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Title: Development and Validation of the Inspirational Leaders Survey (ILS)

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Abstract

Purpose

The Inspirational Leaders Survey (ILS) was developed to identify the behaviours and characteristics of inspirational leaders. The main aim of the ILS is to help businesses identify and recruit inspirational leaders into their workforce.

Design/methodology/approach

After a literature review 75 inspiring behaviours were identified. The items were examined through the exploratory factor analysis of responses from a sample of 212 adults; and a confirmatory factor analysis from a sample of 248 adults employed in various organisations with management systems.

Findings

Two factors with nine items emerged as the best approximation of the population covariance matrix of the three models tested from the results. The factors were called 'Individual Behaviours (five items: desire to achieve success, determined to achieve goals, passionate about work, committed to achieve success, and hardworking)' and 'Relationship Behaviours (four items: ability to instil confidence in people, inspire others, offer hope to others, and offer stability and direction to others)'.

Originality/value

The characteristics of inspirational leaders have received only limited empirical assessment, and an instrument to measure these characteristics has not been widely available. Such an instrument could provide a useful tool to identify inspirational leaders in our social and work-related groups. The present study describes the development of the ILS, which would help human resources in organisations identify and recruit inspirational leaders into their workforce.

Development and Validation of the Inspirational Leaders Survey (ILS)

Introduction

In the corporate world it is evident the leadership style of our managers is a major factor that determines the quality and success of an organisation (Weymes, 2002). The quest to uncover a leadership style that brings about the greatest corporate accomplishment has led academics to propose a number of conflicting theories. The most notable are trait theories (e.g. Stogdill, 1974), situational theories (e.g. Hersey and Blanchard, 1977), behavioural theories (see McGregor, 1960), contingency theories (e.g. Fiedler, 1967), transactional theories (Downton, 1973), and transformational theories (e.g. Bass, 1985).

Currently Bass's (1985) transformational theory dominates the scholarly landscape. Its popularity is fuelled by a large body of research that clearly shows transformational leaders have a positive effect on a number of key performance outcomes. For example, transformational leadership has been linked to confidence (Price and Weiss, 2013), effort (Arthur et al., 2011; Rowold, 2006), perceived competence (Price and Weiss, 2013), task and team cohesion (Price and Weiss, 2013; Callow et al., 2009; Smith et al., 2013), aggressive behaviours (Tucker et al., 2010), enjoyment (Price and Weiss, 2013), organisational citizen behaviours (Lee et al., 2013), satisfaction (Kao and Tsai, 2016), intrinsic motivation (Price and Weiss, 2013), and performance (Charbonneau et al., 2001).

To explain these findings leadership scholars have suggested leaders who use a transformational style of leadership influence their followers by inducing the mechanisms associated with intrinsic motivation, commitment, psychological empowerment, sacrifice, and needs satisfaction (Rowold, 2006; Zachoratos et al., 2000).

Bass's (1985) transformational theory was influenced by the early work of Burns (1978) and House's (1976) theory of charismatic leadership; and describes a style of leadership

that is inspiring, developmental, values based, and intellectually stimulating (Bass and Bass, 2008). This is in stark contrast to other forms of leadership, which are based on the use of rewards and sanctions or quid pro quo.

Mahatma Gandhi, Winston Churchill, John F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King Jr. are classic examples of leaders that were transformational. These leaders of political life were charismatic and inspired people all over the world to do more and to be more. In its basic form transformational leadership can be divided into behaviours that can be described as charismatic and behaviours that can be described as inspirational (Bass and Bass, 2008). Bass (1985) suggests the charismatic leader is a role model who instils high ethical behaviour, and pride, whilst also gaining respect and trust. In contrast, inspirational leadership involves inspiring and motivating followers to reach ambitious goals that may have previously seemed unachievable.

Transformational theory has proved popular amongst leadership scholars because it has been operationalised and can be reliably measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), (see Avolio et al., 1995; Bass, 1990; Bass and Avolio, 1993). Specifically, the MLQ measures behaviours that are associated with individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence (charisma), and inspirational motivation. Although the MLQ has received worldwide acclaim, it has been criticised for its ambiguity by Yukl (1999). For example, idealised influence (charisma) is not clearly differentiated from inspirational motivation, and there appears to be considerable overlap between these two behavioural constructs (Yukl, 1999). This casts doubt on the construct validity of this questionnaire and its utility for measuring the constructs it claims to measure. Clearly the development of a new psychometric instrument for measuring both charismatic and inspirational leadership behaviours is required.

