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Deposited in DRO:

07 January 2011

Version of attached file:

Published Version

Peer-review status of attached file:

Peer-reviewed

Citation for published item:

Schyns, B. (2001) 'The relationship between employees self-monitoring and occupational self-efficacy and transformational leadership.', Current research in social psychology., 7 (3). pp. 30-42.

Further information on publisher's website:

http://www.uiowa.edu/ grpproc/crisp/crisp.7.3.htm

Publisher's copyright statement:

Additional information:

CURRENT RESEARCH IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEES' SELF-MONITORING AND OCCUPATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY AND PERCEIVED TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP[1]

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ABSTRACT

The topic of the present study is the relationship between transformational leadership as perceived by followers and follower characteristics such as self-monitoring and self-efficacy. Self-monitoring was hypothesized to be positively related to transformational leadership, as persons with high self-monitoring are a) sensitive to expressive behaviors of others and b) able to control their own expressive behavior. The correlations found here, however, are too small to confirm this assumption. With respect to self-efficacy, past research leads to two contradictory assumptions concerning its relationship to transformational leadership: a) Self-efficacy is negatively related to a perception of transformational leadership as "weak" employees (i.e. persons with low self-efficacy) are especially susceptible to transformational leadership or b) Self-efficacy is positively related to a perception of transformational leadership as employees with high self-efficacy see themselves as being similar to their leaders and thus tend to perceived transformational leadership in their leaders. Whereas the first hypothesis had to be rejected, the second was supported. The sample was then subdivided into groups in order to test extreme group differences. No extreme group differences could be found.

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INTRODUCTION

Charismatic leadership is an old concept going back to the renowned Great-Men theory (for an overview see Bass 1990). In recent leadership research this concept has been rediscovered (Avolio and Bass 1998; Klein and House 1998). Whereas research originally focussed on leaders' attributes, more recent conceptions in this research area, such as the research on

transformational leadership (Avolio and Bass 1998), emphasize exceptional leadership behavior. Bass and Avolio (1990), for example, have identified characteristics of exceptional leadership behavior, such as individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation.

Different authors discuss the relationship between charismatic and transformational leadership concepts. Yukl (1999) stresses the differences between the two concepts and argues that transformational behavior may even make it less likely that followers perceive charisma. He argues that transformational behavior aims at developing and empowering followers. As a consequence, followers will be more independent and less likely to attribute charisma to their leaders. Thus, Yukl implies that only dependent followers attribute charisma to their leaders.

In contrast, Bass (1985, 1994) states that charisma is an essential part of transformational leadership. In his opinion, followers' perception of charisma adds to the success of transformational leaders. The charismatic part – according to Bass (1994) – is the shared vision, whereas the transformational part is the individual consideration given to followers. He leaves the question open as to whether or not certain characteristics of followers make them more sensitive to charisma.

As is commonly viewed in recent research (see e.g. de Vries, Roe and Taillieu 1999; Den Hartog, House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, Dorfman et al. 1999), I have taken on the assumption that transformational <u>behavior</u> of leaders is a reflection of the leaders' charismatic <u>attributes</u>. This is also in line with the theoretical view of House and Shamir (1993) who try to integrate charismatic, visionary, and transformational leadership by isolating behaviors that all theories have in common. They specify seven behaviors in detail: (a) visionary behavior, (b) image building, (c) empowering behaviors, (d) risk taking and self-sacrificial behavior, (e) intellectual stimulation, (f) supportive leader behavior, and (g) adaptive behavior. There is no difference made in this study between the concepts of charismatic and transformational leadership[2]. In addition, arguments which refer to perceived charismatic leadership can be extended to perceived transformational leadership. Thus, I refer to charismatic and transformational leadership as transformational leadership.

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In most studies, researchers ask subordinates to rate their leaders' behavior in order to assess the behaviors associated with transformational leadership. However, several authors have discussed whether or not this kind of assessment more likely reflects attributes of followers than attributes or behaviors of leaders. Ayman (1993) argues that it is, in fact, the perception of followers which is being assessed when questionnaires are distributed to them and goes on to explain several processes that influence this perception. For example, he argues that the followers' implicit theories shape the descriptions of leaders. Implicit leadership theories can be defined as the conception one has about how a leader should be or should behave. Eden and Leviathan (1975) studied the effect of implicit (followers') leadership theories on employees' statements with respect to the behavior of their leaders. When distributing leadership questionnaires, Eden and Leviathan (1975) gave no information about leadership behavior to participants who were to fill the questionnaire out. From the results they concluded that implicit leadership theories could

explain the factor structures attained with the leadership questionnaires in studies on leadership behavior. I have aligned myself with Ayman in this paper and use the term "perceived" transformational leadership when the leadership assessment has taken place by means of followers' ratings.

