional leadership is characterized by managers who reward employees who perform well (by satisfying their self-interest) and penalize or discipline those who do not perform (Bass, 1990). Transactional leadership, however, can be ineffective especially if the manager has no control over rewards and incentives that are promised to the employees. In most organisations “[...] pay increases depend mostly on seniority, and promotions depend on qualifications and policies” (Bass, 1990, p. 21). Moreover, transactional relationship depends on whether employees are interested in the rewards associated with good performance or whether they are afraid of the penalties associated with not performing.

A more recent perspective on transactional leadership is transformational leadership which asserts that effective leaders motivate followers to move beyond self-interest and to work for collective goals (Bass, 1997; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). While transactional leaders reward the self-interest of employees, transformational leaders are said to encourage followers to focus on the purpose and goals of the group (Bass, 1990, p. 21). To achieve these results, transformational leaders need to possess certain personality traits and skills, such as having charisma, having the ability to inspire others, being able to intellectually stimulate their followers and having the ability to give individual attention to their employees by coaching and providing advice (Bass, 1990, p. 22).

Transformational leadership does not replace the idea that leadership is transactional between leaders and followers, however it argues that for leaders to be effective, they should also be transformational, meaning that they should enhance followers’ “motivation, understanding, maturity and sense of self-worth” (Bass, 1997, p. 130). While transactional leadership may be limited to short term goals, thus focusing on the exchange of resources between leaders and followers, transformational leadership focuses on “higher order intrinsic

needs” (Judge & Piccolo, 2004, p. 755). Transformational leadership is currently one of the more dominant leadership approaches. Proponents of this approach argue that it is universal and can be applied in any context.

The transformational leadership approach has also received a lot of attention in the South African context. For instance, Denton and Vloeberghs (2003) suggested that a new type of leadership was needed in the period after apartheid because organisations were going through a transitional phase. They asserted that transformational leaders would be effective as they are “future oriented in vision and strategy, aligning their people with this vision, while motivating and inspiring them to achieve it” (Denton & Vloeberghs, 2003, p. 93). In line with this thinking, Visser, de Coning and Smit (2005) argued that small and medium enterprises (SME’s) in South Africa need to incorporate transformational leadership values into their businesses in order to be more innovative and to be able to compete both locally and on a global level. The interplay between leadership style and the special qualities a leader should possess was also addressed in South African research. For instance, van Eeden, Cilliers and van Deventer (2008) reported that managers who practiced a transformational leadership style were likely to have average to high scores in traits such as strategic thinking, they were more innovative and evaluated information critically, they were also more resilient and ambitious. In contrast, transactional leaders were reported to be passive and lacked involvement with others (van Eden et al., 2008). The assumed interplay between leadership style and leader qualities in the form of personality traits and skills might have inspired Glad and Blanton (1997) to suggest that the former South African presidents Frederik W. de Klerk and Nelson R. Mandela were in actual fact transformational leaders because they were able to negotiate a peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy for their followers based on their vision of a new South Africa.

Transformational leadership is an approach that aims to understand individual, group and organisational effectiveness. Moreover, the transformational leadership approach makes certain assumptions about leaders and followers. Firstly, transformational leaders are those who have certain “special” qualities such as charisma, courage, vision and the ability to influence others (Denton & Vloeberghs, 2003). Secondly, followers are seen as passive and bound by self-interest. Therefore, they need to be guided and motivated by a leader to achieve group goals. Although this approach seems to recognise that followership is an important aspect of successful leadership, Yukl (1999) asserts that it is conceptually vague with regard to the underlying influence processes (p. 287) and conceptually ambiguous because of its complexity (p. 289 ). Thus, according to Yukl (1999), the transformational leadership approach lacks theoretical clarity on how influence processes occur between leaders and followers and between leaders and organisational processes.

Recent research within the tradition of transformational leadership aimed to address Yukl’s (1999) critique by systematically studying the interplay between transformational leadership behaviour and personal and social identity processes (see for instance, Tse & Chiu, 2014). Most important for the present study is the work of Cregan et al. (2009) who addressed the relationship between transformational leadership and collectivism (conceptualised as loyalty towards and willingness to serve the in-group) by arguing that transformational leaders create and develop an in-group member’s identification with the in-group which in turn influences in-group members’ collectivism (p. 705). The data that was collected within a trade union context supported this assumption. The study by Cregan et al. (2009) is the only study to our knowledge that investigated the impact of social identity and perceptions of transformational leadership on group members’ willingness to serve the in-group.

The outlined leadership models, which define leaders as possessing certain inherent qualities, have been criticised by social psychologists like Haslam et al. (2011), who argued that such perspectives undermine the fact that behaviour is always specific to a particular context. Moreover, they argued that there is a problem with models based on a leader's charisma because it is a 'trait' that seems to accumulate over time (Haslam et al., 2011). For instance, perceptions of a leader's charisma have been shown to increase even after the leader's death (Donley & Winter, 1970). Thus, charisma seems to be a characteristic that followers attribute or confer onto a leader and not necessarily, a trait found within leaders themselves (Steffens, Peters, Haslam, & van Dick, 2016). Therefore, the argument that charisma is a 'trait' that is inherent to the individual, is problematic; which makes its empirical assessment questionable (see also Haslam et al., 2011). Consequently, for leaders to be successful, they need to behave in ways that are in line with follower's expectations and thus perform according to leadership stereotypes held by followers (Haslam et al., 2011).

Haslam et al. (2011) as well as Hogg (2001) further assert that although most leadership approaches recognise that leaders and followers are important in the process of leadership; they lack a real analysis of how leadership develops from processes that are related to the psychological belonging to a group. These critiques by social psychologists seem to correspond with the observation by Thomas et al. (2013, p. 7) who stated that "mainstream social psychology had rekindled its interest in leadership (and group phenomena)" by the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century when the question of how the wishes or ideas of leaders are translated into followers' efforts once again became important in social psychological research. This renaissance was characterised by the development of new theoretical leadership approaches. Of particular importance for the present research is the social identity approach to leadership which has recently been introduced to explain how

leadership emerges from and influences the group (Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014).

### **Social identity approach to leadership**

According to Haslam and colleagues (2011) social identity and the distinction between “we” and “they” lies at the heart of the psychology of leadership, because in order to understand the process of leadership one must first comprehend the process of how individuals come to identify with the social groups to which they belong. The process of how psychological group memberships are formed is outlined in self-categorisation theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, Wetherell, 1987) which builds on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). One of the assumptions of self-categorisation theory is that individual’s self-concepts are comprised of cognitive self-categorisations. People are able to perceive themselves as unique individuals who are unlike any one else which refers to their personal identity. On the other hand, people are also able to perceive themselves as being similar to all other humans. All other in-group and out-group self-categorisations are placed between these two ends of the continuum, such as man/woman, mother/father, and South African/non-South African. Self-categorisation theory further assumes that when any given social identity is salient, people go through the psychological process of depersonalisation whereby they perceive themselves as group members and not as unique individuals. Depersonalisation makes all group processes possible such as group cooperation, social influence and leadership (Turner et al., 1987). Consequently, leadership is exercised through in-group based influences and therefore, the concept of leadership cannot be divorced from the group which informs the simple observation that there cannot be a leader without followers (Platow, Haslam, Reicher, & Steffens, 2015, p. 20).



Turner (2005) argued that the development of a social identity is what gives rise to social influence because group members share the same values and norms which enable them to influence each other. This influence then enables group members to act as an organised body and thus as a collective (Turner, 2005). Therefore, leaders only gain influence “by representing, standing for, believing in and working for others” (Turner, 2005, p. 19) and not because they have access to resources. In contrast to what other leadership models may suggest, leadership – according to the social identity approach to leadership - is not something that is inherently in a position or a person.

The social identity approach to leadership further argues that successful leadership, as a process of social influence, involves making followers want to contribute to shared goals. Leaders might achieve this follower contribution by exercising influence on them through four psychological dimensions (Haslam et al., 2011). The first psychological dimension refers to what a leader *should be*, namely prototypical of the in-group. The other three dimensions refer to what a leader *should do*, namely to advance in-group needs, to create identity and to build lived structures that are not only visible to the in-group but also to out-group members (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). In the following section, the four identity leadership dimensions will be introduced and discussed in detail, including their function in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action.

### *Identity Prototypicality*

Leaders are increasingly effective in mobilising or influencing followers to the extent that they represent group characteristics (van Knippenberg, 2011), that is to say, that they embody the prototypical attitudes, behaviours, and values of the group (Hornsey, 2008). However, prototypicality for leaders does not refer to the embodiment of the average characteristics of the group but rather refers to the leader as an ideal or exemplary group

member (van Knippenberg, 2011). Leader prototypicality induces trust from followers in that they trust that the leader has the best interests of the group at heart and that s/he will advance those group interests (van Knippenberg, 2011).

The more an in-group member is perceived as prototypical by other group members, the more s/he can influence others in the group (Turner, 2005). However, van Knippenberg (2011) cautions that not every member of the group will necessarily be influenced by a leader because this influence depends on the extent to which group members identify with the group.

Leader prototypicality has been shown to predict various follower outcomes such as perceived leader effectiveness, job satisfaction, and relational identification (Steffens, Haslam, & Reicher, 2014). Giessner, van Knippenberg and Sleebos (2009) conducted an experimental study where they were interested in what facilitates followers' perceptions of leader effectiveness. Because for leaders to stay in power and to be seen as effective leaders by their followers, they need to be perceived as successful in leading their groups/ organisations. However, the reality is that some leaders seem to continue to receive as much support even after failing to deliver results. It was found that this is due to perceptions of the leader's prototypicality (Giessner et al., 2009). In another study, it was found that followers evaluated non-prototypical and prototypical leaders as being similarly effective in the condition that the leader succeeded in a performance goal (Giessner et al., 2009). However, a prototypical leader was perceived to be more effective than a non-prototypical leader even after s/he failed to reach a performance goal. Moreover, non-prototypical leaders gained more perceptions of prototypicality when they performed successfully in a task, which suggests that non-prototypical leaders could increase their representativeness of the group by performing their duties well (Giessner et al., 2009). From the aforementioned research it seems that prototypicality may excuse leaders from underperforming and that a leader's

successful performance may lead to an increase in followers perceptions of his/her prototypicality.

Perceptions of leader's prototypicality may even replace the need for fairness among group members. For instance, Ullrich, Christ, and van Dick (2009) showed that although group members care strongly about procedural fairness, its effect was weakened when the leader was described as prototypical to group members who strongly identified with the group. These results were also demonstrated in a natural context with a sample of employees from different organisations (Ulrich et al., 2009).

Leader prototypicality is however only influential when group members identify strongly with the in-group as shown by Ulrich and colleagues (2009), in that the effects of leader prototypicality on leader endorsement was only enhanced in high identifying in-group members. The interplay between in-group identification and leader prototypicality was also shown by Hains, Hogg and Duck (1997) who found that leader prototypicality was considered as an important aspect of leadership by members who strongly identified with the group. Moreover, when people identified with a salient in-group, prototypical leaders were perceived to be more effective than non-prototypical leaders (Hogg, Hains, & Mason, 1998). These results reflect that perceptions of leader's prototypicality are largely determined by followers' in-group identification.

As mentioned above prototypicality has been shown to predict both leadership outcomes such as trust in leaders, leader endorsement, leader effectiveness, leader performance, leader charisma, and leader fairness (van Knippenberg, 2011; Ullrich et al., 2009; Steffens, Haslam, Ryan, & Kessler, 2013; Steffens, Haslam, & Reicher, 2014; Barreto & Hogg, 2017) and follower outcomes such as job satisfaction and follower cooperation (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014; De Cremer, van Dijke, & Mayer, 2010). However,

the interplay between prototypicality and collective action has only been addressed from the in-group members' perspective by showing that members who perceive themselves as more prototypical of the in-group were more likely to engage in intergroup competition on behalf of their group (Goldman & Hogg, 2016). Thus, the question arises, whether a leader's prototypicality influences followers' engagements in collective action. From a theoretical point of view, it can be suggested that leader prototypicality will influence followers' intentions to engage in collective action because "it is by being representative of shared group interests that individuals are able to exert influence over other group members" (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014, p. 1002). More precisely, the more followers identify with their group the more they will perceive the group leader as prototypical which in turn will influence their intentions to engage in collective action (Hypothesis 2).

The following section will elaborate on the other three psychological dimensions of the identity leadership approach, namely advancement, entrepreneurship and impresarioship which refer to what a leader does. More specifically, these three psychological dimensions will be discussed with regard to their role in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action.