Inspirational leadership has been recognised by many researchers (such as Weymes, 2002) as an important management competency, therefore this paper intends to develop a

psychometric instrument that measures inspirational leadership. There is also a scarcity of empirical knowledge in this field. Indeed, whilst charismatic leadership has received considerable attention from the corporate community, inspirational leadership has received far less. This is surprising as a number of studies from the corporate world clearly show inspiration rather than charisma to be the most important leadership quality. For example, in a study by International Business Machines Corporation (2012), 1,700 CEOs in 64 countries were asked what were the most important behaviours their leaders should exhibit. Their results showed the three leadership behaviours that mattered most were the ability to focus intensely on customer needs, the ability to collaborate with colleagues, and the ability to inspire. Similar results were found in a study by Zenger et al. (2012). Using extensive 360° feedback data, gathered from 50,000 leaders who were assessed by approximately a half-million colleagues, these researchers found the ability to inspire was the most important leadership quality.

One of the first groups of researchers to investigate the behaviours of inspirational leaders was Thrash and Elliot (2003). In their pioneering study, Thrash and Elliot (2003) found inspiration to be an empirically valid independent construct that correlates positively with the behavioural activation system (BAS), extraversion, positive emotionality, positive affect, work-mastery component of need for achievement, intrinsic motivation, openness to experience, absorption (in which attention is directed toward beauty or other object qualities), creativity, perceived competence, self-esteem, and optimism. Using time-lagged antecedent and consequence analyses, Thrash and Elliot (2003) found openness to experience and work-mastery functioned as antecedents, whilst the other variables emerged as consequences. In summary, their study suggests openness and work-mastery facilitates inspiration, and inspiring leaders embrace these behaviours.

The instrument used by Thrash and Elliot (2003) to measure the traits of an inspirational leader is known as the Inspirational Scale (IS). Although the IS has excellent

convergent, construct and predictive validity (see Thrash and Elliot, 2003) it was forged from a student population and may not capture the full experience of inspiration in corporate businesses. We suggest a more business specific measure is therefore required. Our research focuses on achieving this objective. A dearth of scholarly knowledge on inspirational leadership in the corporate literature led us to incorporate research from both the corporate and sport scholarly domains to develop our knowledge. Although Spitzer and Evans (1997) discussed the futility of comparing leadership in sport and business, Jones (2002) argued the behaviours of leaders in both domains are transferable. Thus the notion of using knowledge from both sport and business is appropriate (Jones, 2002).

The corporate world is perhaps best known for illuminating the behaviours of inspirational leaders. Warrilow (2012), for example, suggested inspirational leaders can create positive change in motivation, morale, and performance if they proactively engage in behaviours deemed as intellectually stimulating, which consider others. Other researchers namely Kouzes and Posner (2002) have suggested inspirational leaders make a difference by creating a vision and a positive, hopeful outlook. Inspirational leaders are also described by these researchers as energetic, creative, enthusiastic, exciting, passionate, good communicators and mediators of positive emotions.

In addition, Weymes (2002) describes inspirational leaders as hardworking, confident, reflective thinkers with a fearsome intellect. They are according to Weymes (2002) idea catalysts, energetic, tenacious, with a passion for work. They offer stability and direction and they can mobilise people. They coach and mentor rather than dictate and they are emotionally involved with the industry. Inspirational leaders can get the best from everybody; they are people orientated, and have time for everyone. They are problem solvers and focused, yet fun loving and jovial.

Unfortunately, Weymes (2002) did not provide any empirical support for his work,

however, his study provided valuable insights into the possibility that the behaviours and practices of inspirational leaders may be shaped, modified, and even coached.

Another criticism of Weymes's (2002) is that he ignores the literature on successful performance from other academic sources such as sport. For example, researchers in the field of performance psychology are aware successful performance is a consequence of a person's ability to demonstrate a variety of behaviours and characteristics that are often referred to as mental toughness or the successful mind-set (Asken, Grossman, & Christensen, 2010; Jones and Moorhouse, 2008; Weinberg, 2010; Gorden & Gucciardi, 2011). According to Gucciardi, Hanton, Gordon, Mallett, and Temby, (2014), mental toughness is the personal capacity to produce consistently high levels of subjective (e.g., personal goals or strivings) or objective performance (e.g. productivity) despite everyday challenges and stressors as well as significant adversities.