The assumption that followers' characteristics (such as implicit leadership theories) influence the perception of charisma is in line with Weber's (1921) assumptions. Weber had already stated that no charismatic leader can emerge without followers that recognize his / her exceptional characteristics. However, the important question is precisely which follower characteristics lead followers to perceive their leaders as transformational.

In response to such questions, discussions in recent research have arisen concerning possible influential (personality) characteristics of followers (see e.g. Ehrhart and Klein 2001; Weierter 1997, 1999).

In line with the research on followers' characteristics and their relationship to (perceived) transformational leadership, Weierter (1997) focused on the effect of several personality constructs on the follower's perception of transformational leadership. In a theoretical analysis, he introduced four personality characteristics of followers: self-monitoring, self-concept clarity, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. He sets up a model in which self-monitoring and self-concept clarity of followers are necessary preconditions for the perception of transformational leadership, whereas self-esteem and self-efficacy are preconditions for the maintenance of a transformational relationship.

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Weierter's first proposal (1997, 1999),as far as self-monitoring is concerned, is that high self-monitors are more likely to perceive transformational leadership than low self-monitors. He justifies this assumption by referring to the definition of self-monitoring. High self-monitorers are a) sensitive to the expressive behavior of others and b) able to control their expressive behavior in accordance with the (perceived) needs of a situation (e.g. Gangestad and Snyder 2000). According to the first part of this definition, high self-monitoring can consequently be seen as a precondition for the sensitivity to perceive charisma in a leader. Thus, (H1) self-monitoring is positively related to perceived transformational leadership.

Keller (1999) studied the relationship between implicit leadership theories and personality traits. She found a correlation of r = .11 between self-monitoring and representation of leadership as transformational. She proposes that employees might attribute transformational leadership to their leaders if they feel similar to them.

Ehrhart and Klein (2001) endorse this position and suggest that followers who are similar to transformational leaders show a preference for those leaders. This similarity includes aspects such as achievement orientation and high self-esteem. They found low but significant correlations between preference for a transformational leader and achievement (r= .16) and between preference for a transformational leader and self-esteem (r = .16).

Secondly, according to Weierter's (1997) model, transformational leaders enhance self-efficacy

and self-esteem of their followers. Bandura (1977) defines self-efficacy as the belief in one's ability to successfully execute the behaviour required to produce certain outcomes (p. 193). Applying this definition to a leadership context, Weierter (1997) asserts that followers' self-efficacy is necessary for maintaining a transformational relationship between followers and leaders.

While Weierter (1997) regards leaders' behavior as antecedent to followers self-efficacy, the opposite view is argued for here. Klein and House (1995) tried to extract characteristics of followers that make them sensitive to transformational leadership in the sense that they are more likely to perceive transformational leadership. They suggest that it is possible that "strong" employees might be sensitive to charisma, as they do not believe their feeling of self-worth and self-efficacy are threatened by those leaders and thus are more likely to perceive transformational leadership than "weak" employees.

In light of Klein and House (1995), it can therefore be expected (H2a) that self-efficacy is positively related to the perceptions of transformational leadership.

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On the other hand, Klein and House (1995) assume that weak subordinates are more sensitive to transformational leadership in the sense that they are more likely to perceive transformational leadership. This view is shared by Yukl (1999) who implies that only dependent followers attribute transformational to their leaders. For this reason, (H2b) self-efficacy is negatively related to the perceptions of transformational leadership.

METHOD

Participants
The sample in this study included 141 participants. Sixty-one were male, 80 female. The mean age was 37.4 years (SD = 12.9). Seventeen of the participants were blue-collar workers, 124 were white-collar workers. Forty-seven have or had a position as a superior, 94 have / had not.

Measures
Transformational Leadership. Transformational leadership was assessed using the transformational scales of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; Bass and Avolio 1990; adapted and translated by Felfe and Goihl, in press). In contrast to Bass and Avolio (1990; see also Avolio, Bass and Jung 1999), who found a four-factor-solution, a factor analysis[3] hinted at a one-factor-solution in the present study. This result is in line with results of earlier studies indicating high interrelations between the transformational scales of the MLQ (see Tejeda, Scandura and Pillai 2001; Den Hartog, van Muijen, and Koopman 1997). The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of the combined scale was alpha = .93.

