Leadership style and regulatory mode: Value from fit?

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Abstract

In this article, we consider the relationship between regulatory orientation and transformational leadership. Specifically, we propose that the effectiveness of transformational leadership depends on followers' regulatory mode—the manner in which they pursue goals. Based on regulatory fit theory (Higgins, 2000, 2002), we hypothesize that transformational leadership will be more effective in increasing motivation and eliciting positive evaluations from people with more of a locomotion mode (those who focus on movement from one state to another) rather than people with more of an assessment mode (those who make comparisons and judgments before acting). We find support for these ideas using data collected from a survey of executives and two original experimental designs, one in which regulatory mode is measured as a chronic disposition and the other in which it is situationally induced.

Introduction

Leaders can influence the behavior of their followers through the use of different styles, or approaches, to managing others. For the past two decades, a pair of predominant styles—transactional and transformational leadership—have received a significant amount of scholarly attention. Transactional leadership (Bass, 1981, 1985, 1997; Burns, 1978) refers to an exchange dynamic between leaders and their subordinates, in which the leader establishes specific goals, monitors progress, and identifies rewards that can be expected upon goal achievement. Transformational leadership (Bass, 1981, 1985, 1997) involves encouraging others to develop and perform beyond standard expectations. Transformational leaders inspire others with whom they work by viewing the future with optimism, projecting an idealized vision, and communicating that the vision is achievable.

Some scholars have described transformational and transactional leadership as competing approaches to motivating others. In particular, Burns (1978) claimed that these two styles exist at opposite ends of a continuum—an individual can display transformational leadership or transactional leadership, but not both. Other leadership scholars (e.g., Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1985, 1998, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Waldman, Bass, & Yammarino, 1990) hold a different view, arguing that these styles are not competing, but complementary. For example, Conger and Kanungo (1988) suggested that leaders who rely on contingent rewards (a dimension of transactional leadership) and charisma (a dimension of transformational leadership) may be most successful in empowering their subordinates. Similarly, Bass (1985) proposed that transformational leadership can augment the impact of transactional leadership on strengthening the leader–follower relationship.

Although some studies suggest that outstanding leaders display both transformational and transactional styles (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1993; Hater & Bass, 1988), it seems that transformational leadership can be more

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effective than transactional leadership in many cases (for a review, see Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Previous research has found evidence of a strong, positive relationship between transformational leadership and the performance of business units (e.g., Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Howell & Avolio, 1993), work teams (e.g., Howell & Frost, 1989), naval officers' fleets (Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993), and presidential administrations (e.g., House, Spangler, & Woycke, 1991). At the individual level, transformational, or charismatic, leadership can positively influence satisfaction, organizational commitment, and productivity (e.g., Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993).

Enacting a transformational leadership style may be more effective than adopting a transactional leadership style, in general. However, the extent to which transformational leadership is effective may also depend on the person being led. Indeed, good matches between leaders and followers will likely elicit better outcomes (e.g., Howell & Shamir, 2005). In the past, research on individual differences and leadership has tended to concentrate on the behaviors and traits of the leader (e.g., House & Aditya, 1997). Answering the question, "what characteristics define successful leaders?" is, of course, important. However, relatively little research has examined how the characteristics of the follower might affect their reactions to a particular leader (see Howell & Shamir, 2005, for a recent exception). Thus, the question remains "what is it about some followers that makes them react more favorably to a leader, particularly a transformational leader?"

We propose that one key characteristic of followers who appreciate transformational leaders may be their regulatory orientation—the manner in which they pursue goals and value goal attainment. According to Higgins, Kruglanski, and Pierro (2003) and Kruglanski et al. (2000), part of an individual's regulatory orientation is his regulatory mode, a basic underpinning of human motivation that represents a preference for action or deliberation. Two independent regulatory modes exist: locomotion (our concern with moving from one state to another) and assessment (our concern with making comparisons and judgments before acting and appraising performance against standards). Each mode can exist as both a state and a trait—people emphasize different regulatory modes in different situations (state), and they tend to emphasize one mode more than the other (trait).

Leadership researchers may be keenly interested in the concept of regulatory mode because it refers to how people attain their goals and outlining processes toward goal attainment is a fundamental aspect of leadership in organizations (Bass, 1985). Indeed, most leaders are able to choose a method to achieve group goals even if they are not able to set these goals themselves. Regulatory mode theory also suggests that followers will respond more enthusiastically to a particular style of leadership when it suits their mode. Fortunately for leaders in organizations, regulatory modes are malleable, which suggests a significant opportunity. Whereas previous research on the link between chronic individual differences and leadership style offers insight primarily on the matching of leaders and followers, findings from studies of regulatory mode present opportunities for leadership interventions as well.

Drawing on regulatory mode theory (Higgins et al., 2003; Kruglanski et al., 2000), we suggest that the impact of transformational leadership depends on how it suits a follower's regulatory mode—specifically, transformational leadership will be more effective in eliciting motivation and favorable evaluations from followers when it is congruent with a follower's goal pursuit orientation and less effective when it is incongruent. In an attempt to connect the leadership style framework with the literature on self-regulation, we draw on regulatory mode theory to make predictions about when transformational leadership will be more, rather than less, inspiring.

Regulatory mode theory

Regulatory mode theory distinguishes between two primary functions in self-regulation—assessment and locomotion (Kruglanski et al., 2000). Assessment is the aspect of self-regulation concerned with making comparisons. People high in assessment critically evaluate different states or entities, such as goals and the means to pursue them, in relation to alternatives (Higgins et al., 2003; Kruglanski et al., 2000). That is, they prefer to wait and compare all possible choices before deciding how to act. In decision-making, for example, those who are high in assessment prefer to compare each of the alternatives and their attribute values in reference to pre-existing standards (e.g., Higgins et al., 2003). They make a choice by weighing their comparisons and choosing the alternative that has the best attributes overall. Thus, assessment is a strong preference for waiting to "do the right thing."