Mental toughness has a number of key elements: (1) Affective Intelligence (the ability to regulate one's emotions and moods in any circumstance to facilitate performance); (2) Desire to Achieve success (an internalized, insatiable desire and commitment to consistently improve one's performance levels and achieve success); (3) Resilience (the ability to withstand and bounce back from situations in which negative outcomes are experienced); (4) Attention Control (the ability to manage one's attention and focus over extended periods); (5) Self-Belief (an unshakeable self-belief in your physical ability to perform in any circumstance); (6) Optimistic Thinking (the tendency to expect positive outcomes in the future and to perceive oneself in a positive manner); (7) Context Intelligence (an awareness and understanding of the performance environment and how to apply this knowledge to the performance environment); (8) Handling Challenge (thriving when challenged to execute the required skill and procedures effectively); (9) Obsessive passion (an intense feeling of love, enthusiasm and energy for one's occupation); (10) Hardworking (someone who works hard in all activities), (11) and

Committed to Achieve Success (committed to a goal and making it happen) (see Gorden and

Gucciardi, 2011; and Gucciardi et al., 2014; Jones et al., 2002: Mattie and Munroe-Chandler,

2012; Middleton et al., 2004; Weinberg et al., 2011). These key facets may be related to

inspirational leadership and are included in our exploratory study.

To summarise, it appears the characteristics of inspirational leaders have received only

limited empirical research. The aim of this paper is to explore the perceived behaviours and

characteristics by developing and evaluating the psychometric properties of a self-report

questionnaire. We have named the psychometric measure the Inspirational Leaders Survey

(ILS), which is based on the work of Warrilow (2012), Weymes's (2002), Kouzes and Posner,

(2002), Gucciardi et al., (2014) and Thrash and Elliot (2003).

Method

When Goldberg and Digman (1994) discussed item selection in the development of

questionnaires, they argued the selection of items 'is by far the single most important decision

to be made in any investigation, and it should be guided by theory and/or findings from past

research' (p.218). It is for this reason the authors utilised the Delphi method (Linstone and

Turoff, 1975) to aid the process of developing the ILS.

The Delphi method involves using a small group of experts who design a questionnaire,

which is then sent to a larger respondent group. After the questionnaire is returned, the expert

panel summarises the results and develops a new questionnaire for the respondent group to

assess. The respondent group then re-evaluates its original answers and provides a final

summary and report. Ethical approval was granted by the research committee of the University

of Derby.

In this study the Delphi method resulted in the authors generating a 100-item

questionnaire. The items were newly crafted and targeted to measure the frequency with which

the responders use inspirational practices and behaviours. The classification of inspirational

leaders described by Weymes (2002) and the related literature on emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996), mental toughness (Gucciardi et al., 2014), and transformational leadership (Kouzes and Posner, 2002) dictated the construction of the items. The authors were mindful of the advantages of an 'over inclusive item pool' for two reasons:

•   subsequent factor analysis provides evidence of which item belongs in a particular construct or elsewhere; and

•   with regard to *facets* (Reise et al., 2000), item sets with similar content that tap into narrow-band constructs are expected to display high item correlations.

The process of arriving at the initial 100-item questionnaire for distribution and testing is described below and involved what can be described as 'overcompensating' in the initial stages of development when deciding the number of items required to encapsulate the theories on which the questionnaire was based.

First, three psychology consultants rated the items content relevance. The psychology consultants were considered experts because they had a combined total of 66 years of experience within the field of psychology, had experience in questionnaire development, and were familiar with the literature on which the questionnaire drew.