Self-Monitoring. The two-subscaled instrument developed by Lennox and Wolfe (1984) was used to assess self-monitoring. The first subscale is called "Sensitivity to expressive behavior of others" (abbreviated "sensitivity") and reflects the first facet of self-monitoring. It consists of 6 items. The second subscale is called "Ability to modify self-presentation" (abbreviated "self-presentation) and reflects the second facet of self-monitoring. It consists of seven items. For the

German translation (Schyns and Paul 2002), the subscale "sensitivity" could be replicated in a factor analysis with all thirteen items as Lennox and Wolfe suggested. Some of the items of the subscale "self-presentation" had low factor loadings; others loaded high on both factors. Both subscales were thus tested in single factor analyses. For the subscale "sensitivity" only one factor with an eigenvalue higher than 1 emerged. The items of this subscale loaded reasonably high. A sample item of this subscale is: "I'm often able to read people's true emotions through their eyes". The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) was alpha = .70.

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In a factor analysis of the subscale "self-presentation," two of the seven items loaded lower than .3 on the factor ("I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them" and "I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation I find myself in"). They were eliminated from the scale. As the internal consistency rose again after eliminating another item ("In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for"), this item was eliminated from the scale, as well. Thus, the remaining subscale consisted of four items. A sample item of this subscale is: "When I feel that the image I am portraying isn't working, I can readily change it to something that does". The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) was alpha = .71.

Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale. The Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale (OCCSEFF; Schyns and v. Collani, under review) is a work-related, generalized scale that is applicable to different work place contexts as well as to different organizations. The scale thus seemed to be especially good in this context as participants with various occupations were questioned. It consists of 20 items. A sample item is: "When I make plans concerning my occupational future, I'm certain I can make them work." A Likert-type response scale with 6 categories was used, ranging from 1 ("completely true") to 6 ("not at all true"). The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) was alpha = .92.

PROCEDURE

Students, who earned course credit for collecting the data, administered the questionnaires to the participants[4]. They selected participants on the condition that they were presently working and have a direct superior. Thus, no self-employed persons took part in the study.

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses
Prior to testing the hypotheses, tests were done in order to find out if the demographic variables have any relationship to the perception of transformational leadership. Neither age, nor length of employment (in one's life, in the company, under supervisor) had any significant correlation to perceived transformational leadership (r between -.00 and -.06).

In addition, no significant differences were obtained between male and female participants on transformational leadership scale. The means were 3.44 and 3.56, respectively (t (136) = - 1.04, p = .30). No significant differences emerged between participants with male (M = 3.47) and female leaders (M = 3.62; (t (136) = - 1.11, p = .27).

No significant difference on perceived transformational leadership was found for blue and white collar workers (M = 3.31 and M = 3.56, respectively; t (125) = - 1.21, p = .23) and for participants who have or had a position as a superior and those who have / had not (M = 3.57 and M = 3.51, respectively; t (136) = 0.41, p = .68).

As the demographic and occupational variables turned out not to be related to perceived transformational, these were excluded from further investigations.

Test of Hypotheses

Because self-monitoring was assessed with two subscales ("Sensitivity to expressive behavior of others" – Sensitivity – and "Ability to modify self-presentation" – Ability), two single correlations were calculated to test H1 (positive relation between self-monitoring and transformational leadership). The correlation between "Sensitivity" and transformational leadership is virtually zero (see Table 1). The correlation between "self-presentation" and transformational leadership is positive but rather low (see Table 1). Thus, H1 has to be rejected.

In order to test H2a and H2b (self-efficacy is positively vs. negatively related to the perception of transformational leadership), a correlation was computed between self-efficacy and transformational leadership. The correlation was .21. This result argues for H2a and H2b has to be rejected. However, as this test might be too insensitive to the possible effects of very low or very high self-efficacy, extreme groups of self-efficacy were set up. The first group consisted of the 1/3 of employees with highest self-efficacy; the second group consisted of the 1/3 employees with lowest self-efficacy. A middle group with the 1/3 persons with middle self-efficacy was also set up.

A proper test of extreme group differences would then be to compare participants with particularly high self-efficacy to the remaining participants. Participants with high self-efficacy should show higher perception of transformational leadership than the remaining persons. The mean on transformational leadership for participants with high self-efficacy is 3.64. For the remaining persons it is 3.45. This difference is not significant (t (133) = 1.3, p = .20).