#### *Identity advancement*

A leader's capacity to engender active followership depends on the leader's ability to promote collective interests associated with a shared in-group identity (Haslam & Platow, 2001). Though it is imperative that followers perceive the leader to be prototypical, it is equally important for followers to perceive the leader as one who champions and advances the group's interests as opposed to personal or out-group interests (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al. 2014; Giessner, van Knippenberg, van Ginkel, & Sleebos, 2013). The latter was demonstrated with regard to the role of fairness. While participants in an interpersonal

situation endorsed fair rather than unfair leaders, participants in an intergroup situation were more likely to endorse a leader that favoured the in-group (rather than the out-group), regardless of whether the leader was perceived as fair or not (Platow, Hoar, Reid, Harley, & Morrison, 1997). Similarly, in situations where leaders favoured the out-group they were negatively evaluated by followers because they violated the basic expectation that an in-group leader should advance the in-group (Jetten, Duck, Terry, & O'Brien, 2002).

Likewise, a leader gained more support from followers under the condition that s/he favours the in-group more than the out-group, as opposed to conditions where s/he treats both groups fairly or where s/he favours the out-group more than the in-group (Haslam & Platow, 2001). Moreover, this study found that the leader was perceived as fair under the condition that s/he was portrayed as evenhanded (i.e., treating both groups similarly), but perceptions of fairness did not determine followers' support. Support for a leader's decision was strongest when the decision favoured in-group as opposed to out-group interests. Thus, support for a leader's decision as sensible and fair does not necessarily mean that followers will be willing to act out the leader's intentions. The results rather suggested that followers were more willing to act on behalf of the leader's vision when they perceived the leader as someone who is willing to advance the in-group's interests (Haslam & Platow, 2001). It appears that people are willing to support a leader who supports, defends or advances their in-group's concerns relative to the out-group.

The psychological dimensions of identity prototypicality and identity advancement are interrelated. Leader prototypicality has been shown to predict the leader's group oriented behaviour (Giessner et al., 2013; Steffens et al., 2013). Similarly, a leader's support of the group's interests increased perceptions of his/her prototypicality, meaning that when the leader is seen to advance in-group needs, followers may then come to see him/her as a more

prototypical leader (Steffens et al., 2013). The latter suggests that there is a bi-directional relationship between identity advancement and identity prototypicality (Steffens et al., 2013).

A leader who advances group interests should be most influential to group members who are strongly identified with the group (van Dick & Kerschreiter, 2016). In other words, strongly identified followers will be more influenced by leaders who advance the group's interest because they perceive that the leaders interests are in line with those of the in-group (Haslam et al., 2011). This suggests that perceptions of a leader's identity advancement are influenced by follower identification. Additionally, the aforementioned studies showed that perceptions of a leader's identity advancement influences whether a leader is endorsed by followers (Platow et al., 1997), whether followers evaluate the leader favourably (Jetten et al., 2002) and whether followers will support the leader (Haslam & Platow, 2001). Leaders will generally be more effective if they are perceived as promoting shared interests of the group (Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). Consequently, it can be assumed that the more followers identify with the in-group the more they will perceive the leader to be advancing their group's interests which will influence their intentions to engage in collective action (Hypothesis 3).

### *Identity Entrepreneurship*

Leaders are "entrepreneurs of identity" because of the active role they play in constructing a shared identity for group members, in delineating what the group stands for and in creating a sense of cohesion among group members (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). Group identity is not static but can be shaped and recreated. A leader's ability to shape and manage the group's social identity would for instance influence group performance (Steffens, Haslam, Kerschreiter, Schuh, & van Dick., 2014). Moreover, the relationship between identity entrepreneurship and group performance revealed to be mediated by both

increased work engagement and reduced work burnout (Steffens, Haslam, Kerschreiter et al., 2014). These findings indicate that when leaders act for instance as identity entrepreneurs in an organisational setting they are able to positively influence workers' health and wellbeing, which on the other hand increases their work performance (Steffens, Haslam, Kerschreiter et al., 2014).

Leaders might also use identity entrepreneurship to define in-group boundaries by for instance creating distance between in-group and out-group members. Mols and Jetten (2014), who examined speeches from Populist Right Wing Party leaders, found that these leaders shaped group boundaries and delineated which group members belonged to their group and which did not via discursive techniques. Moreover, leaders use identity entrepreneurship to mobilise their followers. Haslam and Reicher (2007) observed that a leader can mobilise group members to unite by means of putting emphasis on their collective fate and therefore strengthening the groups' identity. Similarly to Mols and Jetten's (2014) findings, the leaders in Haslam and Reicher's (2007) study also used discursive techniques such as metaphors to emphasise the 'we-ness' of the group and to define in-group boundaries. The outlined research suggests that when leaders act as identity entrepreneurs they are able to mobilise group members to act collectively. However, leaders can only mobilise followers' collective energies to the extent that these followers perceive themselves as part of a common in-group and share the same social identity (Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). Haslam and Reicher (2007) also showed that once followers identified as a group, they were then able to centralise their leadership and in that way the leader was able to influence in-group members. This shows that when followers identify with a group, they become susceptible to a leader's acts of identity entrepreneurship.

There is evidence that identity entrepreneurship is also associated with the other identity leadership dimensions. For instance, Steffens et al. (2013) suggested that a leader's

capacity to act as an identity entrepreneur is partly influenced by the leader's ability to promote group interests. The study showed that when a leader performed well and thus contributed to the groups' success, the leader was able to shape certain norms and values that were compatible with the in-group's behaviour. Moreover, Steffens and colleagues (2013) argued that leader entrepreneurship is also determined by leader prototypicality, in that the more representative the leader is of the group, the more s/he is given freedom by followers to promote new in-group norms.

Similar to the previous identity dimensions, it can be assumed that the more followers identify with the in-group the more they will perceive the group leader as an identity entrepreneur and this will influence their intentions to engage in collective action (Hypothesis 4).

#### *Identity Impresarioship*

The aforementioned dimensions are all important aspects of successful identity leadership. However, leaders are ultimately expected to deliver outcomes for their groups and organisations (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). Leaders need to embed the group into group members' lived experiences (Haslam et al., 2011) and they need to deliver concrete outcomes which make the group matter among other groups (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). For instance, a leader's ability to initiate structure is considered to be very important in an organisational setting (Judge, Piccolo, & Ilies, 2004). Initiating structure is the degree to which a leader organises his role and the roles of his followers towards achieving concrete goals and outcomes. Judge et al. (2004) found that a leader's ability to initiate structure predicted job performance as well as group performance. Leaders should help group members experience their group identity and live it. It is important that a group's social identity remains salient so that it is relevant and influential to followers (van Dick &



Kerschreiter, 2016). Consequently, the leader needs to create social structures that make this identity a reality. This point was elaborated in Botindari and Reicher's (2015) observational study, which found that identity impresarioship was the most important dimension that predicted intentions to support and vote for a political leader. The authors concluded that support for a leader was based on the leaders' ability to create a favourable social reality for potential followers. Even something that seems as minute as the way team meetings are organised may be an important indicator of the group's identity and may encourage members of the group to be more productive. For instance, Bluedorn, Turban and Love (1999) found that organisational team meetings which were held with team members standing up were actually more efficient and shorter than sit-down meetings which produced decisions that were no better than stand-up meetings. These results show that "[...] by devising structures that help sustain the vision in the team members' daily reality, leaders can create a stronger identity" (van Dick & Kerschreiter, 2016, p. 376).

Although there are no studies – to our knowledge – that tested the direct relationship between identity impresarioship and collective action, previous research on outcomes such as group performance (Judge et al., 2004), group productivity (Bluedorn et al., 1999) and support for a political leader (Botindari & Reicher, 2015) suggest that a leader's identity impresarioship will predict followers' intentions to engage in collective action given that these followers identify with the in-group (Hypothesis 5).

That identity leadership becomes instrumental requires that people identify with social groups (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). However, social groups differ in their nature and thus provide different social contexts and realities for in-group members. Consequently, it can be assumed that the role of identity leadership for the relationship between in-group

identification and collective action is determined by these different contexts and realities of social groups.

### **The role of group context**

Social identity processes do not apply equally in different social contexts (Hinkle & Brown, 1990 cited in Kelly, 1993). For instance, whether identification with a group results in collective action depends on the level of concreteness of the respective social category (De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999) and on the politicising of the category (Simon et al., 1998). As the social group can be assumed to influence the relationship between social identity and collective action (De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999; Simon et al., 1998), it can be equally assumed to influence the role of identity leadership within this relationship.

Collective action was defined as a social pattern of individuals who prioritise group goals over their personal goals (Triandis, 1995). That people prioritise group goals over personal goals presupposes that they identify strongly with the respective group. However, the prioritisation of group goals might also depend on how group boundaries are perceived. Following the logic of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), one could assume that people might favour personal goals over group goals if they perceive group boundaries as highly permeable or fluid, that is to say, to leave the group is perceived as easy and without any moral consequences. In the same line, it could be further assumed that group goals might be more important than personal goals for people who perceive group boundaries as rather impermeable, that is to say, to leave the group is perceived as difficult and it might result in moral consequences.

Consequently, in a group context where it is easy to leave a group, group goals might be less salient; whereas in a group context where it is difficult to leave a group, the opposite might be true. Leadership in these two group contexts might differ in its instrumentality, in

that, identity leadership might be more instrumental in coordinating collective action in the service of group goals in a context of permeable and fluid group boundaries than in a context of impermeable group boundaries. To test the conditional effect of group context on the relationship between in-group identification and collective action via identity leadership, three different group contexts were used in the present research that were assumed to differ in their permeability of their group boundaries.

The first group context used in the present studies was the political context in the form of political parties. It was assumed that political parties within the South African context have rather impermeable group boundaries. Party members or supporters are usually loyal to the political parties they identify with. This assumption is supported by Booysen (2007) who reports for instance that the African National Congress (ANC) as a governing party has a voter loyalty factor of approximately 95%. Within the South African context, discontent with a political party is less likely to result in changing the party as a member or supporter but to result in abstaining from political engagement. Given the rather rigid structures as well as the competitiveness of political parties within the South African context it can be assumed that group boundaries are less permeable and thus group goals are salient, and therefore leadership might be less required in coordinating collective action in the service of group goals.

The second group context used in the present study was the civic society context, more specifically, the trade union context, which has a long history in South Africa. We assumed that the trade union context might require a certain degree of leadership in coordinating collective action in the service of group goals because group boundaries can be assumed to be more permeable in that although people might remain within the inclusive category of trade union they might however change (e.g., because of changes in their career)

trade union sectors (i.e., for instances changing from a trade union representing mine workers to a trade union representing teachers).

Lastly, the group context of work team was used in the present study. Given that work teams are often highly flexible and their in-group members are socially mobile, it was assumed that work teams have rather permeable boundaries. Consequently, it was concluded that this group context requires a higher degree of leadership in coordinating collective action in the service of group goals.

The outlined consideration of group context is in line not only with calls to explore the role of context when studying social influence (van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010) but also to assess the application of the social identity leadership approach in different social and organisational contexts (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). Consequently, the present research also aimed to test the role of social group context as a possible moderator in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action through identity leadership (Hypothesis 6).

### **Summary of the proposed hypotheses**

The present study proposes six hypotheses. Firstly, it is hypothesised that the more people identify with a relevant in-group, the more they will be prepared to engage in collective action on behalf of that group (Hypothesis 1). The second hypothesis states that the more followers identify with their group the more they will perceive the group leader as prototypical which in turn will influence their intentions to engage in collective action (Hypothesis 2). The third hypothesis states that the more followers identify with the in-group the more they will perceive the leader as advancing group interests, which will influence their intentions to engage in collective action (Hypothesis 3). The fourth hypothesis states that the more followers identify with the in-group the more they will perceive the leader as an

entrepreneur of identity, which will increase the likelihood that they engage in collective action (Hypothesis 4). The fifth hypothesis states that the more followers identify with the in-group the more they will perceive the leader to be building lived structures, which will influence their intentions to engage in collective action (Hypothesis 5). Lastly, it was assumed that social group context moderates the relationships between in-group identification and collective action through identity leadership (Hypothesis 6).

## **The present research**

Prior to the hypotheses testing, Study 1 was conducted which addressed the question whether the four dimensional structure of the identity leadership inventory as established by Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al. (2014) could be replicated in the present research context, because this inventory has never been used in South Africa. Moreover, previous research using the four dimensional identity leadership inventory has shown that the assessed dimensions of identity leadership are conceptually and empirically interrelated (Steffens et al., 2013, Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014, Botindari & Reicher, 2015). Given that the proposed hypotheses (Hypotheses 2-6) in the present study are based on mediation models, which are tested by multiple regression analyses, it was necessary to meet the requirement that the predictor variables (i.e., identification with in-group, identity prototypicality, identity advancement, identity entrepreneurship, and identity impresarioship) must not show multicollinearity (Field, 2009).