In contrast, locomotion is the aspect of self-regulation concerned with movement from state to state (i.e., from current state to end state) and with a preference to initiate goal-directed movement (Higgins et al., 2003; Kruglanski et al., 2000). Locomotion refers to a strong desire to choose any activity to work on rather than waiting to begin (Higgins et al., 2003; Kruglanski et al., 2000). Whereas people high in assessment are patient in considering all possible courses of action, people high in locomotion prefer to take action, and then maintain it without disruption. In decision-making, for example, individuals who are high in locomotion consider the first evaluative attribute and eliminate whichever alternative has the worst value for that attribute (Higgins et al., 2003). They repeat this process for subsequent evaluative

attributes until a single option remains, thereby quickly identifying a course of action. Thus, locomotion is associated with a preference for getting started on a task and maintaining focus until the task is completed (i.e., "just do it").

Previous research has distinguished the regulatory mode concept from other self-regulatory orientations, including Lewin's goal setting and goal striving dichotomy (e.g., Lewin, Dembo, Festinger, & Sears, 1944), the Rubicon model of action phases outlined by Gollwitzer and colleagues (e.g., Gollwitzer, 1990; Heckhausen & Gollwitzer, 1987), and Kuhl's (1985) model of action and state orientations (see Kruglanski et al., 2000, for a review). A critical aspect of regulatory mode theory is that, although it emphasizes different outcomes for locomotion and assessment modes of self-regulation, it does not suggest that one mode is superior to the other. Instead, both are independent dimensions of self-regulatory activities and both can contribute to individual success. Further, unlike some self-regulatory orientations, regulatory modes can appear as both chronic dispositions (e.g., Kruglanski et al., 2000) and situationally activated states (e.g., Avnet & Higgins, 2003).

Regulatory fit and leadership style

Most theoretical approaches to goal setting assume that people derive instrumental and psychological value from achieving their goals. Higgins's (2000, 2002) concept of "regulatory fit" posits that people derive value from the way in which a goal is pursued, independent of the eventual outcome. When people pursue their goals in a manner that suits their regulatory orientation, they experience "value from fit." This fit experience leads them to not only feel "right" about what they are doing, but also to increase their evaluation of that activity—it's fun, rewarding, meaningful, and important (Higgins, 2000, 2002). Indeed, research has found that people enjoy activities more and are more motivated to perform them (Freitas & Higgins, 2002; Freitas, Liberman, & Higgins, 2002) when there is a perceived "fit" between their regulatory mode (locomotion or assessment) and the strategies used to motivate them. For example, if people are told they will be rewarded for getting a job done quickly, this would fit with a locomotion orientation (because the high locomotor is concerned with speed and flow) more than an assessment orientation (because the high assessor is concerned with accuracy and detail).

People who experience greater regulatory fit, and therefore derive greater value from fit, are more inclined toward goal pursuit. That is, as fit increases, people become more motivated to put forth effort toward achieving their goal and focus their attention on goal attainment. In addition, when regulatory fit is higher, their evaluations of goal pursuits, and that which enables their goal pursuits, will be more positive as well. For example, if an incentive system is put in place that is well suited to an individual's regulatory mode (e.g., just being rewarded for "doing something" may suit an individual high in locomotion), the focal individual will offer a more approving evaluation of the incentive system (e.g., Brunstein, Schultheiss, & Graessman, 1998). This value transfer process is usually straightforward, so that the focal person evaluates more highly whatever led them to increase their feelings of motivation.

In the context of leadership, the concept of regulatory fit suggests that people may respond differently to a leader depending on the fit between the leader's style and their own orientation. Leaders can determine the strategic means by which followers pursue their goals, and followers will likely experience fit when leaders encourage them to pursue their goals in a way that sustains their regulatory orientation. In particular, people with more of a locomotion mode may be more likely to experience fit with transformational leaders because this leadership style emphasizes movement from state to state. Transformational leaders show a strong sense of purpose and perseverance to achieve the most difficult objectives. They energize their subordinates and motivate them to maintain focus and persevere, direct subordinates toward mutually attractive future states, and encourage subordinates' autonomy in problem solving (Bass, 1981, 1985, 1997; Bass & Avolio, 1993). Transformational leaders tend to be more effective in leading change efforts, partly because they encourage people to move toward a desired future state (Hamblin, 1958; Flynn & Staw, 2004).

Transformational leaders' ability to create and communicate a compelling vision will likely be motivating to people with a strong locomotion orientation. When properly articulated, a vision specifies a change of direction (Bass, 1985), and people with a strong locomotion orientation enjoy change. Accordingly, these individuals would prefer the way transformational leaders challenge the status quo by outlining a clear path to an alternative end state (e.g., Hater & Bass, 1988). In addition, transformational leadership is closely related to charismatic leadership (indeed, many leadership scholars treat the two concepts as indistinguishable; e.g., Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Leaders with higher levels of charisma tend to display higher levels of energy, drive, and perseverance (House et al., 1991). Followers with a locomotion regulatory mode may respond positively to such energy, drive, and perseverance because, given their concern with moving from state to state without interruption, they tend to display these qualities themselves (Kruglanski et al., 2000).

People with a strong assessment orientation, on the other hand, might appreciate the transformational

leadership style less because they are more concerned with comparing alternatives before acting and appraising their performance in comparison to pre-existing standards (Higgins et al., 2003; Kruglanski et al., 2000). Whereas strong locomotors may prefer the energy and enthusiasm projected by charismatic, transformational leaders, strong assessors may prefer a more clinical and controlled approach. Thus, transformational leaders may be more effective with followers who possess a stronger locomotion orientation, but not a stronger assessment orientation, because the former have a better fit with the process of goal attainment that the leader articulates and demonstrates. Specifically, transformational leaders will likely elicit higher levels of motivation and more positive evaluations (i.e., value from fit) from people with more of a locomotion mode than from people with more of an assessment mode.

Hypothesis 1. Transformational leaders will elicit higher levels of motivation and more positive evaluations from people with more of a locomotion mode than from people with more of an assessment mode.

Transformational leaders may be more successful than transactional leaders in eliciting favorable reactions from followers with a locomotion mode. Unlike transformational leadership, transactional leadership relies heavily on an exchange dynamic to manage others, emphasizing the accomplishment of tasks in exchange for desired rewards (Burns, 1978; Bass & Avolio, 1993). This use of incentives to motivate followers focuses on the outcomes of goal attainment. However, a locomotion regulatory mode (and an assessment mode, for that matter) refers to an individual's concern with the process of goal pursuit rather than the outcomes of goal attainment. For transactional leaders, their overarching emphasis on outcomes, rather than process, may not have much of a moderating effect on the influence of regulatory mode and, in turn, the experience of regulatory fit because the experience of regulatory fit stems from the way in which a goal is pursued, independent of the eventual outcome.