The panel of responders (n=20) participated in an initial meeting where they were informed by the authors about the construction of the questionnaire and the population to be recruited in the validation process. Members of the panel were then sent a draft of the questionnaire to independently evaluate. After receiving the feedback from members of the panel, the authors amended the questionnaire accordingly. The questionnaire was then sent out to members of the panel to independently evaluate the questionnaire for a second time. After a period of two weeks the members of the panel and the authors met to discuss the suitability of items for inclusion in the ILS, and a consensus was reached about the inclusion, rejection, or revision of

each item. This delayed two-week period permitted time for reflection whereby any further

ideas could be discussed in the subsequent meeting. After this phase was complete, two heads

of major institutions completed the revised questionnaire. In addition, twenty managers from

various institutions including education, sport, hospitality, and tourism volunteered to

participate as judges, completed the questionnaire. Subsequently, some minor revisions were

made according to suggestions. Following this rigorous process, an initial version of the ILS

consisted of 75 items with a five-point Likert-type format (see Sarason et al., 1986, for related

constructs). This version of the questionnaire was then completed by a sample of 212

respondents and an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on the data collected.

Following this procedure a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with data collected from a

further sample of 248 respondents who also completed the same version of the ILS to test the

three alternative models that emerged from the EFA.

Participants

In total 460 participants (age range 25-55, M = 39.40, SD = 8.69 years), who were located in

the UK, completed the inventory: 212 for the EFA and 248 for the CFA. The sample was

drawn from individuals who were managers in large business organisations, with at least one

year of managerial experience. The gender split for the total sample was 232 (50.43%) female

and 228 (49.57%) male participants. There were no non-respondents.

Procedure

Participants were informed of the nature of the study being undertaken and that their

involvement in the research was voluntary. No obligations were placed upon potential

respondents nor were any inducements employed to recruit the sample. All participants gave

written consent before any data was collected.

The ILS was then distributed personally to the participants. When fully completed the

ILS was handed back to one of the authors who was present at all times. This ensured no conferring between participants took place whilst completing the questionnaire.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The protocol adopted for the EFA was maximum likelihood and rotation of the matrix of loadings via oblique rotation using the direct oblimin rotation technique with the conventionally accepted cut-off of 0.40 as the threshold required for inclusion in the matrix (Stevens, 1992). A scree plot was used to determine the number of factors emerging from the data. The scree test is the suggested and preferred method of deciding the number of factors suggested by the data. It is, apart from exceptions, a relatively simple and quick way of representing factors within data in a visual format. The scree test provides a number of data points above a 'break,' which are the number of factors it is suggested are retained. If a number of data points are clustered around the break (elbow shape), multiple factor analyses are required; this may involve setting the number of factors to retain (Costello and Osborne, 2005).

To confirm and supplement the decision from the scree plot, multiple test runs were conducted to establish the number of factors in the data set. This is regarded as the best methodology for the process for 'pure' factor analysis as opposed to using the default SPSS setting of principal components analysis (PCA), and rotating the matrix of loadings via orthogonal, varimax rotation.

The decision to select the protocol used for the EFA in this paper and not the default settings, which are widely used, has solid foundations. The default settings in SPSS (PCA, eigenvalue above 1, and varimax rotation) can lead to the belief the researcher has undertaken a factor analytic approach. However, this is not the case as PCA and pure factor analysis differ in important ways. For example, components analysis tends to overestimate factor loadings and therefore yields correlations that are negatively biased (Borgotta et al., 1986; Reise, et al.,

2000). In addition, PCA creates summaries of observed variables that are effects rather than the actual causes of the variable correlations (Reise et al., 2000). Conversely, factor analytic procedures result in a correlation matrix with estimated communalities, the goal of which is to extract the optimum number of latent variables to explain correlation among the items (Reise et al., 2000). As Gorsuch (1997) states 'the default procedures of many statistical packages … is no longer adequate for exploratory factor analysis' (p.532).

Moreover, using the eigenvalue above 1 criteria based on PCA consistently leads to the retention of too many factors (Zwick and Velicer, 1986). Costello and Osborne (2005) cited Velicer and Jackson (1990) who stated eigenvalue above 1 is among the least accurate methods for selecting the number of factors to retain. In fact, eigenvalue has nothing at all to do with the reliability of a factor (Cliff, 1988). For a more comprehensive discussion about the problems with using eigenvalue above 1 for factor extraction, see Lee and Comrey (1979).

Reise et al. (2000) cite a number of 'compelling reasons to consider oblique rotations' (p.292). Amongst these are

•   oblique rotation methods produce orthogonal solutions if appropriate;

•   oblique rotations meet simple structure criterion better than orthogonal rotations;

•   oblique rotation is superior in terms of factor replicability (Dielman et al., 1972; Gorsuch, 1970); and

•   It is unreasonable to assume variables are uncorrelated; thus oblique rotation represents more realistic modelling of psychological constructs.