Study 1 was important because it provided empirical evidence on whether the four dimensional structure of the identity leadership inventory was applicable for Study 2 and Study 3 which tested the proposed hypotheses. While Study 2 applied a research design (i.e., within-subject design) that allowed exploring the possibility of the conditional effect of social context on the interplay between in-group identification, identity leadership and collective action; Study 3 was based on a research design (i.e., between-subject design) that actually permitted statistical testing of the moderated mediation model as proposed by the hypotheses in the present study.

## Study 1

The aim of the first study was to test whether the four dimensional structure of the identity leadership inventory as established by Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al. (2014) could be replicated within the South African context. The data for Study 1 was collected among South African students who participated in the international research project “Identity Leadership Inventory – Global” organised by Prof Rolf van Dick (Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany). The international project “Identity Leadership Inventory – Global” (ILI-Global) was based on a cross-sectional survey design and focused on the application and validation of the identity leadership inventory scales by gathering data from 20 countries covering six continents.

### Sample

The South African sample consisted of 383 students registered with the University of South Africa. The majority (n = 205) were females and 88 indicated that they were males. Most participants were black (n = 135), 33 indicated that they were coloured, 22 specified that they were Indian, and 96 participants indicated that they were white South Africans.<sup>1</sup> Participants’ age ranged from 18 to older than 55 with a majority (n = 126) indicating that they were between 25-35 years old. Only a few participants indicated to be older than 55 (n = 5). Most of the participants had four to 10 years (n = 101) and the least number of participants reported to have less than one year of working experience (n = 11).

### Ethical clearance

Study 1 was granted ethical clearance by the College of Graduate Studies at the University of South Africa (Unisa). Subsequently, the Unisa Senate Research and Innovation

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<sup>1</sup> The reference to black, Indian, Coloured and white South Africans is a commonly used classification system to distinguish former disadvantaged and advantaged groups in South Africa.

for Higher Degrees Committee granted permission, to invite Unisa students to participate in the study.

## **Procedure**

Data for Study 1 was collected through an internet-based survey which was uploaded on the online platform, Qualtrics. The first page outlined that the international research project aimed to understand people's perceptions of different organisations and their leaders. It was stipulated that we were interested in the participants' honest opinion and that there would be no right or wrong answers when answering the survey. The participants were notified of the estimated duration of the study and they were requested to follow a link that would direct them to the study. Participants were further informed that they provided consent to participate in the study by opening the link to the survey.

## **Measures**

Although the ILI-Global study assessed various constructs besides the identity leadership construct, Study 1 will only report the latter. Identity leadership was assessed using the 15 item identity leadership inventory (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014), which was presented in a fixed order. This inventory consists of four dimensions which were presented in the following order: *identity prototypicality*, *identity advancement*, *identity entrepreneurship* and *identity impresarioship*. All participants rated their responses on a seven point Likert scale answer format ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The sub-scales assessing the four dimensions used the original items as proposed by Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al. (2014). The items are outlined below.

*Identity prototypicality* was measured by four items: "My immediate supervisor embodies what the group stands for", "My immediate supervisor is representative of



members of the group”, “My immediate supervisor is a model member of the group” and “My immediate supervisor exemplifies what it means to be a member of the group”.

*Identity advancement* was measured by the following four items: “My immediate supervisor promotes the interests of members of the group”, “My immediate supervisor acts as a champion for the group”, “My immediate supervisor stands up for the group”, and “My immediate supervisor has the group’s interests at heart, when he or she acts”.

*Identity entrepreneurship* was measured by the items: “My immediate supervisor makes people feel as if they are part of the same group”, “My immediate supervisor creates a sense of cohesion within the group”, “My immediate supervisor develops an understanding of what it means to be a member of the group”, and “My immediate supervisor shapes members’ perceptions of the group’s values and ideals”.

*Identity impresarioship* was assessed by the following three items: “My immediate supervisor devises activities that bring the group together”, “My immediate supervisor arranges events that help the group function effectively” and “My immediate supervisor creates structures that are useful for group members”.

## **Results**

Confirmatory Factor Analysis using AMOS was conducted testing three competing models: (1) the 15-item one-factor model (Figure 1), (2) the 15-item four-factor model with second-order factor (Figure 2), and (3) the 15-item oblique four-factor model (Figure 3).

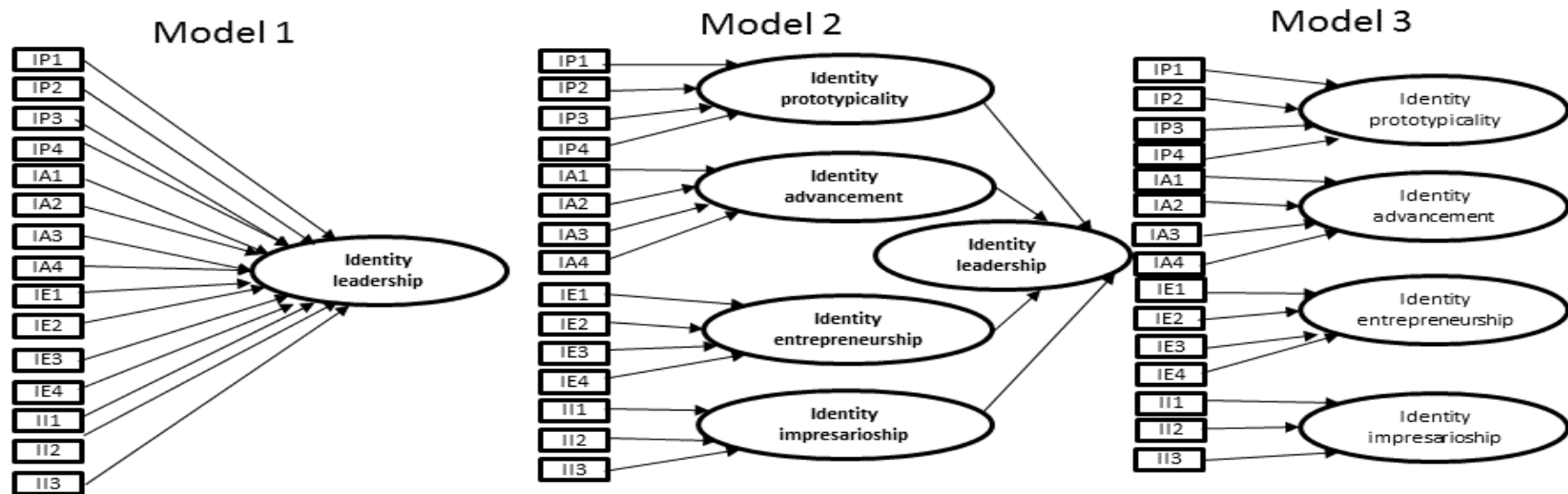


Figure 1. 15-item one-factor model (Model 1); Figure 2. 15-item four-factor model with second order factor (Model 2); Figure 3. 15-item oblique four-factor model (Model 3);

Note: IP = Identity Prototypicality, IA = Identity Advancement, IE = Identity Entrepreneurship, II = Identity Impresarioship

Table 1 reports the Chi-Squares, the relative (incremental) fit indices including the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker Lewis Index or Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) and the Normed Fit Index (NFI); the absolute fit indices including the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Standard Root Mean Residual (Std RMR); and the comparative fit index of Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) for all three models.

Table 1. Model fit indices for each model

	Model 1 15-item one-factor model	Model 2 15-item four-factor model with second order factor	Model 3 15-item oblique four factor model
Degrees of Freedom	90	86	84
Chi-Square	663.016	333.911	316.922
<i>p</i>	< .001	< .001	< .001
Std. RMR	.0288	.0224	.0209
RMSEA	.129	.087	.085
RMSEA <i>Cis</i>	.120, .138	.077, .097	.075, .095
AIC	753.016	431.911	418.922
CFI	.931	.970	.972
NFI	.931	.960	.962
NNFI	.919	.963	.965

The statistically significant Chi-Squares suggest that none of the three models actually fitted the data perfectly. However, according the relative, absolute and comparative indices, the 15-item four-factor model with second-order factor (Model 2) and the 15-item oblique four-factor model (Model 3) showed a better fit to the data when compared with the 15-item one-factor model (Model 1). For instance, Model 2 and 3 showed lower values in the Standard Root Mean Residual (Std RMR), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

and the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) when compared to Model 1 which suggests a better model fit. Similarly, Model 2 and 3 showed larger values in the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Non-normed fit index (NNFI), and the Normed Fit Index when compared to Model 1. These indices again suggest that Model 2 and 3 fitted the data better than Model 1.

The observed differences in the Model indices are qualified by the results of the Chi-Square differences which suggest that Model 2 fitted the data significantly better than the competing Model 1,  $\Delta\chi^2 = 329.105$ ,  $\Delta df = 4$ ,  $p < .001$ . The fit of Model 3 was also significantly better than Model 1,  $\Delta\chi^2 = 329.105$ ,  $\Delta df = 6$ ,  $p < .001$ . However, Model 3 had a significantly better fit when compared with Model 2,  $\Delta\chi^2 = 16.989$ ,  $\Delta df = 2$ ,  $p < .001$ .

These results replicate the findings of Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al. (2014), that the 15-item oblique four factor model (Model 3) fits the data significantly better when compared to the two competing models: the 15-item one-factor model (Model 1) and the 15-item four-factor model with second-order factor (Model 2). The standardised item loadings on the respective factors for Model 3 are reported in Table 2.

Table 2. Standardised CFA results showing item loadings and factor correlations (Model 3)

Items	Item loadings			
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
1 IP	.86			
2 IP	.84			
3 IP	.94			
4 IP	.95			
5 IA		.92		
6 IA		.80		
7 IA		.92		
8 IA		.93		
9 IE			.95	
10 IE			.92	
11 IE			.96	
12 IE			.93	
13 II				.91
14 II				.92
15 II				.90

Factor intercorrelations				
Factor	1	2	3	4
1	-			
2	.96	-		
3	.93	.97	-	
4	.89	.91	.93	-

The bottom part of Table 2 also reports the intercorrelations between the factors. The correlation coefficients were relatively high with intercorrelations larger than .88. These results imply that the four dimensions of identity leadership have a significant overlap in the present study.

## Discussion

The aim of Study 1 was to determine whether the four dimensional structure of the identity leadership inventory (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014) could be replicated within the South African context. Confirmatory factor analyses suggested that the oblique four-factor model of identity leadership (Model 3) showed a significantly better fit to the data than the 15-item one-factor model (Model 1) and the 15-item four-factor model with second-

order factor (Model 2). Consequently, the present study replicated the findings by Steffens, Haslam, Reicher and colleagues (2014), that the items of the identity leadership inventory captured four relatively distinct dimensions. Nonetheless, Study 1 also replicated the strong intercorrelations among the four dimensions of identity leadership. Such strong correlations among the four dimensions imply that there is considerable overlap between the dimensions, which means statistically that these four dimensions share a great amount of variance. The latter also implies that participants might not have been able to discriminate between these four dimensions. Or using the words of Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., (2014, p. 1009) who interpreted the high correlations between the dimensions (ranging from .78 to .88) in their study to suggest “[...] that participants treated the different dimensions of their leaders as having significant overlap”.

The strong intercorrelations among the four dimensions of the identity leadership inventory indicate a limitation which has implications for Study 2 and Study 3 that aimed to test the possible mediation function of the four identity leadership dimensions in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action. It was therefore pertinent to explore the factor structure of the identity leadership inventory in Study 2 and Study 3 before testing the mediation models. Given that mediation analyses are based on multiple regression analyses; they have to meet the requirement that predictor variables do not show multicollinearity. Intercorrelations between the four dimensions as found as in Study 1 would definitely violate this requirement.

Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al. (2014) conceded that it is possible that future research might find that the four identity leadership dimensions are correlated with each other which they assumed might depend on social context. In this case they recommended to treat the four leadership dimensions as distinct, that is to say, to examine the separate dimensions rather than bundling these together (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014, p. 1019). Because we

were interested in the overall role of identity leadership in mediating the relationship between in-group identification and collective action, we decided not to follow their recommendation but to use identity leadership as a one dimensional construct, given that Study 2 and Study 3 replicate the rather high correlation coefficients.