According to Bass (1981, 1985, 1997), transactional leaders try to focus people on the "right way" to accomplish tasks, encourage dependence on the leader for preferred solutions, and monitor their deviations from existing performance standards. They are more "hands on" than transformational leaders in terms of micromanaging their subordinates and taking corrective actions (Bass, 1981, 1985, 1997). For followers with more of a locomotion mode, this leadership approach may be unsettling because it hinders them from making progress on their own terms. Strong locomotors are committed to maintaining goal-directed movement without distraction or delay (Higgins et al., 2003; Kruglanski et al., 2000).

Transformational leadership facilitates activity flow, which is the primary concern of people who adopt more of a locomotion mode. In contrast, transactional leadership, with its close monitoring of performance and interference to take corrective action, presents barriers to flow. Further, whereas transformational leaders like change and are less likely to support the status quo, transactional leaders generally prefer stable, predictable environments (Burns, 1978). Followers who adopt more of a locomotion regulatory mode would therefore find a better fit with transformational leaders. Thus, we predict that transformational leaders will elicit higher levels of motivation and more positive evaluations from people with more of a locomotion mode than will transactional leaders.

Hypothesis 2. Transformational leaders will elicit higher levels of motivation and more positive evaluations from people with more of a locomotion mode than will transactional leaders.

Our predictions focus on a specific form of fit—that which exists between transformational leadership and a locomotion mode of self-regulation. As for those individuals with more of an assessment mode, we make no specific prediction about their preferred style of leadership or which style of leadership will elicit the strongest response from them. A priori, we find little empirical evidence or theoretical rationale that would suggest an overlap between an assessment mode of self-regulation and a particular style of leadership. Nevertheless, we will consider these possible connections (that between assessment and transformational leadership, and that between assessment and transactional leadership) in each of our studies.

Plan of study

We tested our hypotheses in three studies. First, we collected some data on actual leader–follower relationships from a sample of executives. Each executive was asked to rate their regulatory mode, their boss's leadership style, and their level of work motivation. Second, we followed up on this exploratory study by designing a laboratory experiment that allowed us to manipulate leadership style and assess its impact on participants' motivation and their evaluations of a particular leader. In our third, and final, study, we turned from trait-measures of regulatory mode to situationally induced modes. Specifically, we relied on an experimental prime to induce a locomotion or assessment mode and then measured followers' preferences for a transformational versus a transactional leader.

Study 1

Participants

Forty-nine people enrolled in an executive Masters of Business Administration (MBA) program at a private

East Coast University voluntarily participated in this study. The participants were working full-time and attended 3 days of classes every 3 weeks. Participants' mean age was 34.9 years, and their average work experience was 12.4 years. They worked an average of 2.6 years for the supervisor they rated. Sixty-nine percent of the participants were male, and their careers represented a range of diverse industries, including, but not limited to, financial services, consulting, high technology, education, pharmaceuticals, and media.

Procedure

Those who agreed to participate in the study (response rate = 76%) were asked to fill out an online survey that took approximately 15 min to complete. Participants were given the option to submit the survey anonymously or with their name attached to their responses. Those who chose to attach their name were given feedback on their responses ($n = 47$ out of 49). The questionnaire was counterbalanced to control for order effects (half the sample completed the regulatory mode scales before the leadership scales, and the other half completed the leadership scales before the regulatory mode scales). To familiarize the respondents with the items used to capture leadership (and to provide participants with feedback on their own leadership style), we asked them to complete these items in two successive rounds—first rating their own leadership style and then rating their supervisor's leadership style.

Measures

Regulatory mode

Regulatory mode was measured using a questionnaire developed by Kruglanski et al. (2000). Using six-point Likert-type scales, which ranged from one (strongly disagree) to six (strongly agree), participants were asked to rate 24 items that capture locomotion or assessment modes of self-regulation (12 items for each scale). Items designed to assess the locomotion mode of self-regulation include "When I decide to do something, I can't wait to get started" and "By the time I accomplish a task, I already have the next one in mind." Items designed to assess the assessment mode of self-regulation include "I often critique work done by myself or others" and "I like evaluating other people's plans."

Using these responses, we computed two separate scores for locomotion and assessment by calculating the mean response to each set of items. Previous studies have found that the locomotion and assessment scales demonstrate satisfactory levels of reliability (Kruglanski et al., 2000). In this sample, the coefficient alpha (α) for the locomotion scale was .78 and for the assessment scale it was .83. The mean locomotion score was 4.96 ($SD = .55$) and the mean assessment score was 4.18 ($SD = .81$). Although the mean assessment score is consistent with previous studies, the mean locomotion score is higher than what has been reported in past research (e.g., 4.14, $SD = .69$, Kruglanski et al., 2000). We return to this issue later in our general discussion.

Leadership style

We used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X) developed by Bass and Avolio (1997) to measure participant's perceptions of their boss's leadership style (transformational or transactional). The MLQ contains 20 items that represent five aspects of transformational leadership: (1) idealized influence-attributed; (2) idealized influence-behavior; (3) inspirational motivation; (4) intellectual stimulation; (5) individualized consideration. It also contains 12 items that represent three aspects of transactional leadership: (1) contingent reward; (2) management by exception-active; (3) management by exception-passive (for a complete description of each sub-dimension, see Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Participants were asked to judge how often their boss displayed the behavior described in each item using a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from zero (not at all) to four (frequently if not always).

Transformational and transactional scores were derived by computing the average response to the items associated with each of these scales. In this sample, the coefficient alpha (α) was .93 for the transformational scale and .55 for the transactional scale. Although low, the coefficient alpha for the transactional scale is consistent with past research (see Bass & Avolio, 1997 for a review). The mean transformational score was 3.45 ($SD = .75$), and the mean transactional score was 2.87 ($SD = .46$).