In essence, if factors are truly uncorrelated, orthogonal and oblique rotations produce nearly identical results (Costello and Osborne, 2005). However, as stated previously, oblique rotation subsumes orthogonal rotation in that as stated above it produces orthogonal solutions if appropriate. Orthogonal solutions, on the other hand, do not produce oblique solutions. The

view of the authors, which is based on the literature, is therefore the preferred protocol should be oblique rotation.

EFA Results

The scree plot suggested four factors (latent Variables) would be a suitable representation of the data. However, as recommended by Costello and Osborne (2005), multiple test runs were conducted to establish the number of factors in a data set.

A number of iterations were required to arrive at an acceptable solution due to items cross-loading on more than one factor, not having a sufficient loading or not loading at all in the rotated factor solutions.

This resulted in three suitable models. Model 1 (Tables 1 and 2) contains two latent variables (factors) totalling nine items (all above 0.523). Model 2 (Tables 3 and 4) contains three latent variables totalling ten items (all above 0.471). Model 3 (Tables 5 and 6) contains four latent variables (factors) totalling ten items (both above 0.496).

In Model 1, a two-factor model, four items loaded onto Factor 1 and five items onto Factor 2. It is clear from Table 2 that the items for Factor 1 relate to individual diligence, determination and motivation. This factor was labelled 'Individual.' Items for Factor 2 suggest someone who is prepared to motivate and mentor the development of others, and this factor was labelled 'Relational.'

In Model 2, a three-factor model, two items loaded onto Factor 1, three items onto Factor 2 and five items onto Factor 3. It is clear from Table 4 that the items for Factor 1 relate to creative problem solving. This factor was labelled 'Creativity.' Items for Factor 2 suggest again, an individual who is determined and diligent; this factor was labelled 'Individual.' Items for Factor 3 suggest someone who is willing to mentor the development of others, and this factor was labelled 'Relational.'

In Model 3, a four-factor model, two items loaded onto Factor 1, two items onto Factor

2, three items onto Factor 3, and three items onto Factor 4. It is clear from Table 6 that the items for Factor 1 relate to a determined, diligent individual. This factor was labelled 'Individual.' Items for Factor 2 suggest emotional awareness or intelligence; this factor was labelled 'Emotionality.' Items for Factor 3 suggest creative problem solving, and this factor was labelled 'Creativity.' Items for Factor 4 suggest someone who is prepared to mentor the development of others, and this factor was labelled 'Relational.'

EFA is a method that allows for the reduction of a large body of data; however, it does not allow for the falsification of a particular model. There are no objective statistical criteria to determine the solution with the optimal number of factors (Hyland et al., 2013).

Hyland et al. (2013) point out that CFA on the other hand, is a theoretical plausible model deemed to describe the underlying structure of a particular measure (see Bollen, 1989 for discussion on the relative strengths and benefits of EFA and CFA).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

To further develop, test and corroborate the findings from the initial EFA and to clarify the results, CFA was undertaken to establish the most appropriate model from the two, three, and four factor solutions. The same data collection procedure as the EFA was followed.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

The overall fit of each model was undertaken using the maximum likelihood method to establish the relative fit between models using a range of goodness-of-fit statistics and assessment of the appropriateness of the model parameters. The X^2 statistic assessed the sample and implied covariance matrix, and a good fitting model is indicated by a non-significant result. However, the X^2 statistic is strongly associated with sample size, and as such good models tend to be over-rejected. Therefore, Tanaka (1987) suggested that a model should not

be rejected simply on the basis of a significant X^2 result. Accordingly, it is recommended that researchers examine the ration of the X^2 value to the degrees of freedom (df), and according to Kline (1994), any model with a X^2–to-df ratio of less than 3:1 indicates a good fitting model. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI; Bentler, 1990) and the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI; Tucker and Lewis, 1973) are measures of how a model fits the data compared to a baseline model where all variables are uncorrelated. For these indices, values above .90 indicate a reasonable fit while values above .95 indicated a good model fit (Bentler, 1990; Hu and Bentler, 1999). In addition, one more absolute index is presented the root mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA; Steiger, 1990). Ideally this index should be less than .05, however, values less than .08 also suggest an adequate fit (Bentler, 1990; Hu and Bentler, 1999; Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1993). Furthermore, the Akaike Information Criterion (ACI; Akaike, 1974) was used to evaluate the alternative models, with the smaller value indicating the best fitting model. The CFI, RMSEA, and the AIC all have explicit penalties for model complexity.