In the following Study 2 and Study 3 are reported that first, aimed to test the basic assumption that in-group identification predicts collective action (Hypothesis 1); secondly, the assumption that the relationship between in-group identification and collective action is mediated by the four dimensions of identity leadership (Hypotheses 2 - 5); and finally, the assumption that the influence of in-group identification on collective action via identity leadership is conditional on social group context (Hypothesis 6).

## **Study 2**

The overall aim of Study 2 was to explore the role of the four dimensions of identity leadership in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action and whether these relationships depend on social group context. More specifically, the first objective of Study 2 was to test whether the relationship between in-group identification and collective action is mediated by the four dimensions of identity leadership (Hypotheses 1 to 5). In order to test Hypotheses 2 to 5 it was necessary to first explore the factors structure of the identity leadership inventory, and secondly to ensure that the identity leadership inventory is a distinct construct that is different from in-group identification.

The second objective of Study 2 was to explore whether the influence of in-group identification and identity leadership on collective action depends on the social group (Hypothesis 6). The influence of social group context on the relationship between in-group identification and collective action via identity leadership was explored in Study 2 using the following three social groups: political party, civic society in the form of trade unions and a workgroup context. Given the fact that Study 2 aimed to explore the role of the four dimensions of identity leadership in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action and the possible influence of the social group it was decided for technical reasons (such as small sample size) to apply a within-subject design. Thus, the exploration of the influence of social group was limited to ascertain the explained variance in collective action (as dependent variable) in the three different social group contexts.

### **Sample**

A total of 146 UNISA students took part in Study 2. The majority of participants were female (n =115), and 31 participants indicated that they were male. In terms of race, most participants (n= 72) identified themselves as black, 10 as coloured, 11 identified as Indian



and 51 identified themselves as white South Africans, with the remaining participants ( $n = 2$ ) identifying themselves as belonging to other race groups. The participants were on average 33.35 years old ranging from 22 to 40 years. A chi-square analysis between race and gender revealed no significant relationship,  $X^2(4) = 1.183, p > .05$ , indicating that the sample was more or less equally distributed in terms of race and gender.

## **Procedure**

Data for Study 2 was also collected through an internet-based survey which was uploaded on the online platform Qualtrics. The main information presented on the first page of the survey was the same as in Study 1.

As mentioned before, Study 2 was based on a within-subjects research design. Each participant responded to questions and statements which were presented for three different social groups: The social groups were political party, civic society (in the form of trade unions) and workgroup. In the first social group context participants were presented with a list of five political parties, which occupy the most seats in the current South African parliament. The parties were the African National Congress (ANC), The Democratic Alliance (DA), the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the National Freedom Party (NFP). Participants were instructed to choose one political party, which they identify with the most. They were then presented with the in-group identification scale to assess the extent to which they identify with the party. Subsequently, participants were presented with a picture of the party leader corresponding to the political party they had chosen and they were then asked to take a moment to think about this leader. Participants were then presented with the identity leadership inventory. The participants then proceeded to complete the measures assessing collective action.

In the second part of the study, participants were provided with a civic society context in the form of trade unions. In this part, participants were presented with a list of five South African trade unions. The trade unions included the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU), the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU), the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), the National Union of Metal workers South Africa (NUMSA) and the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU). Participants were again asked to choose one trade union, which they identify with the most. Participants then proceeded to complete the in-group identification scale. Similar to the political party context, they were then presented with a picture of the trade union leader corresponding to the trade union they had chosen. Participants then continued to complete the same measures as specified in the previous social group context.

The third part of the study addressed the social context of workgroup. Participants were told to think about their current workgroup and workgroup leader. In cases where participants were not employed they were asked to think about a past or imagined workgroup and its leader. They then proceeded to respond to the in-group identification scale to measure the extent to which they identify with their workgroup. Participants then proceeded to complete the same measures specified above.

The last section of the study assessed demographic information such as the participants' race, gender, and age.

## **Measures**

All measures in Study 2 used a five point Likert scale answer format ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The items within the measures were randomly

presented to participants; however, the order of the measures remained the same in all three social group contexts.

### ***Independent variables***

*In-group Identification* was assessed using selected items from the in-group identification scale developed by Leach et al. (2008). The items selected to assess in-group identification were: “I feel a bond with my group”, “I feel committed to my group”, “I think that my group has a lot to be proud of”, “It is pleasant to be a member of my group”, “The fact that I am a member of this group is an important part of my identity”, “Being a member of this group is an important part of how I see myself”, “I have a lot in common with the average member of my group”, “I am similar to the average person in my group”, “Members of my group have a lot in common with each other”, and “Members of my group are very similar to each other”. The internal consistencies for in-group identification in the three group contexts were as follows: political party context ( $\alpha = .87$ ), civil movement context ( $\alpha = .95$ ) and workgroup context ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

*Identity leadership* was measured using the same identity leadership items outlined in Study 1. The only difference is that the items began with “This leader” instead of “My immediate supervisor” as in Study 1. However, due to an error during the process of designing the internet-based questionnaire the item “This leader embodies what the group stands for” was excluded. This item measures identity prototypicality. Also different to Study 1, the items (and thus the order of the four dimension) of the identity leadership inventory were randomly presented to participants to avoid a “learning effect” because participants responded to the identity leadership items among others three times due to the between-subject design of Study 2.

### ***Dependent Variable***

*Collective action* was measured using an eight item scale adapted from van Zomeren, Leach and Spears (2010). The original measure consisted of four items which measured intentions to engage in collective action. In the present study the four items were adopted to measure both attitudes towards collective actions and intentions to engage in collective action resulting in eight items. According to a meta-analysis of collective action studies conducted by van Zomeren, Postmes and Spears (2008, p. 510), collective action is very difficult to measure as actual behaviour. Therefore, researchers tend to rely on indirect means of measurements or proxies such as measuring attitudes towards collective actions (e.g., I would support collective action) and intentions to act collectively (e.g., I would engage in collective action). These are considered a better option as opposed to tapping on past behaviour, or actual behaviour (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008, p. 510). In the present study the items used to assess attitudes towards collective actions were: “I would support future demonstrations of fellow group members”, “I would support raising a collective voice as a group”, “I would support doing something with fellow group members”, “I would support those who participate in some form of action for the group”; and the items used to assess intentions to engage in collective actions were: “I would participate in a future demonstration with fellow group members”, “I would participate in raising our collective voice as a group”, “I would do something together with fellow group members”, “I would participate in some form of action for the group”. All eight items were treated as a one dimensional scale. The internal consistencies for each of the three group contexts were as follows: political party context ( $\alpha = .95$ ), civil movement context ( $\alpha = .99$ ) and work group context ( $\alpha = .97$ ).

## Results

### *Preliminary Analysis*

In the first step we explored the factor structure of the identity leadership inventory and the in-group identification measure. Factor analyses using the maximum likelihood method were conducted to explore the factor structure of the identity leadership inventory (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014) and to ascertain that the in-group identification measure and the identity leadership inventory indeed assessed two distinct constructs.

#### *Factor structure of the identity leadership inventory*

Table 3 reports the relevant indices of the three conducted factor analyses using the maximum likelihood method. The Kaiser-Meyer-Okin measures verified the sampling adequacy for the analyses in all three contexts (Field, 2009, p. 659). Moreover, all KMO values for individual variables were larger than .72, which is considered as good and supports our confidence that the sample sizes were adequate in the present three contexts (Field, 2009, p. 659). The Bartlett's tests of sphericity were significant in all three contexts indicating that correlations among the items were sufficiently large for a maximum likelihood test. Communalities after extraction ranged from .55 to .92. In each context only one factor was extracted which explained 68.02% of the variance in the political party context (item loadings ranged from .78 to .90), 83.88% of the variance in the civic society context (item loadings ranged from .90 to .94), and 83.52% of variance in the workgroup context (item loadings ranged from .84 to .96).

Table 3. Relevant indices testing the factor structure of identity leadership, Study 2

	Political Party	Civic Society	Workgroup
Kaiser-Meyer-Okin	.96	.97	.96
KMO values for individual variables	> .72	> .96	> .94
Bartlett's test of sphericity	$\chi^2(91) = 3181.58,$ $p < .001$	$\chi^2(91) = 3514.14,$ $p < .001$	$\chi^2(91) = 3223.99,$ $p < .001$
Communalities	.55 to .81	.75 to .89	.71 to .92

The maximum likelihood tests in the three group contexts did not discriminate between the four dimensions of the identity leadership inventory in Study 2. These results are in line with the findings in Study 1, which showed strong intercorrelations among the four dimensions. Because the present research was interested in exploring the role of identity leadership in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action, it was decided to treat the identity leadership inventory as a one dimensional measure in further analyses. Consequently, the proposed Hypotheses 2 to 5 were collapsed into one hypothesis, stating that identity leadership mediates the relationship between in-group identification and collective action (Hypothesis 2).

#### *Identity leadership versus in-group identification*

In a second step, factor analyses using the maximum likelihood method were conducted to ascertain that in-group identification and identity leadership are indeed two distinct constructs. In the analyses, SPSS was instructed for all three social group contexts to extract two factors.

Table 4. Relevant indices testing the factor structure of identity leadership and in-group identification, Study 2

	Political Party	Civic Society	Workgroup
Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin	.93	.96	.95
KMO values for individual variables	> .76	> .91	> .85
Bartlett's test of sphericity	$\chi^2(276) = 4508.547,$ $p < .001$	$\chi^2(276) = 5285.03,$ $p < .001$	$\chi^2(276) = 4920.59,$ $p < .001$
Communalities	.17 to .81	.48 to .90	.37 to .92

Table 4 summarises the relevant indices of the three conducted factor analyses including the identity leadership measure and the in-group identification measure using the maximum likelihood method. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin measures as well as the KMO values for individual variables (> .76) verified again the sampling adequacy for the analyses in all three contexts (Field, 2009, p. 659). The Bartlett's tests of sphericity were again significant in all three contexts indicating sufficient correlations among the items which is considered as a precondition to conduct a maximum likelihood test. Communalities after extraction ranged from .17 to .92. In each context two factors were extracted. The pattern matrix of the political party context revealed that all items of the identity leadership inventory loaded on the first factor (item loadings were larger than .71) and all items of the in-group identification measure loaded on the second factor (all item loadings were larger than .35). Similar results were found for the civic society context, in that, all items of the identity leadership inventory loaded on factor one (item loadings larger than .82); while the second factor represented all items of the in-group identification measure (item loadings larger than .74). The pattern

matrix of the workgroup context showed that the first factor represented the items of the identity leadership inventory (item loadings larger than .73). Similar to the previous group contexts, the second factor represented all in-group identification items with loadings larger than .64.

The results of the factor analyses confirmed for all three group contexts that the identity leadership inventory and the in-group identification measure indeed assessed two distinct constructs. Descriptive analyses of in-group identification, identity leadership and collective action for the three contexts are depicted in Tables 5, 6 and 7. The tables report the means, standard deviations and intercorrelations.

### *Descriptive statistics*

All variables correlated significantly with each other as expected in the respective group contexts. More precisely, in-group identification which is a known predictor of collective action was positively related to collective action in all three social group contexts. Identity leadership also positively correlated with collective action in all three contexts which suggests that there is a relationship between the two constructs. The independent variables, in-group identification and identity leadership, also correlated significantly with each other in all three contexts. This relationship was not surprising, as both constructs are based on the social identity approach. It should be noted that the correlation coefficients in the civil society context were rather high when compared to the other two group contexts.



Table 5. Means, standard deviations and intercorrelations for political party context, Study 2

	1	2	3
Mean	3.30	3.60	3.73
SD	0.66	0.84	0.74
1. In-group identification	-		
2. Identity leadership	.43**	-	
3. Collective action	.50**	.32**	-

Note: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

Table 6. Means, standard deviations and intercorrelations for civic society context, Study 2

	1	2	3
Mean	3.15	3.22	3.13
SD	0.78	0.78	1.03
1. In-group identification	-		
2. Identity leadership	.70**	-	
3. Collective action	.68**	.70**	-

Note: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

Table 7. Means, standard deviations and intercorrelations for workgroup context, Study 2

	1	2	3
Mean	3.50	3.45	3.76
SD	0.83	1.04	0.87
1. In-group identification	-		
2. Identity leadership	.70**	-	
3. Collective action	.65**	.56**	-

Note: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

### *Hypothesis Testing*

The first two hypotheses proposed that collective action is influenced by in-group identification (Hypothesis 1) and that this relationship is mediated by the followers' perceptions and experiences of their leader (Hypothesis 2).