Motivation

Motivation was measured using the MLQ's extra effort subscale, which includes three items. Taken together, these items assess the extent to which subordinates feel motivated by a leader to exert effort beyond the ordinary. A sample item is: "He/she increased my willingness to try harder." Items were rated on a five-point scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). The mean for the extra effort scale was 3.20 ($SD = 1.12$). The coefficient alpha (α) was .91.

Results

Locomotion and assessment were not significantly correlated ($r = .06$). See Table 1 for a summary of descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables in the study.

Following Aiken and West (1996), we mean-centered each of our independent variables in order to minimize the impact of multicollinearity. We then conducted a multiple regression analysis, in which we regressed

Table 1
Means, standard deviations, and correlations of all the variables in Study 1

Variable	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
Locomotion-subordinate	4.96	0.55	—				
Assessment-subordinate	4.18	0.81	.06	—			
Transformational leadership	3.45	0.75	.21	−.03	—		
Transactional leadership	2.87	0.46	.29*	.53**	−.02	—	
Extra effort	3.20	1.11	.07	−.03	.81**	.01	—

* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

participants' motivation scores on their locomotion and assessment scores, ratings of their boss's transformational leadership style and transactional leadership style, and the interactions between their regulatory modes and their boss's leadership styles. A summary of this analysis is reported in Table 2. The results of the analysis remained the same when we controlled for the number of years the participants worked and the number of years they reported to their boss.

As shown in Table 2, and consistent with previous research, there was a significant main effect for leadership style ($\beta = 1.18$, $p < .01$), so that transformational leaders were considered more motivating than transactional leaders. As we predicted, there was also a significant interaction effect involving locomotion and transformational leadership ($\beta = .58$, $p < .05$). To determine whether the coefficient for the interaction of locomotion and transformational leadership was significantly different from the coefficient for the interaction of assessment and transformational leadership, we performed a likelihood ratio test (Greene, 2002). In support of H1, transformational leaders elicited greater motivation from people with a stronger locomotion mode than from people with a stronger assessment mode ($\chi^2 = 5.60$, $p < .05$).

To determine whether the coefficients for the interaction of locomotion and transformational leadership, and the interaction of locomotion and transactional leadership differed, we performed a second likelihood ratio test (Greene, 2002). In support of H2, transformational leaders elicited greater motivation from people with a stronger locomotion mode than did transactional leaders ($\chi^2 = 5.74$, $p < .05$).

Table 2
Results for regression of motivation on regulatory mode, leadership style, and their interaction (Study 1)

Predictor	*B*	*SE*	*β*	*p*
Locomotion	−0.25	0.20	−0.12	.22
Assessment	−0.15	0.15	−0.11	.34
Transformational leadership	1.18	0.14	0.80	.00
Transactional leadership	0.34	0.27	0.14	.21
Locomotion × transformational leadership	0.58	0.28	0.21	.05
Locomotion × transactional leadership	−0.27	0.21	−0.13	.20
Assessment × transformational leadership	−0.83	0.49	−0.22	.10
Assessment × transactional leadership	0.22	0.26	0.09	.41

$F(8, 40) = 13.03$; $p < .001$; $R^2 = .72$.

Discussion

The purpose of Study 1 was to explore the relationship between leadership style and a follower's regulatory mode. In particular, we were interested in whether the combination of transformational leadership and locomotion would be positively related to a follower's reported level of motivation. The results supported our hypotheses. Specifically, followers with more of a locomotion mode reported higher levels of motivation when working for transformational leaders than did followers with more of an assessment mode. Further, this relationship between followers' regulatory mode and their reported motivation was stronger for transformational leaders than for transactional leaders. Although these results are promising, they are preliminary. Indeed, the association between regulatory mode and leadership style might be driven by other factors not captured in this study. In Study 2, then, we attempt to build on the findings from Study 1 by examining the relationship between leadership style and a follower's regulatory mode in a controlled laboratory environment.

Study 2

Participants

One hundred undergraduate students enrolled in a private East Coast University voluntarily participated in this experimental study. Participants were recruited via flyers posted around campus and advertisements posted on a laboratory recruiting website. They were offered $12 for 1 h of their time, with the opportunity to win an additional $3. Forty-six percent of the sample was male, and the sample's ethnic representation included Whites (40%), African-Americans (20%), Asian-Americans (22%), and Hispanic-Americans (7%). Participants' mean age was 21.9 years.

Procedure

Upon entering the laboratory, participants were set up at a computer and given an informed consent document to read and sign. The principal investigator then

explained the purported purpose of the project, which was to study idea generation. To make the study appear more realistic and meaningful, participants were informed that their ideas would be used to help a non-profit organization called Education First, which, they were told, placed recent college graduates in teaching positions at inner-city high schools. Specifically, subjects were asked to brainstorm ideas about how to improve this fictitious organization's recruitment efforts on college campuses. A maximum of 10 subjects participated in each session.

Participants were asked to complete a brief on-line questionnaire, which measured their regulatory mode orientation. After filling out this questionnaire, they were introduced to the leader, who described himself as a senior representative for Education First, but he, in fact, was a paid actor. Relying on either a transformational or transactional script (included a Appendix A), the leader described the organization and explained the task that participants would be asked to complete. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions that represented a particular leadership style.

After the leader finished his speech, participants were asked to generate ideas about how Education First could improve the quality of its recruitment campaign. They were given 20 min to complete the task. During this 20 min period, the leader made several statements at 5-, 13-, and 18-min intervals that were designed to reinforce his leadership style. Participants then completed a post-task on-line questionnaire that assessed their level of motivation, their attitudes toward the leader, and their demographic profile. Following the session, participants were debriefed about the actor's true identity and the true purpose of the experiment.

Experimental manipulation

Regulatory mode

Locomotion and assessment were measured using the 24 item self-report questionnaire described in Study 1 (Kruglanski et al., 2000). In this sample, the coefficient alpha (α) was .85 for the locomotion scale and .82 for the assessment scale. The mean locomotion score was 4.49 ($SD = .71$) and the mean assessment score was 4.21 ($SD = .74$), which is consistent with previous research.

Leadership style

Following others (Howell & Frost, 1989; Jung & Avolio, 1999; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996), we manipulated leadership style by hiring and training an actor who was blind to the study hypotheses. To capture transformational and transactional leadership, we adapted scripts from Jung and Avolio (1999), Howell and Frost (1989), and a training program developed by Bass and Avolio (1997). Each script was designed to operationalize the nonverbal and paralinguistic behaviors associated with these two leadership styles.