In a second t-test, the persons with particularly low self-efficacy were compared to the remaining persons. Participants with low self-efficacy should perceive their leaders as more transformational than the remaining persons. The mean on transformational leadership for participants with low self-efficacy is 3.31. For the remaining persons it is 3.64. This difference is significant (t (133) = -2.31, p = .02) but in the opposite direction than was expected.

Table 1: Means, standard deviations, and correlations for scales

	Mean	Standard deviation	Transformational leadership	Self-efficacy	Sensitivity

Transformational leadership	3.53	0.80		
Self-efficacy	4.71	0.71	.206**	
Sensitivity	4.35	0.59	.051	.242***
Self-presentation	4.28	0.73	.133	.322***	.438***

* p < .10; ** p < .05; *** p < .01.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to examine the employee characteristics self-monitoring and self-efficacy and their relationship to transformational leadership, as rated by employees. Research and theory on charisma and transformational leadership lead to the assumption that employee characteristics influence the perception of leadership behavior and especially transformational leadership (see Klein and House 1995; Weierter 1997, 1999; Weierter, Ashkanasy and Callan 1997). This could also be assumed from Weber's original model of charisma (1921), in which Weber stated that in order to be charismatic, leaders have to have followers who perceive them as charismatic.

As far as self-monitoring is concerned, the assumption of its positive relationship to transformational leadership cannot be confirmed. The correlations of both self-monitoring subscales with transformational leadership were rather small. These results contradict results published by Weierter, Ashkanasy and Callan (1997), who report finding a positive effect of self-monitoring on perceived transformational leadership. These differences in results could, however, be due to the use of different scales for transformational leadership and self-monitoring. The influence of different scales in the examination of the relationship between self-monitoring and transformational leadership should be further investigated in future research. A second reason for the differing results might be employment and cultural background. Whereas Weierter et al. (1997) questioned undergraduate students with Australian and Chinese background, the sample in this study consisted of German employees.

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In this study, self-efficacy is positively related to transformational leadership. This can be seen to support the argument that followers with high self-efficacy tend to perceive more transformational behaviors in their leaders than followers with low self-efficacy do. Interestingly, almost the same correlation between self-efficacy and transformational leadership (where the same scales were used) was found in a sample of employees working in new forms of employment (Felfe 2001).

As cross-sectional data was used, nothing can be said about the direction of influence. In addition to the assumption set up here - that employees with high self-efficacy are more likely to perceive transformational leadership than employees with low self-efficacy - the other direction of influence could also be valid: That is to say that the positive correlation found in this study could also be due to leadership behavior that influences and enhances self-efficacy. Schyns (2001) proposes that different processes could be responsible for such an effect: Employees'

self-efficacy is influenced by the possibilities a leader provides for the employee to execute certain behaviors, as well as by vicarious experience, and by the leader's verbal persuasions. Natanovich and Eden (2001) found a positive correlation between leadership behavior and self-efficacy in a longitudinal design indicating that leadership behavior can influence self-efficacy.

In order to further examine self-efficacy and the perception of transformational leaders, t-test were calculated. The t-tests did not support the assumption that employees with high self-efficacy have higher perceptions of transformational leadership than the remaining employees. The assumption that employees with low self-efficacy have higher perceptions of transformational leadership than the remaining employees could also not be supported. Neither employees with high nor employees with low self-efficacy showed significantly higher perceptions of transformational leadership than the remaining participants.

A restriction of this study is that the average self-efficacy was rather high in this sample (M = 4.71 on a six-point scale). Thus, the failure to support the assumption of Klein and House (1995) that weak employees are sensitive to charisma might be due to too few participants with low self-efficacy in this sample. In future research, it should be paid attention to the variance of self-efficacy: in order to test Klein and House's assumption, employees with especially high and especially low self-efficacy should be examined.

ENDNOTES

1. I wish to thank Hartmut Blank for the discussion about the study and Jörg Felfe for making me curious about transformational leadership and for many fruitful discussions. I also want to thank the editor of CRISP, Lisa Troyer, and two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on this article.

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2. I thank Joerg Felfe for a detailed discussion on this point.

3. All factor analyses were done using Maximum Likelihood procedure. In case of more than one proposed factor, oblique rotation was done.

4. I thank Tina Paul for her assistance in the course.

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