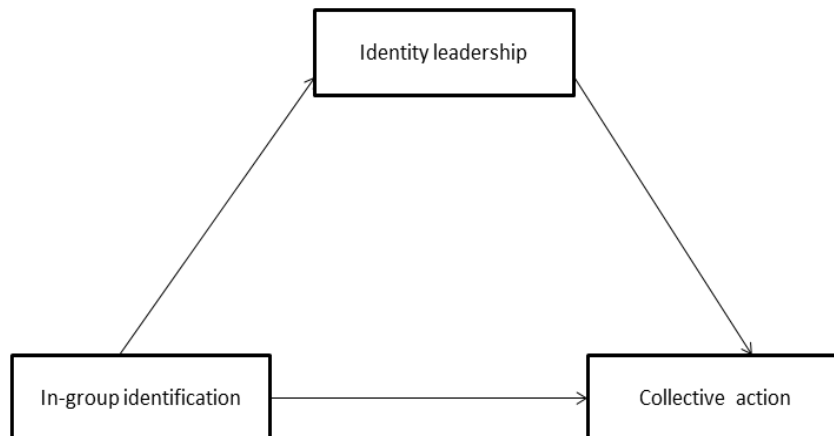


Figure 4. Simple mediation model

The two hypotheses were tested by a simple mediation model using the SPSS macro *Process* (Hayes, 2013). In-group identification was entered as independent variable, collective action was entered as dependent variable and identity leadership was defined as mediator variable (see Figure 4). This simple mediation model was tested for the three group contexts separately.

### *Political Party Context*

The results of the simple mediation model for the political party context showed that the model fitted the data well,  $R^2 = .26$ ,  $F(2,212) = 36.75$ ,  $p < .001$  (see Table 8). Collective action within the political party context was significantly predicted by in-group identification but not by identity leadership which already suggests that the relationship between in-group identification and collective action is not mediated through identity leadership in this context. The latter is qualified by the non-significant indirect effect and the non-significant Normal Theory test (see Table 8), showing that identity leadership did not statistically mediate the relationship between in-group identification and collective action in the political party context.

Table 8. Simple mediation for political party context, Study 2

<u>Outcome: Identity leadership</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.6695	.2577	6.4794	.0000	1.1616	2.1774
In-group identification	.5813	.0759	7.6566	.0000	.4317	.7310
<u>Outcome: Collective action</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.7669	.2393	7.3837	.0000	1.2952	2.2386
Identity Leadership	.0939	.0582	1.6144	.1079	-.0208	.2085
In-group Identification	.4881	.0728	6.7063	.0000	.3446	.6315
<u>Total effect model</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.9236	.2195	8.7624	.0000	1.4909	2.3564
In-group Identification	.5427	.0647	8.3885	.0000	.4151	.6702

<u>Total, direct and indirect effects</u>						
<u>Total effect x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.5427	.0647	8.3885	.0000	.4151	.6702
<u>Direct effects x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.4881	.0728	6.7063	.0000	.3446	.6315
<u>Indirect effects x on y</u>	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI		
Identity Leadership	.0546	.0447	-.0207	.1597		
<u>Normal theory test for specific indirect effect</u>						
	Effect	SE	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>		
	.0546	.0348	1.5669	.1171		

### ***Civic Society Context***

The descriptive analysis of the independent, mediator and dependent variables within the civil society context showed that these variables were not normally distributed which might have caused the strong correlation between the independent, mediator and dependent variables (see Table 6). It was therefore decided to transform these variables into normal scores using Rankit's formula as an approximation method. According to Solomon and Sawilowsky (2009) Rankit is the most accurate method to use among different sample sizes and distributions. Moreover, the decision to normalise the variables was supported by the results of the collinearity diagnostics which showed that the condition index between in-group identification and collective action reached 9.4, whereas the condition index between identity leadership and collective action reached 13.15, which was close to 15. It is important to note that a condition index greater than 15 suggests multicollinearity. After normalising the civil movement variables, the condition index reached 1.3 and 2.3, respectively.

Consequently, the mediation analysis in the civil society context was conducted with the normalised variables.

The results of the simple mediation in the civil society context showed that the model fitted the data well,  $R^2 = .60$ ,  $F(2,155) = 116.65$ ,  $p < .001$  (see Table 9). Collective action within the civil society context was significantly predicted by both in-group identification and identity leadership. The results of the direct effect, the indirect effect and the Normal theory tests for specific indirect effects supported Hypotheses 1 and 2 for the civic society context, in that identity leadership - although partially –mediates the relationship between in-group identification and collective action (see Table 9).

Table 9. Simple mediation for civic society context, Study 2

<u>Outcome: Identity leadership</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	-.0164	.0560	-.2926	.7702	-.1270	.0942
In-group identification	.6624	.0563	11.7693	.0000	.5512	.7736
<u>Outcome: Collective action</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	.0052	.0473	.1096	.9129	-.0882	.0986
Identity Leadership	.4578	.0676	6.7713	.0000	.3243	.5914
In-group Identification	.3475	.0653	5.3205	.0000	.2185	.4765
<u>Total effect model</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	-.0023	.0537	-.0432	.9656	-.1083	.1037
In-group Identification	.6507	.0539	12.0660	.0000	.5442	.7573

<u>Total, direct and indirect effects</u>						
<u>Total effect x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.6507	.0539	12.0660	.0000	.5442	.7573
<u>Direct effects x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.3475	.0653	5.3205	.0000	.2185	.4765
<u>Indirect effects x on y</u>	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI		
Identity Leadership	.3033	.0696	.1752	.4476		
<u>Normal theory tests for specific indirect effect</u>						
	Effect	SE	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>		
	.3033	.0518	5.8534	.0000		

### ***Workgroup Context***

The results of the simple mediation model showed that the model fitted the data in the workgroup context,  $R^2 = .45$ ,  $F(2,144) = 57.91$ ,  $p < .001$  (Table 10). As in the civil society context, collective action within the workgroup context was significantly predicted by both in-group identification and identity leadership. The result of the indirect effect, however, suggests that the relationship between in-group identification and collective action is not statistically significantly mediated by identity leadership (Hypotheses 2). The Normal theory tests for specific indirect effects however supported our hypothesis for the workgroup context, in that identity leadership - although partially - mediates the relationship between in-group identification and collective action. Given the ambiguity of the results, any interpretation should be made with caution.

Table 10. Simple mediation for workgroup context, Study 2

<u>Outcome: Identity leadership</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	.4396	.2655	1.6557	.1000	-.0852	.9644
In-group identification	.8601	.0741	11.6033	.0000	.7138	1.0069
<u>Outcome: Collective action</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.3353	.2319	5.7571	.0000	.8769	1.7937
Identity Leadership	.1681	.0719	2.3385	.0207	.0260	.3101
In-group Identification	.5924	.0891	5.9415	.0000	.3533	.7056
<u>Total effect model</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.4092	.2333	6.0405	.0000	.9481	1.8703
In-group Identification	.6740	.0651	10.3462	.0000	.5453	.8028
<u>Total, direct and indirect effects</u>						
<u>Total effect x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.6740	.0651	10.3462	.0000	.5453	.8028
<u>Direct effects x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.5924	.0891	5.9415	.0000	.3533	.7056
<u>Indirect effects x on y</u>	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI		
Identity Leadership	.1446	.0806	-.0077	.3082		
<u>Normal theory tests for specific indirect effect</u>						
	Effect	SE	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>		
	.1446	.0633	2.2843	.0224		

The second objective of Study 2 was to explore whether the influence of in-group identification and identity leadership on collective action depends on the social group. Due to the fact that Study 2 was based on a within-subject research design, the possible influence of social group was explored by comparing the explained variance in collective action for all three social group contexts at face value. The explained variance of collective action was highest for the civic society context (60%), followed by the workgroup context (45%), and the least in the political party context (26%). Although we were not able to statistically test the moderation effect of social group on the relationship between in-group identification and collective action via identity leadership, the differences in the explained variances on collective action suggest that social group context might influence the relationship between in-group identification and collective action via identity leadership.

## **Discussion**

Study 2 aimed to explore the role of identity leadership in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action and whether this relationship depends on the social group context. The first objective of Study 2 was to test whether the relationship between in-group identification and collective action is mediated by identity leadership (Hypotheses 1 and 2). The second objective of Study 2 was to explore whether the influence of in-group identification on collective action via identity leadership depends on the social group context. The influence of social group context on the relationship between in-group identification and collective action via identity leadership was explored using the following three social group contexts: political party, civil society in the form of trade unions and the workgroup context.

The preliminary analyses showed firstly, that the items of the identity leadership inventory did not load on four separate factors. It was therefore decided to conceptualise identity leadership as a one dimensional construct in the present study. Secondly, the results



of further factor analyses showed that identity leadership was distinct from in-group identification, in each group context. This shows that these two constructs are distinct from each other, even though they are both based on the social identity approach.

The results of the mediation analyses showed that in-group identification significantly predicted collective action in all three contexts (Hypothesis 1). These results are in line with previous research (Simon et al., 1998; Deaux et al., 2006, van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears., 2008). Moreover, the results showed that in-group identification significantly predicted identity leadership in all three group contexts, supporting the research from studies addressing separate dimensions of identity leadership (Ullrich et al., 2009; Hains et al., 1997; Hogg et al., 1998; Haslam & Reicher, 2007; Haslam et al., 2011; van Dick & Kerschreiter, 2016). This provides further evidence that the process of leadership, more specifically identity leadership, is a process based on group identification (Botindari & Reicher, 2015). Furthermore, the results showed that in-group identification partially predicts collective action through identity leadership in the civil society context and in the workgroup context but not in the political party context.

Lastly, the found differences in the explained variance of collective action already suggest that group context might play a role in influencing the relationship between in-group identification and collective action via identity leadership. However, because Study 2 was based on a within-subject design, it was not possible to test statistically whether social group context indeed moderates the mediated relationship between in-group identification and collective action via identity leadership.

Study 2 had two major limitations. Firstly, 14 instead of 15 items of the identity leadership inventory were presented to the participants due to an oversight while setting up the internet questionnaire and the items of the identity leadership inventory were presented in

random order to each participant. However, according to the manual of the identity leadership inventory the items are supposed to be presented in a fixed order under each dimension. It was therefore decided not only to make sure that the full inventory is applied in the third study but also that the instruction of the manual of the identity leadership inventory is followed. Secondly, due to the explorative nature of Study 2 a within-subject design was applied which did not allow for testing a moderated mediation model statistically. Consequently, Study 3 used a between-subject design and thus a larger sample size.

### Study 3

Study 3 aimed to replicate the general findings of Study 2 that identity leadership mediates the relationship between in-group identification and collective action (Hypotheses 1 and 2). In order to test the simple mediation model in Study 3, it was again necessary to conduct exploratory factor analyses for the three social group contexts to establish the factor structure of identity leadership and to confirm that in-group identification and identity leadership measures assessed two distinct constructs. Moreover, Study 3 applied a between-subjects design, meaning that participants were randomly assigned to one of the three different social group contexts. In this way it was possible to statistically test for the moderating function of social group context in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action, through identity leadership.

#### Sample

A total of 491 students registered with the University of South Africa participated in the study. The participants were randomly allocated to the three social group contexts: political party context, civic society context (trade unions) and work group context. The majority of participants were female ( $n = 233$ ) and 56 participants indicated that they were male. Most participants identified themselves as black ( $n = 148$ ), 15 as coloured, 18 as Indian and 105 participants indicated that they were white, with 3 participants who identified as belonging to other race groups. The participants were on average 29.56 years old ranging from 18 to 65 years. Detailed sample information for the three groups is outlined in Table 11. A Chi square analysis was conducted for race and gender. There was no significant relationship between race and gender,  $X^2(4) = 3.360, p > .05$ , which indicates that gender and race was equally distributed to the various conditions.

Table 11. Sample sizes in each context, Study 3

	Political party	Civil Society	Workgroup
N	166	157	168
Males	20	14	22
Females	99	47	87
Missings	47	96	59
Black	55	43	50
Coloured	5	0	10
Indian	9	2	7
White	48	16	41
Mean age	28.35	30.28	30.45
Age range	18-59	19-65	18-60

### **Ethical Clearance**

Ethical clearance for Study 3 was granted by the College of Graduate Studies and subsequently by the Senate Research, Innovation and Higher Degrees Committee of the University of South Africa.

## **Procedure**

Study 3 was again conducted using Qualtrics. It used the same procedure as Study 1 and 2 in outlining the main aims of the research project on the first page. Different to Study 2, Study 3 applied a between-subjects design, which meant that participants were randomly allocated to one of the three group contexts (i.e., name political party, civil movement or workgroup context). The randomisation was blind and generated by the internet platform Qualtrics.