In the transformational leadership condition the leader's speech focused on the importance of the task and its broader contribution to the organization (Education First). It emphasized the need for participants to transcend their self-interest for the sake of the organization's mission. The leader also communicated high performance expectations, encouraged participants to be creative and innovative in coming up with ideas, and expressed confidence in their ability to generate high-quality ideas. As for paralinguistic behaviors, the leader spoke with a captivating, engaging voice tone and used intonations. He projected a confident, dynamic presence, and alternated between pacing and sitting on the edge of a table, leaning toward the participant. He established direct eye contact, held a relaxed posture, made expansive hand and arm gestures, and exhibited animated gestures and facial expressions.

In the transactional leadership condition the leader's speech emphasized what needed to be done to accomplish the task and made clear that rewards were contingent upon the achievement of performance objectives. To reinforce this point, the leader mentioned that he would monitor participants' performance. He also promised to provide feedback if he felt that such feedback was necessary. Sitting in a chair, maintaining a consistent posture, he spoke in an unemotional and steady voice. In the transactional condition, the leader's behavior toward the participants was neutral (i.e., neither warm nor cold). He maintained intermittent eye contact, restricted his body movement, and exhibited neutral facial expressions.

The actor was given a list of verbal, nonverbal, and paralinguistic behaviors and a script to memorize for each leadership style. In training, he practiced in the presence of the experimenter who provided him with detailed feedback. After several iterations, we conducted a pilot study to ensure the validity of our manipulation. The actor's performance was videotaped and evaluated by a group of undergraduate subjects. Nineteen subjects evaluated the transactional performance and 20 evaluated the transformational performance. Each subject used eight items adapted from the MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1997) that corresponded to a five-point scale (1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree"). Four items were used to measure transformational leadership (e.g., "articulated a compelling vision of the future"), and four items were used to measure transactional leadership (e.g., "focused attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from what is expected of me").

In this pilot sample, the coefficient alpha (α) for the ransformational leadership scale was .92 and for the transactional scale it was .79. The mean ratings for the transformational leader were 4.04 ($SD = .60$) on the

transformational scale and 2.23 ($SD = .79$) on the transactional scale. The mean ratings for the transactional leader were 3.30 ($SD = .69$) on the transactional scale and 2.34 ($SD = .83$) on the transformational scale. Results of the within and between leader comparisons were significant ($p < .01$) and in the intended direction, indicating that students perceived the leader's behavior as more or less transformational or transactional in the appropriate condition.

Dependent measures

Motivation

Motivation was measured using the MLQ's extra effort subscale used in Study 1. The three items were rated on a five-point scale ranging from one, "strongly disagree," to five, "strongly agree." The overall mean for the extra effort scale was 3.44 ($SD = 1.0$) (3.77, $SD = 0.89$, for the transformational leader and 3.18, $SD = 1.01$, for the transactional leader). The coefficient alpha (α) was .88.

Leadership evaluation

The subject's evaluation of the leader was measured using four items, including "I think [this person] possesses leadership qualities." The items were rated on a five-point scale ranging from one, "strongly disagree," to five, "strongly agree." The overall mean for the leadership evaluation scale was 3.72 ($SD = .84$) (3.99, $SD = 0.64$, for the transformational leader and 3.51, $SD = 0.93$, for the transactional leader). The coefficient alpha (α) was .90.

Results

Locomotion and assessment were not significantly correlated ($r = .17$). See Table 3 for a summary of descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables in this study.

Once again, we mean-centered each of the independent variables to mitigate the potential impact of multicollinearity (Aiken & West, 1996). We then conducted a moderated multivariate regression using GLM—regressing participants' motivation and leadership evaluation on locomotion, assessment, leadership style (0 = transactional; 1 = transformational), a locomotion × leadership style interaction, and an assessment × leadership style interaction. Consistent with previous research, there was a significant main effect for leadership style, Wilks' $\Lambda = .91$, $F(2,93) = 4.76$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .09$. There was also a significant interaction effect involving locomotion and leadership style, Wilks' $\Lambda = .92$, $F(2,93) = 4.07$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .08$. The interaction effect involving assessment and leadership style was not significant, Wilks' $\Lambda = .99$, $F(2,93) = 0.28$, $p = .76$, $\eta^2 = .01$.

We conducted a multivariate analysis using MPLUS. A summary of this analysis is reported in Table 4.

As shown in Table 4 the locomotion × leadership style interaction, but not the assessment × leadership style interaction, was positively related to participants' motivation ($\beta = .74$, $p < .05$) and their evaluation of the leader ($\beta = .66$, $p < .01$). To clarify the form of the interaction between regulatory mode and leadership style, we graphed the motivation and evaluation ratings following the guidelines outlined by Aiken and West (1996). As can be seen in Fig. 1, people with more of a locomotion orientation were more motivated by the transformational leader (4.08) than by the transactional leader (2.88). Likewise, people with more of an assessment mode were also more motivated by a transformational leader (3.62) than by a transactional leader (3.24), but to

Table 4
Results for moderated multivariate analysis of motivation and evaluation (Study 2)

Predictor	Dependent variable	
	Motivation	Evaluation
Locomotion	−0.31 (0.17)	−0.26 (0.14)
Assessment	0.13 (0.15)	0.08 (0.13)
Leadership style	0.56** (0.19)	0.45** (0.16)
Locomotion × leadership style	0.74* (0.29)	0.66** (0.24)
Assessment × leadership style	−0.22 (0.29)	−0.15 (0.24)

Note. Standard errors are shown in parentheses.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

Table 3
Means, standard deviations, and correlations of all the variables in Study 2

Variable	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
Locomotion	4.49	0.71	—				
Assessment	4.21	0.74	.17	—			
Leadership condition	0.44	0.50	.16	−.04	—		
Motivation	3.44	1.00	.02	.06	.29**	—	
Evaluation	3.72	0.84	.03	.05	.28**	.69**	—

Note. Leadership condition is scored 0 = transactional ($N = 56$) and 1 = transformational ($N = 44$). The means on the dependent variables by condition are as follows: extra effort = 3.77 ($SD = 0.89$) for the transformational leader and 3.18 ($SD = 1.01$) for the transactional leader; evaluation = 3.99 ($SD = 0.64$) for the transformational leader and 3.51 ($SD = 0.93$) for the transactional leader.
** $p < .01$.