In order to test the dimensionality of the ILS, the authors investigated the three specified alternate models using standard CFA techniques. Tables 7 and 8 report the fit indices and CFIs of the three models. All three models produced statistically significant results. However, the two-factor solution displayed overall, the best model fit. It had the lowest overall AIC value, and the CFI and TLI values were better or comparable with the other models, with a good x^2-to-df-ratio, and RMSEA result also evident.

[Insert Figure 1 here]

All these results suggest a good model fit. The majority of the indicators exceeded Hair et al.'s (1998) strict cut off criteria of 0.60, and the two that did not still exhibit statistically significant factor loadings above 0.50. These results therefore support the construct validity of

the ILS.

Discussion

The current study describes the development of a quantitative measure of inspirational leadership that has been psychometrically validated. In order to ascertain the appropriate factor structure of the measure, a series of different factor structures were devised. The results suggest a two-factor model with nine items was the best approximation of the population covariance matrix of the models tested.

The two-factor, nine-item model produced the lowest x^2 result, and its X^2-to-df ratio was less than 3:1 (i.e. 1.599, p < .027), suggesting an acceptable model according to Kline's (1994) indications. The RMSEA result also suggests an adequate fit, with the CFI and TLI results suggesting a good model fit. On the basis of the X^2-to-df ratio, RMSEA, CFI, TLI, and AIC results, the two-factor model could be said to represent the most appropriate model. The majority of the indicators exceeded Hair et al.'s (1998) strict cut off criteria of 0.60, and those few indicators that did not still exhibit statistically significant factor loading above 0.50. In addition, the Cronbach's alpha statistics for internal consistency revealed an acceptable level for the *relational* factor (0.75) overall, and the *individual* factor (0.76) overall (see DeVellis, 2003).

The primary loadings on the first factor of the ILS represent the behaviours or actions normally associated with motivation and mental toughness, namely, desire to achieve success, determined to achieve goals, passionate about work, committed to achieve success, and hardworking; thus the authors have labelled Factor 1 'Individual Behaviours' (IB).

The primary loadings on the second factor of the ILS appear to represent behaviours that evoke positive emotions and guide followers into transcending themselves from their current preoccupations, namely, stability and direction, confidence, inspiration (positive

energy) and hope: thus the authors have labelled Factor 2 'Relationship Behaviours' (RB).

Taken together the results support Thrash and Elliot's (2003) finding that inspiration is

characterised by evocation, motivation, and transcendence.

Implications for Theory

The behaviours identified may be linked to a number of theoretical frameworks that are well

established in the narrative of psychology. For example, the five behaviours associated with IB

(desire to achieve success, determined to achieve goals, passionate about work, committed to

achieve success, and hardworking) are central to theories and models scholars describe as

mental toughness (see Gucciardi et al., 2014). The idea that inspirational leadership is linked to

mental toughness is an important new finding and justifies our utility of mental toughness

theory in the creation of the ILS. Mental toughness researchers (e.g. Mahoney et al. 2014),

have suggested motivation lies at the heart of mental toughness and therefore should be

examined from a motivational theory perspective. The link between mental toughness and IB

make us propose leadership should also be examined using motivation theory. Contemporary

researchers investigating the leadership and follower relationship support this notion (e.g.

Kovjanic et al., 2012; Breevaart et al., 2014).

A theory of motivation that perhaps best fits our results is self-determination theory

proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985). It does this in several ways. First our study suggests

inspirational leaders engage in behaviours that develop the self. Second our study suggests

inspirational leaders behave with autonomous motivation, which means leaders engage in

behaviour that reflect personal interests and values rather than something one feels compelled

to do by external or internal pressures (see Stone et al., 2009; Sheldon and Elliot, 1999;

Sheldon and Houser-Marko, 2001; Sheldon and Kasser, 1998). Interestingly, Thrash and Elliot

(2003) have shown there is a positive relationship between inspiration and self-determination.