## **Measures**

In Study 3 all participants' responses were rated on a seven point Likert scale answer format ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). This was different from the second study, which used a five point Likert scale answer format. Identity leadership items were presented in a fixed order under each respective dimension as applied in Study 1 (Steffens et al., 2014). The items assessing in-group identification and those assessing collective action were randomly presented to each participant.

*Identity leadership* was measured as in Study 1 with the items beginning with “This leader”, whereas *in-group identification* ( $\alpha = .89$ ) and *collective action* ( $\alpha = .95$ ) were measured as in Study 2.

## **Results**

### ***Preliminary Analysis***

As in Study 2, the first step was to explore the factor structure of the identity leadership inventory and to test whether identity leadership and in-group identification were two distinct constructs.

*Factor Structure of the identity leadership inventory*

Table 12. Relevant indices testing the factor structure of identity leadership, Study 3

	Political Party	Civic Society	Workgroup
Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin	.95	.94	.94
KMO values for individual variables	> .92	> .92	> .91
Bartlett's test of sphericity	$\chi^2(105) = 2564.29,$ $p < .001$	$\chi^2(105) = 1020.71,$ $p < .001$	$\chi^2(105) = 1939.17,$ $p < .001$
Communalities	.63 to .89	.48 to .79	.48 to .84

Table 12 depicts the relevant indices of the three conducted factor analyses using the maximum likelihood method. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin measures verified again the sampling adequacy for the analyses in all three contexts (Field, 2009, p. 659). Again, all KMO values for individual variables were larger than .91, which is considered as superb (Field, 2009, p. 659). The correlations among the items were sufficiently large for a maximum likelihood test according to the Bartlett's tests of sphericity which were significant in all three contexts. Communalities after extraction ranged from .48 to .89. As in Study 2, only one factor was extracted in all three contexts explaining 74.89% of the variance in the political party context (item loadings ranged from .79 to .94), 68.62% of the variance in the civic society context (item loadings ranged from .66 to .89), and 70.11% of variance in the workgroup context (item loadings ranged from .70 to .92).

As in Study 2, exploratory factor analyses did not distinguish between the four dimensions of the identity leadership inventory in each of the three contexts. Consequently, in further analyses the identity leadership was applied as a single construct.

*Identity leadership versus in-group identification*

Again, SPSS was instructed to extract two factors for all three contexts, since we wanted to ascertain that the aforementioned identity leadership as well as in-group were two distinct constructs.

Table 13. Relevant indices testing the factor structure of identity leadership and in-group identification, Study 3

	Political Party	Civic Society	Workgroup
Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin	.93	.89	.93
KMO values for individual variables	> .84	> .76	> .69
Bartlett's test of sphericity	$\chi^2(300) = 3421.386,$ $p < .001$	$\chi^2(300) = 1491.779,$ $p < .001$	$\chi^2(300) = 2618.228,$ $p < .001$
Communalities	.25 to .81	.23 to .80	.05 to .86

Table 13 summarises the relevant indices of the three conducted factor analyses including the identity leadership measure and the in-group identification measure using the maximum likelihood method. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin measures as well as the KMO values for individual variables (> .69) verified the sampling adequacy for all three contexts (Field, 2009, p. 659). The Bartlett's tests of sphericity were significant, that is to say, the correlations among the items were sufficient to conduct a maximum likelihood test in all three contexts. Communalities after extraction ranged from .05 to .86. Similar to Study 2, two factors were extracted for each context. The pattern matrix of the political party context revealed again that all items of the identity leadership inventory loaded on one factor (item loadings were larger than .73) and all items of the in-group identification measure loaded on the second

factor (all item loadings were larger than .43). In the civic society context all items of the identity leadership inventory loaded on factor one (item loadings larger than .67); while the second factor represented all items of the in-group identification measure (item loadings larger than .40). The pattern matrix of the workgroup context showed that the first factor represented the items of the identity leadership inventory (item loadings larger than .73), while the second factor represented all in-group identification items (item loadings larger than .21).

The results of the factor analyses replicated the findings of Study 2 in that the identity leadership inventory and in-group identification measure were shown to assess two distinct constructs.

### *Descriptive statistics*

Descriptive measures of in-group identification, identity leadership, and collective action for the three group contexts are depicted in Table 14, 15 and 16. The tables show means, standard deviations and inter-correlations. The intercorrelation matrix shows that all of the variables correlated with each other as expected in the respective contexts; with the exception of the political party context. In this context it was found that identity leadership and collective action did not significantly correlate.



Table 14. Means, standard deviations and intercorrelations for political party context, Study 3

	1	2	3
Mean	4.60	5.21	5.34
SD	1.14	1.44	1.17
1. In-group identification	-		
2. Identity leadership	.43**	-	
3. Collective action	.49**	.12	-

Table 15. Means, standard deviations and intercorrelations for civic society context, Study 3

	1	2	3
Mean	4.47	4.99	5.46
SD	1.90	1.81	2.81
1. In-group identification	-		
2. Identity leadership	.55**	-	
3. Collective action	.51**	.58**	-

Table 16. Means, standard deviations and intercorrelations for workgroup context, Study 3

	1	2	3
Mean	4.83	5.18	5.77
SD	1.05	1.37	1.02
1. In-group identification	-		
2. Identity leadership	.61**	-	
3. Collective action	.26**	.37**	-

### Hypothesis testing

The first aim was to replicate the findings of Study 2, which showed that identity leadership mediates the relationship between in-group identification and collective action in the civic society and workgroup contexts but not in the political party context. Simple mediation models using *Process* (Hayes, 2013) were conducted, consisting of in-group

identification as independent variable, collective action as dependent variable and identity leadership as mediator variable. The results showed that the models fitted the data in the respective group contexts: political party context,  $R^2 = .2491$ ,  $F(2,118) = 19.58$ ,  $p < .001$ , civil society context,  $R^2 = .3939$ ,  $F(2, 58) = 18.85$ ,  $p < .001$ , and workgroup context,  $R^2 = .1357$ ,  $F(2,108) = 8.48$ ,  $p < .001$ .

The findings of the present study replicated those of Study 2. Firstly, identity leadership in all three contexts was significantly predicted by in-group identification (see upper parts of Tables 17-19). Secondly, as in Study 2 collective action was not predicted by identity leadership in the political party context, which was qualified by the non-significant indirect effect and the result of the Normal theory test for specific indirect effect (see Table 17). Thus, our hypothesis that identity leadership mediates the relationship between in-group identification and collective action was again not confirmed for the political party context. Thirdly, the result of the indirect effect and the Normal theory tests for specific indirect effect for the contexts of civic society and workgroup supported Hypothesis 2. As in Study 2, identity leadership partially mediated the relationship between in-group identification and collective action in the civil society context (see Table 18). In line with Study 2, the relationship between in-group identification and collective action in the workgroup context was fully mediated by identity leadership in Study 3 (see Table 19).

Table 17. Simple mediation in political party context, Study 3

<u>Outcome: Identity leadership</u>						
	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.7887	.4865	5.7318	.0000	1.8253	3.7521
In-group identification	.5281	.1016	5.1953	.0000	.3268	.7293
<u>Outcome: collective action</u>						
	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3.3815	.4230	7.9943	.0000	2.5439	4.2191
Identity Leadership	-.0915	.0706	-1.2972	.1971	-.2312	.0482
In-group Identification	.5272	.0866	6.0841	.0000	.3556	.6988
<u>Total effect model</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3.1263	.3755	8.3252	.0000	2.3827	3.8699
In-group Identification	.4788	.0785	6.1036	.0000	.3235	.6342
<u>Total, direct and indirect effects</u>						
<u>Total effect x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.4788	.0785	6.1036	.0000	.3235	.6342
<u>Direct effects x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.5272	.0866	6.0841	.0000	.3556	.6988
<u>Indirect effects x on y</u>	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	BootULCI		
Identity Leadership	-.0483	.0335	-.1235	.0093		
<u>Normal theory tests for specific indirect effect</u>						
	Effect	SE	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>		
	-.0483	.0391	-1.2371	.2160		

Table 18. Simple mediation in civic society context, Study 3

<u>Outcome: Identity leadership</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.5539	.4935	5.1340	.0000	1.5463	3.5215
In-group identification	.5285	.1038	5.0937	.0000	.3209	.7361
<u>Outcome: collective action</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.4993	.6574	2.2806	.0263	.1833	2.8153
Identity Leadership	.5073	.1442	3.5187	.0009	.2187	.7959
In-group Identification	.3100	.1379	2.2484	.0284	.0340	.5860
<u>Total effect model</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.7848	.5970	4.6649	.0000	1.5903	3.9793
In-group Identification	.5781	.1255	4.6065	.0000	.3270	.8292
<u>Total, direct and indirect effects</u>						
<u>Total effect x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.5781	.1255	4.6065	.0000	.3270	.8292
<u>Direct effects x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.3100	.1379	2.2484	.0284	.0340	.5860
<u>Indirect effects x on y</u>	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	BootULCI		
Identity Leadership	.2681	.0921	.1226	.4932		
<u>Normal theory tests for specific indirect effect</u>						
	Effect	SE	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>		
	.2681	.0938	2.8580	.0043		

Table 19. Simple mediation in workgroup context, Study 3

<u>Outcome: Identity leadership</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.3160	.4994	2.6352	.0096	.3236	2.3057
In-group identification	.7888	.0995	7.9298	.0000	.5916	.9859
<u>Outcome: collective action</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	4.2073	.4491	9.3689	.0000	3.3171	5.0974
Identity Leadership	.2425	.0835	2.9036	.0045	.0770	.4080
In-group Identification	.0620	.1089	.5695	.5702	-.1538	.2779
<u>Total effect model</u>						
	<i>Beta</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	4.5264	.4500	10.0584	.0000	3.6345	5.4183
In-group Identification	.2533	.0896	2.8259	.0056	.0756	.4309
<u>Total, direct and indirect effects</u>						
<u>Total effect x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.2533	.0896	2.8259	.0056	.0756	.4309
<u>Direct effects x on y</u>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
	.0620	.1089	.5695	.5702	-.1538	.2779
<u>Indirect effects x on y</u>	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	BootULCI		
Identity Leadership	.1913	.0756	.0691	.3661		
<u>Normal theory tests for specific indirect effect</u>						
	Effect	SE	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>		
	.1913	.0706	2.7077	.0068		

The second aim of Study 3 was to explore the moderating role of social context in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action through identity leadership. Given the fact that Study 3 applied a between-subjects design, it was possible to test whether there were statistically significant differences in the paths of the mediation models.

The moderated mediation model was tested by conducting path analysis using AMOS (see Figure 5). Following the procedures for nested model comparisons, in a first step we estimated the most parsimonious model by setting cross group constraints on all the direct paths, namely from in-group identification to identity leadership (path 1), from identity leadership to collective action (path 2) and from in-group identification to collective action (path 3; see Figure 5). The parsimonious model is based on the hypothesis that the path estimates will not be different for the three social groups.

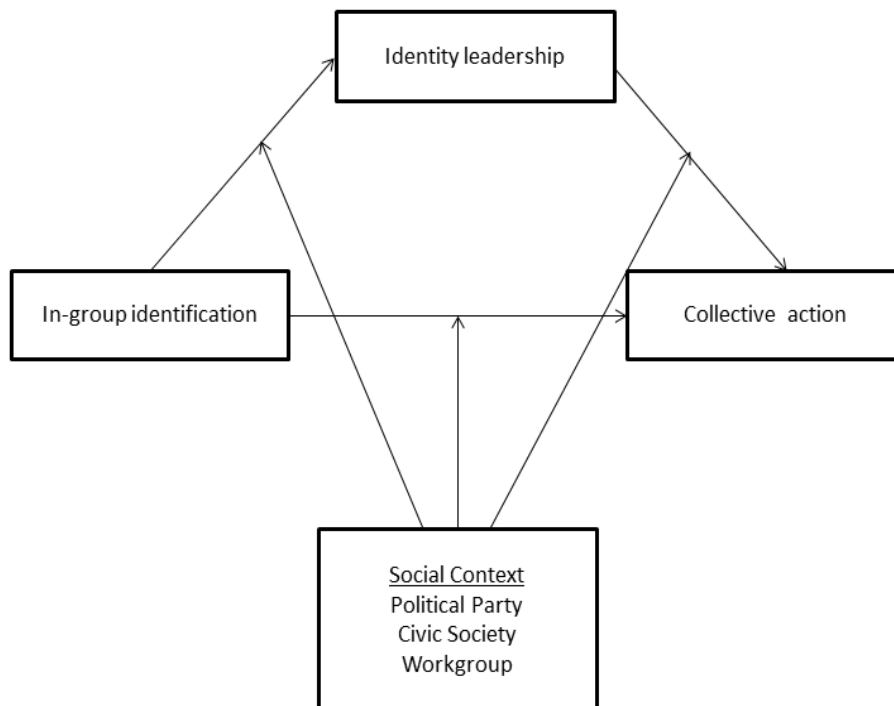


Figure 5. Moderated mediation model

In the second step, four comparison models were defined, with defined freely estimated path parameter in each model. Model 1 defined path 1 (in-group identification on identity leadership) as freely estimated path parameter whereas the paths from identity leadership to collective action (path 2) and from in-group identification to collective action (path 3) were constrained. Model 2 defined path 2 (identity leadership on collective action) as freely estimated path parameter whereas the paths from in-group identification to identity leadership (path 1) and from in-group identification to collective action (path 3) were constrained. Model 3 defined path 3 (in-group identification on collective action) as freely estimated path parameter whereas the paths from in-group identification to identity leadership (path 1) and paths from identity leadership to collective action (path 2) were constrained. Lastly, Model 4 defined path 2 (identity leadership on collective action) and path 3 (in-group identification on collective action) as freely estimated path parameters whereas the path from in-group identification to identity leadership (path 1) was constrained.