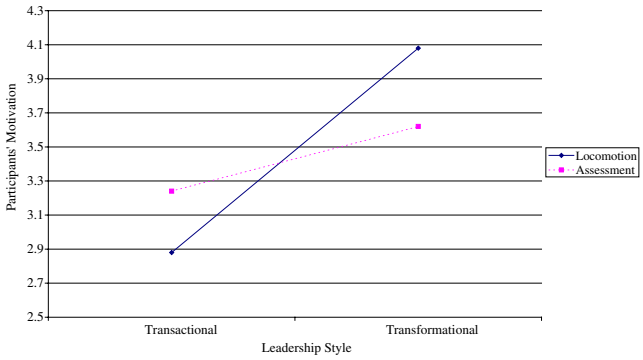

Fig. 1. The interactive effect of leadership style and regulatory mode on motivation (Study 2).

a lesser extent. A similar pattern can be seen in Fig. 2. People with more of a locomotion orientation evaluated the transformational leader (4.27) more favorably than the transactional leader (3.23). People with more of an assessment mode also viewed the transformational leader (3.88) more favorably than the transactional leader (3.54), but, once again, to a lesser extent. Judging by the graphs, it does not seem to be the case that simply any leader can elicit greater motivation and more favorable evaluations from people with a stronger locomotion orientation than a stronger assessment orientation. Indeed, with the transactional leader, the effect is the opposite (i.e., individuals with a stronger assessment orientation are more motivated by, and more favorable toward, him than are individuals with a stronger locomotion orientation).

To determine whether the interactions were significantly different, we performed a likelihood ratio test for each equation. In support of H1, transformational leaders elicited greater motivation ($\chi^2 = 4.24$, $p < .05$) and more favorable evaluations ($\chi^2 = 4.22$, $p < .05$) from people with a stronger locomotion mode than from people with a stronger assessment mode. In support of H2, transformational leaders elicited greater motivation ($p < .05$) and more favorable evaluations ($p < .01$) from people with a stronger locomotion mode than did transactional leaders.

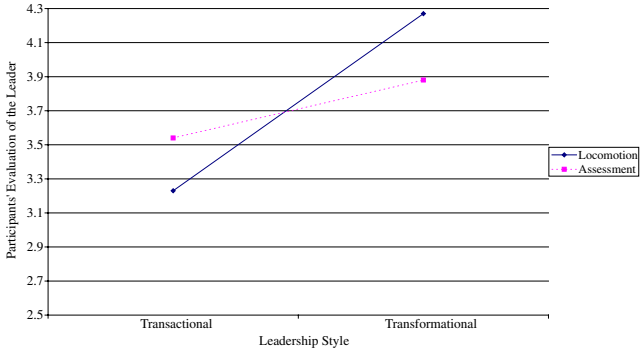

Fig. 2. The interactive effect of leadership style and regulatory mode on evaluation (Study 2).

Discussion

The purpose of Study 2 was to determine whether fit between followers' regulatory orientation and the style of a leader can elicit greater levels of motivation and more favorable evaluations. The results supported our hypotheses. In support of H1, transformational leaders elicited higher levels of motivation and more positive evaluations from people with more of a locomotion mode than from people with more of an assessment mode. In support of H2, transformational leaders elicited higher levels of motivation and more positive evaluations from people with more of a locomotion mode than did transactional leaders.

The results from the first two studies relied on a trait-based measure of regulatory mode. However, research on regulatory mode suggests that the activation of a locomotion or assessment mode can be situationally induced. In Study 3, we seek to build on the findings from the first two studies by determining whether our results can be replicated when regulatory mode is primed and participants are then asked to provide their preferences for a transformational or a transactional leader.

Study 3

Participants

Ninety-two undergraduate students enrolled in a private East Coast University voluntarily participated in this experimental study. Participants were recruited via flyers posted around campus and advertisements posted on a laboratory recruiting website. They were offered $8 for a half an hour of their time. Forty-one percent of the sample was male, and the sample's ethnic representation included Whites (53%), African-Americans (7%), Asian-Americans (21%), and Hispanic-Americans (3%). Participants' mean age was 20.7 years.

Procedure

Participants were seated at a computer terminal and given an informed consent document to read and sign. After they provided their consent and reviewed the study instructions, we asked them to complete an online survey, which induced either a locomotion or an assessment regulatory mode. Participants were randomly assigned to either the locomotion regulatory mode condition ($N = 52$) or the assessment regulatory mode condition ($N = 40$). To assign them randomly to condition, we used

a "randomizer" in the HTML code, which accounts for why the cell sizes are slightly unbalanced.

Following the method originally developed by Avnet and Higgins (2003), we asked each participant in the locomotion regulatory mode condition to read the following stimuli, which are derived from the locomotion scale (Kruglanski et al., 2000):

> Think back to the times when you acted like a "doer."
> Think back to the times when you finished one project and did not wait long before you started a new one.
> Think back to the times when you decided to do something and you could not wait to get started.

For each stimulus item, the participants were asked to write a one-paragraph example of their behavior during these circumstances (e.g., describe a situation in which they acted like a doer).

For the assessment regulatory mode condition, the participants were given similar instructions, but their stimulus items were derived from the assessment scale (Kruglanski et al., 2000):

> Think back to the times when you compared yourself with other people.
> Think back to the times when you thought about your positive and negative characteristics.
> Think back to the times when you critiqued work done by others or yourself.

After participants completed the task that induced regulatory mode, they read and evaluated two vignettes, one describing a transformational leader and the other describing a transactional leader. The order in which the vignettes appeared was counter-balanced across conditions.