The underlying assumption of self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985) is that people are inherently and proactively motivated to master their social environment and they are motivated to satisfy the innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Autonomy refers to the need to act with a sense of volition, choice and self-determination (Stone et al., 2009). Competence is the need to interact with one's social environment and influence important outcomes (Stone et al., 2009). And relatedness is the need to experience satisfying and supportive social relations (Stone et al., 2009). Taken together these needs promote autonomous motivation.

We propose self-determination theory may help explain the behaviours of inspirational leaders described in our study. For example, the 'desire to achieve success' may be explained by the leaders need for autonomy and competence. Moreover, the motivation behind the behaviour we described as 'stability and direction' may be explained by the leaders need for relatedness.

Self-determination theory may also explain how inspirational leaders influence their followers. For example, leaders may inspire their followers by creating consciously or unconsciously autonomy-supportive environments (Deci and Ryan, 2012). Essentially, these are environments that nurture individuals' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. It is likely inspirational leaders enhance perceptions of these fundamental psychological needs and, consequently, promote growth and development in their followers. Leaders may facilitate this process by helping followers set autonomous goals that are aligned with individuals developing interests and deep-seated values.

The finding that inspirational leaders provide stability and direction indicates inspirational leaders are not only interested in developing themselves: they are also interested in developing their followers. In other words, inspirational leaders are essentially altruistic (see Avolio and Locke, 2002; Block, 1996) and people-orientated (Weymes, 2002), and they create

the conditions where followers are allowed to flourish and self-actualise (i.e., fulfil one's potential [Maslow, 1943]). In sum, the behaviours of inspirational leaders appear to accentuate self-actualisation in their followers.

Another important finding from our study is the discovery that inspirational leaders evoke positive emotions. More specifically, our study suggests inspiring leaders awaken inspiration, confidence and hopeful thinking. The impact of these variables on the positive development of followers within corporate settings is well documented (Luthans, 2002; Luthans and Avolio, 2003). For example, research in positive psychology, positive organisational behaviour, and positive psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2004), suggests confidence and hope play a crucial role in developing individuals, teams, organisations, and communities (e.g., see Luthans, 2002; Luthans and Avolio, 2003; Seligman, 2002; Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Snyder and Lopez, 2002).

Given the importance of positive emotions for employee and organisational outcomes such as motivation (Erez and Isen, 2002), creativity, (e.g., George, 1991, 1995, 1996; Spector and Fox, 2002), task performance (e.g., Ashby et al., 1999), and subjective well-being (e.g., Diener et al., 2003), the current findings appear significant and support Weymes (2002) proposition that the primary purpose of an inspirational leader is to influence the feelings and emotions of their followers.

According to Weymes (2002) inspirational leaders evoke positive emotions through the communication and the exchange of ideas he called the inspirational dream. This led Weymes to believe inspirational leaders are idea catalysts. However, this prediction was not supported by the current study. Our findings are also inconsistent with the work of Kouzes and Posner (2002) who indicated inspirational people are sources of creative ideas, cognitions and behaviour. The results of the current study suggest inspirational leaders do not need to generate creative ideas in order to be inspirational. To explain our findings we propose leaders who

generate creative ideas maybe more synonymous with charismatic styles rather than inspirational styles of leadership. Several researchers allude to this proposition. For example, Day and Antonakis (2012) suggested charismatic leaders rather than the inspirational leaders create inspiring visions and ideas. The results may indicate important differences between the patterns of behaviours associated with charismatic and inspirational styles of leadership and requires further investigation. The authors agree that the current study may have helped reduce some of the ambiguity between different styles of leadership that Yukl (1999) suggests is widespread in the research literature.

Limitations

As is the case with any study, there are limitations that need to be highlighted. For example, future studies should preferably retest the factor structure of both the 75-item and nine-item abbreviated version presented herein. Future analysis should ideally utilise a bi-factor modelling approach to control for the effects of contextual factors, as present results indicate that such bi-factor models improve a model fit. In addition, construct validation studies are required and larger samples are needed for investigations that account for factorial invariance such as differences between genders and different cultures. More specifically, construct validity should be tested by examining the ILS's nomological network and by conducting a known-groups analysis. The predictive validity of the ILS should be examined using an experience-sampling methodology to examine predictive validity, within-person correlates, antecedents and consequences, and incremental validity.