The most parsimonious model with cross group constraints on all path parameters showed a rather poor data fit according to the model fit indices,  $\chi^2(6) = 30.464$ ,  $p = .000$ ; NFI = .832; CFI = .851 and RMSEA = .091. The model comparisons revealed that Model 1 which allowed the path between *in-group identification* and *identity leadership* to vary between groups did not fit the data significantly better than the parsimonious model (Chi square difference:  $\chi^2(2) = 5.518$ ,  $p = .063$ ; Model indices:  $\chi^2(4) = 24.945$ ,  $p = .000$ ; NFI = .863; CFI = .872 and RMSEA = .104). The model comparisons further revealed that Model 2 in which the path parameters between *identity leadership* and *collective action* were allowed to vary between the groups,  $\chi^2(4) = 16.694$ ,  $p = .002$ ; NFI = .908; CFI = .922 and RMSEA = .081) and Model 3 in which the path parameters between *in-group identification* and *collective action* were allowed to vary between the groups,  $\chi^2(4) = 23.548$ ; NFI = .870; CFI = .881 and RMSEA = .100, fitted the data significantly better than the parsimonious model according to

the Chi square differences:  $\chi^2(2) = 13.770, p = .001$  and Chi square difference:  $\chi^2(2) = 6.916, p = .031$ , respectively. However Model 4, in which the path parameters between *identity leadership* and *collective action* and the path parameters between *in-group identification* and *collective action* were allowed to vary ( $\chi^2(2) = 5.518, p = .063$ ; NFI = .970; CFI = .979 and RMSEA = .060) not only fitted the data better than the parsimonious model according to the Chi square difference:  $\chi^2(4) = 24.945, p < .000$ , but also Model 2 (Chi square difference:  $\chi^2(2) = 11.175, p = .004$ ) and Model 3 (Chi square difference:  $\chi^2(2) = 18.030, p < .000$ ).

These results imply that the estimates for the path *in-group identification* and *identity leadership* did not differ significantly when the three contexts were compared: political party: *Beta* = .467, *SE* = 0.058,  $p < .001$ ; civic society: *Beta* = .606, *SE* = 0.058,  $p < .001$ ; and workgroup: *Beta* = .497, *SE* = 0.058,  $p < .001$ . However, the estimates did significantly differ for the paths *identity leadership* and *collective action* (political party: *Beta* = -.118, *SE* = 0.070,  $p = .193$ ; civic society: *Beta* = .448, *SE* = 0.139,  $p < .001$ ; workgroup: *Beta* = .305, *SE* = 0.082,  $p < .01$ ) and *in-group identification* and *collective action* (political party: *Beta* = .524, *SE* = 0.91,  $p < .001$ ; civic society: *Beta* = .274, *SE* = 0.138,  $p < .05$ ; workgroup: *Beta* = .064, *SE* = 0.100,  $p = .534$ ) (see Table 20).



Table 20. Standardised betas and explained variances, Study 3

	Political Party		Civic society		Workgroup	
	Identity	Collective	Identity	Collective	Identity	Collective
	Leadership	Action	Leadership	Action	Leadership	Action
Explained Variance	.21.8%	.23.1%	36.8%	42.5%	24.7%	11.7%
In-group Identification	.467***	.524***	.606***	.274*	.497***	.064
Identity Leadership		-.118		.448***		.305**

However, in order to specify which of the three group contexts differed from each other with regard to the found overall group differences in the paths *identity leadership* on *collective action* and *in-group identification* on *collective action* further group comparisons were conducted. Thus, we compared Model 4 which defined the paths between *in-group identification* on *collective action* and *identity leadership* on *collective action* as freely estimated path parameter with two models that restricted either the path *in-group identification* on *collective action* or the path *identity leadership* on *collective action*. In the first analysis we compared the contexts political party versus civil movement; followed by the comparison of political party context versus workgroup context, and lastly we compared the civil society context with the workgroup context.

The first analysis which compared the political party and the civic society context revealed for the path *identity leadership* on *collective action* significant differences,  $\chi^2(1) = 13.403, p < .001$ , but not for the path *in-group identification* and *collective action*,  $\chi^2(1) =$

1.831,  $p = .176$ . The former indicates that the differences in the standardised betas (see Table 20) for the relationship between identity leadership and collective action were significant indicating that identity leadership is predictive for collective action in the civic society context but not in the political party context. The standardised betas (see Table 20) for the relationship between in-group identification and collective action did not differ indicating that in-group identification is predictive for collective action in the political party context as well as in the civil society context.

The second analysis compared political party context and workgroup context. Significant Chi-square differences were found for both the path between *identity leadership* on *collective action*,  $\chi^2(1) = 9.327, p = .002$ , and the path between *in-group identification* and *collective action*,  $\chi^2(1) = 11.109, p = .001$ . These results as well as the standardised betas (see Table 20) indicate that identity leadership is predictive for collective action only in the workgroup context but not in the political party context, and that in-group identification is predictive on collective action only in the political party context but not in the workgroup context.

Lastly, the civil society and the workgroup context were compared. The path comparisons using Chi-square differences revealed no significant differences in the path between *identity leadership* on *collective action*,  $\chi^2(1) = 2.592, p = .107$ , and the path between *in-group identification* and *collective action*,  $\chi^2(1) = 2.048, p = .152$ . These results indicate that identity leadership is predictive for collective action in both contexts and that the standardised betas (see Table 20) in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action did not differ significantly between the civic society context and the workgroup context.

These results suggest that social group context indeed moderates various paths in the mediation model predicting collective action. The results specify that social group context moderates the relationship between identity leadership and collective action as well as the relationship between in-group identification and collective action. More specifically, in the relationship between identity leadership and collective action, the political party context was significantly different from civic society and workgroup context, which did not differ significantly from each other. And in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action the workgroup context differed significantly from the political party context, but not from the civil movement context.

Moreover, the explained variances depicted in Table 20 show that collective action was best explained by in-group identification and identity leadership in the civil society context followed by the political party context and then the workgroup contexts.

## **Discussion**

Study 3 aimed to replicate the general findings of Study 2 that identity leadership mediates the relationship between in-group identification and collective action in the civil society and work context but not in the political party context. Moreover, Study 3 applied a between-subjects design, meaning that participants were randomly assigned to one of the three different social group contexts. In this way it was possible to statistically test for the moderating function of social group context in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action through identity leadership.

As in Study 2, the preliminary analysis showed that the four factor structure of identity leadership could not be confirmed and most importantly the items of identity leadership and in-group identification were found to measure distinct constructs.

The simple mediation analyses replicated the results of Study 2 in that in-group identification predicted collective action through identity leadership in the civic society and workgroup context, but not in the political party context. In the political party context there was only a direct effect between in-group identification and collective action. Identity leadership, however, did not mediate the aforementioned relationship. However, the indirect effect was significant in the civic society and workgroup context. Moreover, in the present study, there was a full mediation in the workgroup context, meaning that the influence of in-group identification on collective action was completely mediated by identity leadership.

The results of the moderated mediation suggest that social group context indeed moderates particular paths within the mediation model predicting collective action. More specifically, social group context moderated the relationships between in-group identification and collective action and between identity leadership and collective action. With regard to the relationship between identity leadership and collective action, the three-group comparison revealed that identity leadership was similarly predictive for collective action in the civic society context and in the workgroup context but not in the political context. With regard to the relationship between in-group identification and collective action, the three-group comparison revealed that in-group identification was similarly predictive for collective action in the civic society and in the political party context but not in the workgroup context.

Lastly, the results showed that in all three social groups there was a consistent relationship between in-group identification and identity leadership. The finding suggests that the relationship between in-group identification and identity leadership does not depend on the social group context. Moreover, this finding shows that identity leadership is based on the process of in-group identification (Ulrich et al., 2009; Hains et al., 1997; Hogg et al., 1998; Haslam & Reicher, 2007; Haslam et al., 2011; van Dick & Kerschreiter, 2016).

## General Discussion

The overall aim of the present research was to provide answers to the question of how collective action is coordinated in the service of group goals. This question was addressed by proposing six hypotheses which were based on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011) as well as related research. The first hypothesis stated that the more people identify with a relevant in-group, the more they will be prepared to engage in collective action on behalf of that group (Hypothesis 1). Secondly, it was proposed that the more followers identify with their group the more they will perceive the group leader as prototypical which in turn will influence their intentions to engage in collective action (Hypothesis 2). Thirdly, it was assumed that the more followers identify with the in-group the more they will perceive the leader to be advancing their group's interests which will influence their intentions to engage in collective action (Hypothesis 3). The fourth hypothesis stated that the stronger followers identify with their group the more they will perceive the group leader as an identity entrepreneur and this will influence their intentions to engage in collective action (Hypothesis 4). The fifth hypothesis stated that the more followers identify with their in-group the more they will perceive the group leader to deliver concrete outcomes which will influence their intentions to engage in collective action (Hypothesis 5). The sixth hypothesis proposed that the mediated relationship between in-group identification and collective action through identity leadership is conditional on social group context (Hypothesis 6).

In order to test Hypotheses 2 to 5, it was crucial that the four dimensional structure of the identity leadership inventory could be replicated within the South African context (Study 1). The results of the confirmatory factor analysis of Study 1 indicated that the oblique four-factor model of identity leadership (Model 3) showed a significantly better fit to the data when compared to the 15 item one factor model (Model 1) and the 15 item four-factor model

with second order factor (Model 2), respectively. These results replicated the findings of Steffens, Haslam, Reicher and colleagues (2014) that the identity leadership inventory indeed captures four relatively distinct identity leadership dimensions. Besides replicating the four dimensional structure, Study 1 also replicated the strong relationships among the four identity leadership dimensions. The latter had implications for Study 2 and Study 3, which aimed to test whether the four identity leadership dimensions mediate the relationship between in-group identification and collective action. Consequently, it was imperative to explore the factor structure of the identity leadership inventory in the subsequent studies.

Exploratory factor analyses using the maximum likelihood method were conducted in Study 2 and Study 3 in order to explore the factor structure of the identity leadership inventory. The factor analyses could not discriminate between the four identity leadership dimensions in both studies, irrespective of the social group context. These results were actually not surprising given the findings of Study 1 which already pointed toward the strong intercorrelations among the four identity leadership dimensions. Thus, it was decided to conceptualise identity leadership as a one dimensional construct in the further analyses. Consequently, Hypotheses 2 to 5 were collapsed into one hypothesis which specified that identity leadership mediates the relationship between in-group identification and collective action (Hypothesis 2). Moreover, additional exploratory factor analyses in Study 2 and Study 3 revealed that identity leadership and in-group identification are two distinct constructs in all three the social group contexts (i.e., political party, civil society and workgroup). The findings showed that there is no overlap between the two constructs, even though identity leadership is assumed to result from social identity processes (Haslam et al., 2011).

In-group identification directly predicted collective action in almost all three social group contexts (Hypothesis 1). While the direct effect was found in all three group contexts in Study 2; the direct link between in-group identification and collective action was found in

the political party and civic society contexts in Study 3. In the workgroup context of Study 3, in-group identification predicted collective action only indirectly via identity leadership. The aforementioned results support previous findings that the more people identify with a relevant in-group, the more they will be prepared to engage in collective action on behalf of that group (Simon et al., 1998; Deaux et al., 2006; van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears., 2008).