The transformational leader vignette read as follows:

Mark Doyle has high expectations of his employees and encourages them to develop to their full potential. 'I try to get people to do more than they originally intended and even more than they thought possible,' he says. 'It's the inspiration an employer provides that allows employees to develop and perform beyond standard expectations.' Mark coaches and mentors his employees, expresses confidence in their abilities, encouraging them to set high goals for themselves, and developing a two-way exchange in communication. He likes to solicit his employees' ideas, challenge their assumptions, and encourage them to think about problems in new and innovative ways. He also shares his vision and mission for the company with his employees. According to Mark, 'it is critical to let your employees know what your vision is so that everyone can do their part in getting there.' To keep the vision in the forefront of his employees' minds, he emphasizes the importance of each task in fulfilling the broader mission of the company.

The transactional leader vignette read as follows:

Alex Hale believes that employees are motivated by positive reinforcement. He discusses with his employees what is required of them and clarifies the rewards they will receive if they fulfill their performance requirements. 'I try to provide the right incentives in order to get people to perform their tasks,' he says. "It's about tailoring the incentive to suit the employee.' Alex actively monitors his employees' performance so that he can take corrective action when necessary. 'I try to anticipate problems and intervene before the problematic behavior creates any serious difficulty.' When employees' performance deviates from standards, he tries to provide them with helpful feedback that will enable them to fix their mistakes. According to Alex, 'I think it's best to nip a problem in the bud before people wind up getting too far off track.' When employees achieve their objectives, Alex rewards them in their annual performance evaluations, where bonuses and promotions are contingent upon their performance over the past year.

To check the validity of the two vignettes, that is, the extent to which they captured transformational and transactional leadership, we had participants rate both leaders on eight items adapted from the MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1997)—four transformational, four transactional. These items were the same as those employed in Study 2.

The coefficient alpha (α) for the transformational leadership scale was .80 for the transformational leader (Mark) and .91 for the transactional leader (Alex). For the transactional scale, it was .82 for the transformational leader (Mark) and .67 for the transactional leader (Alex). The mean ratings for the transformational leader, Mark, were 4.27 ($SD = 0.59$) on the transformational scale and 2.77 ($SD = 0.86$) on the transactional scale. The mean ratings for the transactional leader, Alex, were 4.18 ($SD = 0.64$) on the transactional scale and 3.48 ($SD = 0.96$) on the transformational scale. Results of the within and between leader comparisons were significant ($p < .01$) and in the intended direction, indicating that students perceived the leader's behavior as more or less transformational or transactional in the appropriate condition.

Dependent measures

Preferences

To assess participants' preferences for one leader versus the other we asked them "Which of these leaders would you prefer to work for?" and instructed them to rate their response using a five-point scale (1 = "strongly prefer Mark Doyle"; 2 = "slightly prefer Mark Doyle";

3 = "neutral"; 4 = "slightly prefer Alex Hale"; 5 = "strongly prefer Alex Hale"). The mean for this item was 2.63 ($SD = 1.37$).

Motivation

The three items from the MLQ's extra effort subscale used in Study 1 and in Study 2 were adapted to measure participants' motivation for each leader. Rather than indicate how motivated the leader made them feel as before, they indicated how motivated the leader would make them feel (e.g., "He would increase my willingness to try harder"). The mean for the extra effort scale was 4.05 ($SD = 0.86$) for the transformational leader (Mark) and 3.72 ($SD = 0.97$) for the transactional leader (Alex). The coefficient alpha (α) for the extra effort scale was .88 for both Mark and Alex.

Leadership evaluation

The subject's evaluation of each leader was measured using four items similar to those employed in Study 2 (e.g., "Mark's/Alex's leadership style is highly effective"). The items were rated on a five-point scale ranging from one, "strongly disagree," to five, "strongly agree." The mean for the leadership evaluation scale was 4.20 ($SD = 0.66$) for Mark and 3.76 ($SD = 0.82$) for Alex. The coefficient alpha (α) for the leadership evaluation scale was .86 for both Mark and Alex.

Results

A summary of descriptive statistics and correlations among the study variables is presented in Table 5.

We conducted a multivariate regression using GLM, regressing participants' preferences, motivation, and leadership evaluation on primed regulatory mode (0 = assessment; 1 = locomotion). The overall equation was significant, Wilks' $\Lambda = .87$, $F(5,86) = 2.55$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .13$.

We conducted a multivariate analysis using MPLUS. A summary of this analysis is reported in Table 6.

As shown in Table 6 primed regulatory mode was negatively related to participants' preference for a particular leader ($\beta = -.65$, $p < .05$), so that participants who were primed to activate a locomotion orientation preferred the transformational leader. Further, primed regulatory mode was positively related to participants' ratings of potential motivation ($\beta = .56$, $p < .01$) and their evaluation of the transformational leader ($\beta = .30$, $p < .05$), but not for the transactional leader. In support of H1, then, people who were primed to activate a locomotion regulatory mode exhibited stronger preferences for the transformational leader, expected to be more motivated by him, and evaluated him more favorably than people who were primed to activate an assessment regulatory mode.

To determine whether the coefficients for motivation and evaluation with primed regulatory mode were different for the two leaders, we performed a likelihood ratio test for each equation (i.e., an unrestricted model versus a model where the coefficients for motivation are restricted to be equal for the two leaders; and an unrestricted model versus a model where the coefficients for leader evaluation are restricted to be equal for the two leaders). In support of H2, the transformational leader

Table 5
Means, standard deviations, and correlations of all the variables in Study 3

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6
Primed regulatory mode	0.57	0.50	—					
Preferences-leader	2.63	1.37	−0.24*	—				
Motivation-Mark	4.05	0.86	0.32**	−0.41**	—			
Motivation-Alex	3.72	0.97	−0.01	0.60**	0.03	—		
Evaluation-Mark	4.20	0.66	0.23*	−0.50**	0.65**	−0.11	—	
Evaluation-Alex	3.76	0.82	−0.11	0.46**	−0.10	0.64**	−0.08	—

Note. Ratings of preferences are on a 1–5 scale, 1 = strongly prefer Mark Doyle and 5 = strongly prefer Alex Hale; primed regulatory mode is scored assessment = 0; locomotion = 1.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

Table 6
Results for multivariate analysis of preference, motivation, and evaluation on primed regulatory mode (Study 3)

Predictor	Dependent variable				
	Preference	Motivation		Evaluation	
		Mark	Alex	Mark	Alex
Primed regulatory mode	−0.65* (0.28)	0.56** (0.17)	−0.03 (0.20)	0.30* (0.14)	−0.18 (0.17)