Although it appears some of the behaviour characteristics of inspirational leaders have been uncovered, our questionnaire-based study does not provide sufficient information about the causal effects of different inspirational behaviours. In addition, the study does not offer the reader with information about what an inspirational leader says or does to influence follower

attitudes, satisfaction and performance. Nor does it provide the reader with information about the influences of mediating and situational variables. In order to obtain this information a combination of both qualitative, quantitative, and field based research is required.

Implication for practice

The ILS may have a variety of practical applications. In recent years, research on recruiting behaviours has focused on the importance of assessing job applicant psychological behaviours instead of technical knowledge (Schneider, 1987; Chatman, 1991; Motowidlo et al., 2013). Recruiters in the human resources may use the ILS to recruit inspiring managers and employees or to measure a job applicant's inspirational ability. The ILS may also be used in leadership and management training. For example, managers of teams may use the ILS to inform them of the skills they need to lead their team inspirationally. In other situations the ILS may be used to recruit managers in organisations that require change.

The authors are not suggesting the ILS be used as a definitive stand-alone measure of inspirational people. Rather, it should be used as an indicator; as part of a system of profiling in the selection of people under consideration for leadership positions, or who are applying for graduate fast-track management course with employers. Thus, the ILS is complementary and supplementary, and can therefore be seen as the initial stage of a rigorous selection and profiling process whereby large numbers of candidates can be selected or filtered out by selection panels; thus ensuring a more streamlined efficient process, one that eases the pressure somewhat on the people involved.

However, there are some unanswered questions in this study. For example, are the behaviours of inspirational leaders the same in every culture? For example, Japanese successful leadership models did not lead to successful outcomes in American organisations largely because of the cultural difference: Collective Japanese workers are more lenient with their leader forcing long working hours than individualistic American workers (Young, 1992).

This means management styles and behaviours may need to be very different (Hofstede, 1984; He and Liu, 2010). Numerous studies on cross-cultural leadership (e.g. Ayman, 2004; Bass, 1997; Dorfman, 2004; Gelfand et al., 2007; House et al., 1997) have demonstrated that leadership is conceptualized differently in different cultures. Simply put, an understanding of cultural forces is important to fully comprehend the leadership processes and cross cultural studies need to be carried out in order to examine whether the ILS is a useful tool for companies that operate outside the western culture.

Conclusion

The results of this study suggest inspirational leaders are passionate, hardworking with a desire and commitment to be successful. The results also suggest inspirational leaders provide their followers with stability and direction, giving them the confidence and faith to be upbeat about their future. They also evoke the positive energy, confidence and hope that motivates followers to achieve their goals and fulfil their potential. In essence inspirational leaders are motivating and stimulate followers to develop themselves.

The factor analysis results provide initial evidence of the validity and reliability of a nine-item scale for measuring the behaviours of inspiring people. The findings suggest that the ILS is a psychometrically sound measure for further studies of inspiration. It should be noted the authors have linked inspiration to a number of theoretical frameworks that are well-established in the narrative of psychology. For example, explaining the behaviour of inspirational leaders using a motivational theory perspective. More specifically, we have used self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985) to explain the results of our findings. The idea that inspiration is linked to self-determination is not new. For example, in their study, Thrash and Elliot (2003) found self-determination to be positively related to inspiration. However, the idea inspiration leadership is linked to mental toughness is a new concept for leadership

scholars. In light of our findings we suggest further inspirational leadership development should consider established theory and research from broader areas of psychological enquiry.

Finally, the authors propose the ILS nine-item scale may be used by the business community to identify inspirational leaders in the workforce and may be used as a recruitment tool increasing the probability of having more inspirational leaders in our organisations with management systems. Our future aim is to use our discoveries to provide a framework to train and develop people to become inspirational leaders.

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Appendix: The Inspirational Leadership Survey (ILS)

Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who is ambitious? Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

Disagree	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree
1	2	3	4	5

I see myself as someone who...

1) Has the desire to achieve success

2) Is determined to achieve a goal

3) Is passionate about work

4) Is committed to achieving a goal

5) Is hardworking

6) Offers stability and direction to your team

7) Provides your team with hope for a better future

8) Provides your team with inspiration and positive energy

9) Evokes confidence in your team