Secondly, the results of Study 2 and 3 imply that identity leadership is indeed functional for the relationship between in-group identification and collective action (Hypothesis 2). The latter was shown for both the civic society and workgroup contexts but not for the political party context (Study 2 and 3). In the political party context, it was found that identity leadership did not statistically mediate the relationship between in-group identification and collective action. These results were qualified by the findings from the moderated mediation analyses of Study 3 which showed that the relationship between identity leadership and collective action through identity leadership are indeed dependent on the social group context (Hypothesis 3). Specifically, it is the relationship between identity leadership and collective action, and the relationship between in-group identification and collective action that were found to be conditional on social group context. For instance, the relationship between identity leadership and collective action in the political party context, which was statistically non-significant, differed significantly from the same relationship in the civic society and workgroup contexts which was statistically significant, respectively. The relationship between in-group identification and collective action in the workgroup context was found to be significantly different from the political party context but not from the civil movement context. These findings suggest that while in-group identification seems to be sufficient to predict collective action in the political party context; the workgroup context requires the interplay between in-group identification and identity leadership to predict collective action.

Moreover, the results of Study 2 and Study 3 consistently showed that identity leadership was directly influenced by in-group identification as shown in previous research (Ulrich et al., 2009; Hains et al., 1997; Hogg et al., 1998; Haslam & Reicher, 2007; Haslam et al., 2011; van Dick & Kerschreiter, 2016). The results of Study 3 further implied that this statistically significant relationship was not influenced by social group contexts at all. These findings support the suggestion that leadership becomes instrumental to the extent that people identify with their social groups (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014).

The reported studies make contributions to various social psychological discourses. The first contribution relates to the important role of in-group identification in members' readiness to act collectively. Research has shown that an individual's identification with a group has psychological as well as social consequences, which makes group identification a very important and indispensable construct in the study of intragroup as well as intergroup processes (Leach et al., 2008). More specifically, stronger identification with a group means stronger self-definition, which is the perception of in-group characteristics as representing the self and the perception of the self as similar to other group members (Tropp & Wright, 2001; Leach et al., 2008). Stronger in-group identification also means stronger self-investment, which means that members have an emotional attachment as well as a bond with the group (Leach, et al., 2008; van Zomeren & Spears, 2009). Ultimately, when people define themselves as similar to the group and when they psychologically invest in the group, they tend to perceive benefits to the group as benefits to the self. In other words, people strive for and benefit from a positive social identity associated with their group memberships. Consequently, people's engagement in collective action for the benefit of the group is one of the ways in which people express and experience positive social identity (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). With this in mind, it is not surprising that identification with a social group is important for collective action, because the idea of collective action indicates



a behaviour that individuals carry out collectively. Our findings therefore, extend our understanding of this relationship by showing that identification with a social group does not only directly influence collective action but also indirectly through the coordination of a leader. These findings add to the rich social psychological literature which shows that in-group identification plays a major role in determining group members' engagement in collective action (Kawakami & Dion, 1995; Simon et al., 1998; De Weerd and Klandermans, 1999; Deaux et al., 2006; Blader, 2007; van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). Moreover, our findings suggest that the social group context determines when this relationship is likely to occur directly (e.g., political party) and when this relationship is likely to occur indirectly, via identity leadership (e.g., civic society and workgroup).

The second contribution concerns the relationship between group members' identification and perceptions of identity leadership. Theoretically, it has been suggested that identity leadership develops from processes that are related to the psychological belonging to the group (Haslam et al., 2011). It has been argued that it is mainly through social identity processes that leaders are able to exert influence on their followers (Turner, 2005). Moreover, there is evidence from research studies conducted on single dimensions of identity leadership, which showed that identity leadership dimensions are only important when group members identify with their group (Ullrich et al., 2009; Hains et al., 1997; Hogg et al., 1998; Haslam & Reicher, 2007; Haslam et al., 2011; van Dick & Kerschreiter, 2016). The present research contributes to this discourse by showing that in-group identification predicts identity leadership. This relationship was consistent and it was found across social group contexts. Moreover, the relationships between in-group identification and collective action through leadership corroborate the argument that social identity gives rise to social influence, which then enables group members to act as a collective (see also Turner, 2005). According to the

social identity approach to leadership, leadership is not something that is innate in a person or in a position; it is based on in-group identification processes (van Knippenberg, 2011).

The third contribution made by this research is that it extends our understanding of collective action. Research has shown that people participate in collective action to express a grievance such as perceived injustice (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). More precisely, relative deprivation theory suggests that this grievance occurs when people compare themselves to others currently or over time and find themselves at a disadvantage in this comparison process (Runciman, 1966). Collective action is also dependent on perceived efficacy, the belief that through working together as a group, change can be achieved. However, in-group identification is the basic process through which collective action occurs (see van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). Our findings have shown that in certain instances leadership, and more specifically identity leadership, is important in coordinating collective action. Although the relationship between leadership and willingness to serve the in-group has been previously demonstrated (Cregan et al., 2009), the present findings extend our knowledge by showing that the more followers identify with a group, the more they become inclined to perceive the leader as one who engages in identity leadership and this in turn influences their intentions to participate in collective action. These results are not necessarily in contradiction to Cregan and colleagues' study (2009) which showed that transformational leaders create and develop in-group member's identification with the group, which then influences in-group members' collectivism but rather suggest that the relationship between in-group identification and identity leadership is bi-directional. The latter has already been demonstrated by Fransen et al. (2016), who showed that in-group members' perception of identity leadership results in stronger identification with the group.

The fourth contribution concerns the importance of social group context when examining the aforementioned relationships. It has been suggested that social identity processes do not occur in a social vacuum, but that they depend on the social group context (Hinkle & Brown, 1990 cited in Kelly, 1993). For instance, it has been proposed that identity leadership should be studied in different social and organisational contexts (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). Calls to examine the importance of social contexts have also been echoed in the study of social protests (van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2010). Social identity theory stipulates that the structural conditions of the in-group (e.g., perceived permeability of group boundaries) and the respective intergroup relations (e.g., perceived stability and legitimacy of intergroup differences) actually determine people's inclination to act collectively. For instance, the inclination to engage in collective action depends in part, on the permeability of group boundaries (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In the present research, it was assumed that in a group context where in-group boundaries are perceived as permeable, group goals would be less salient, and that such groups would require the coordination of a leader to engage in collective action. On the other hand, we assumed that in an in-group context where group boundaries are perceived to be impermeable, group goals may be more salient, in which cases the role of the leader might be less important to coordinate collective action. Our results actually pointed into the direction of these assumptions as identity leadership was instrumental in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action in the civic society context and the workgroup context. These are two social group contexts in which group boundaries were assumed to be more permeable (i.e., it might be easy for people to leave these groups) and it was assumed that such groups require some form of leadership in coordinating collective action. On the other hand, the context of political parties was assumed to have rather impermeable in-group boundaries (i.e., leaving a political party might be more difficult) and therefore a leader would not be necessary to coordinate

collective action. The results showed that in-group identification was sufficient to predict collective action in the latter context. However, the outlined explanations should be interpreted with caution for the following reason. Although the results pointed in the direction of our assumptions, the studies reported here did not control for perceptions of in-group permeability nor did they control for the salience of group goals. Consequently, future research should systematically control for these variables. Nevertheless, our findings contribute to our understanding of the social context's role by showing that social group context moderates the relationship between identity leadership and collective action, as well as the relationship between in-group identification and collective action. The findings suggest that the aforementioned relationships are indeed conditional on the social context.

The fifth contribution relates to the discourse concerning the identity leadership inventory's power to discriminate the four leadership dimensions. Previous studies, which tested the identity leadership inventory, found that although the inventory captured four distinct dimensions, they were however strongly correlated with each other (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014). This suggests that these constructs overlap considerably (see also Botindari & Reicher, 2015, Steffens et al., 2013). Currently, two positions can be identified on how to address the identity leadership inventory's power (or lack of it) to discriminate between the four leadership dimensions. On the one hand, Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al. (2014) argue that the inventory should be used to examine separate dimensions of identity leadership rather than to combine them into a global measure (Steffens, Haslam, et al., 2014, p. 1019). On the other hand, researchers conceptualise identity leaderships as an overall construct (see Fransen et al., 2016). The present research, which replicated the four dimensional structure of identity leadership as well as the strong intercorrelations among the four dimensions, opted to examine the role of identity leadership as an overall construct in the relationship between in-group identification and collective action. The decision to

conceptualise identity leadership as an overall construct was made with an understanding of possible limitations. Moreover, the results of the present study might question the argument of Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al. (2014, p.1019) who also proposed that the social context might determine whether the four dimensions of identity leadership will strongly correlate. However, further systematic research is required to gain confidence in this regard.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

As with any research, the reported studies need to be understood in conjunction with their obvious limitations. The first limitation refers to the conceptualisation of identity leadership as an overall construct which did not allow assessing the role of the individual leadership dimensions in the interplay between in-group identification and collective action. Future research might opt for the examination of the separate dimensions of identity leadership as proposed by Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al. (2014). For instance, the role of identity prototypicality or identity entrepreneurship may have particular outcomes in a political context compared to an organisational context (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher et al., 2014).

Secondly, although “there is nothing as practical as a good theory” (Kurt Lewin) which in most cases is a parsimonious model, most of these parsimonious theories or models capture only parts of the human psychological reality. Or to apply the expression of Robert Merton (1949) to social psychology, most social psychological theories are theories of limited scope (i.e., middle range theory). The same applies to the present research, which was based on a rather simple model. Simple models, such as the present model, exclude important variables such as inter-individual difference variables (e.g., affiliation to political parties or trade unions, personal leadership experiences, belief systems about leaders, and/or ideologies), and situational variables (e.g., current salience of social group contexts for

participants due to particular social or political events). Again future research might address this limitation.

Thirdly, the present study conceptualised social context in terms of the permeability of group boundaries and the salience of group goals without empirically controlling for them. Although the proposed conceptualisation could be considered as innovative; it still needs to be confirmed empirically. It is also thinkable that social context could be conceptualised in terms of prevalent norms, values or even the nature of social interactions within a social group. We would argue that the latter might be particularly fruitful in understanding the different functionalities of the identity leadership dimensions. For instance, if we take the relational model theory (Fiske, 1991), which proposes four essential forms of social interactions (i.e., communal sharing, authority ranking, equality matching and market pricing), one could assume that a social context characterised by the relational model of authority ranking might require a different engagement in identity leadership (e.g., identity entrepreneurship) when compared to a social context characterised by the relational model of communal sharing (e.g., identity prototypicality).

A fourth limitation refers to the research designs used in the present studies. Although the application of within- and between-subject research designs could be seen as strength of the reported studies; the absence of additional studies replicating the identified moderation effect of social group context should be seen as a limitation. Additionally, while it can be seen as strength that the present research was exclusively conducted with real groups; the fact that no experimental research designs were applied to manipulate the independent, mediation and moderator variables needs to be seen as weakness. The use of experimental research designs would allow not only establishing the causal links between in-group identification and identity leadership; and identity leadership and collective action but also the conditional effect of on social context.

A fifth limitation concerns the intragroup focus of the present research. As stated in the introduction, the present research was focused on addressing how collective action is coordinated in the service of group goals. It might be interesting for future studies to apply this model within an intergroup context in order to identify the leadership dimensions that are instrumental in intergroup versus intragroup situations.

Another limitation of the present research was the conceptualisation of collective action as a response to the request of an in-group leader. Firstly, collective action was assessed as support and intention to act collectively rather than actual behaviour. Secondly, the items that measured collective action referred to general rather than concrete actions such as strike actions, participating in a street rally, occupying public spaces or signing a petition. Future research might address this limitation.

## **Conclusion**

Irrespective of the outlined limitations, the present research provides insights into the basic dynamics of collective action from a social identity perspective by exploring the role of in-group identification, identity leadership and social group context. The exploration and the demonstration of these basic dynamics are important because they constitute a departure point from where we can better understand the formation, dynamics and effects of real social protests. However, in order to capture the reality of social protests it is necessary to consider and explore the formation and articulation of shared grievance which is considered as a necessary condition of collective actions. Because South Africa is viewed as the “protest capital of the world” (Rodrigues, 2010) and is currently facing an increase in shared grievances according to social movements such as #occupytreasury, #SouthAfricaShutDown, #SouthAfricaMustRise and # SaveSouthAfrica, it is pertinent to further extend our understanding of the “when”, the “why” and the “how” of social protests.

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