Note. Standard errors are shown in parentheses.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

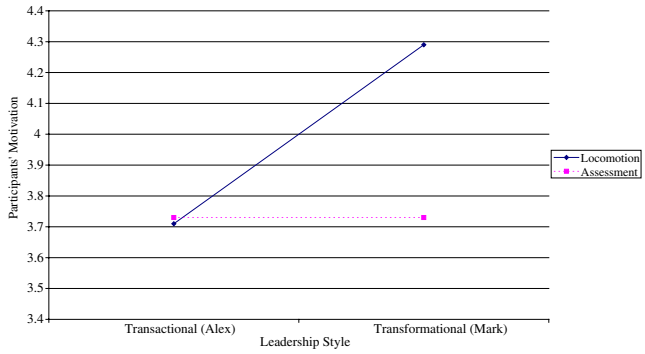

Fig. 3. The interactive effect of leadership style and regulatory mode on motivation (Study 3).

Fig. 4. The interactive effect of leadership style and regulatory mode on evaluation (Study 3).

elicited greater anticipated motivation ($\chi^2 = 4.98$, $p < .05$) and more favorable evaluations ($\chi^2 = 4.44$, $p < .05$) from people primed with a locomotion mode than did the transactional leader.

Participants' mean ratings of the leaders by condition are also illustrative. Those primed with a locomotion mode preferred the transformational leader (2.35) and anticipated being motivated by him (4.29) more than did those primed with an assessment mode (3.00 and 3.73, respectively). In addition, participants primed with a locomotion mode anticipated greater motivation for the transformational leader (4.29) than for the transactional leader (3.71), whereas participants primed with an assessment mode anticipated the same degree of motivation for both leaders (3.73) (see Fig. 3). Participants primed with a locomotion mode evaluated the transformational leader (4.33) more favorably than did those primed with an assessment mode (4.03), and more favorably than the transactional leader (3.69) (see Fig. 4). Participants primed with an assessment mode also evaluated the transformational leader more favorably than the transactional leader (4.03 versus 3.86), but to a lesser extent.

Discussion

The purpose of Study 3 was to determine whether the results found in Study 1 and Study 2, with chronic regulatory mode, could be replicated when regulatory mode was induced with a priming manipulation. In support of H1, transformational leaders elicited stronger preferences, higher levels of anticipated motivation, and more positive evaluations from people primed with a locomotion mode than from people primed with an assessment mode. In support of H2, transformational leaders elicited higher levels of anticipated motivation and more positive evaluations from people primed with a locomotion mode than did transactional leaders. The findings from Study 3 build upon the findings from the previous two studies by demonstrating the relationship between preferences for leadership style and situationally induced regulatory mode. This demonstrates not only that leaders might adapt their style to suit their followers, but that there may be ways to influence followers in order to make them more receptive to transformational leadership.

General discussion

Researchers in organizational behavior have a strong interest in the correlates of leadership, especially charismatic, or transformational, leadership. In the present research, we attempt to clarify the link between self-regulation and followers' positive reactions to transformational leadership. A substantial body of work on self-regulation has emerged in social psychology, demonstrating that regulatory orientations can affect the manner in which people identify and pursue goals (see Higgins et al., 2003 for a review). Our findings illustrate the critical role of self-regulation in understanding how followers react to, and evaluate, leaders in organizations.

In Study 1, we found that people with more of a locomotion mode were more motivated by a supervisor with a transformational leadership style. Further, people with more of a locomotion mode were more motivated by transformational leadership than by transactional leadership. The results from Study 2, in which we enacted leadership style, provided further support for our hypotheses, so that a transformational leader elicited higher levels of motivation and more positive evaluations from people with more of a locomotion mode than an assessment mode (and more so than a transactional leader). Finally, in our third study, we induced regulatory mode and asked participants to evaluate vignettes of a transformational or a transactional leader. Consistent with our previous results, we found that those who adopted a locomotion mode preferred transformational leadership over transactional leadership more than did those with an assessment mode. Taken together, the results of these studies suggest that regulatory orientation may be closely related to leadership style and that a stronger locomotion mode of self-regulation may

positively impact subordinates' motivation and their evaluation of transformational leaders.

Future directions

Our findings call attention to the potential link between theory and research on self-regulation and leadership, particularly between regulatory mode and leadership style. However, other individual differences that predispose followers to favor transformational leadership may exist. For example, according to Deci and Ryan (1985), people have different causal orientations (control, impersonal, and autonomy) that reflect their tendency toward self-determined behavior. An autonomy orientation encompasses several dimensions that refer to motivation and personality (e.g., a preference for interesting and challenging activities and a strong sense of responsibility), including a proclivity toward self-initiation, which is a concept akin to locomotion. Future research might examine whether individuals with more of an autonomy orientation have a strong affinity toward transformational leaders.

Another aspect of an individual's regulatory orientation that may influence their preferences for leadership style is their regulatory focus. Whereas regulatory mode represents preferences for goal pursuit, regulatory focus represents preferences for goal attainment. Regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997, 1998) posits that people are motivated to approach pleasure (promotion focus) and avoid pain (prevention focus), so that promotion-focused people are directed toward achieving positive outcomes (by pursuing their ideal goals) and prevention-focused people are concerned with minimizing negative outcomes (by pursuing their "ought" goals). Prevention-focused people may prefer transactional leaders because they appreciate the avoidance of mistakes through the vigilant monitoring of one's performance. Similarly, promotion-focused people may demonstrate an affinity for transformational leaders because they encourage followers to attain their ideal states. Future research might find it worthwhile to examine this other aspect of self-regulation more closely.

Finally, the social psychological mechanism that connects transformational leaders and those who adopt more of a locomotion mode remains unspecified. One explanation for this connection may be similar to that offered by Howell and Shamir (2005) who proposed that transformational leader–follower dyads can be categorized as personalized and socialized relationships. Whereas personalized relationships provide followers with a clear sense of self through identification with the leader, socialized relationships enable followers to express their values and play an active role in the leader's vision (Howell & Shamir, 2005, p. 100). The formation of these relational bonds may underlie the link between locomotion and transformational leadership, albeit through different means. If what connects transformational leaders to followers with a locomotion mode is their common preference for locomotion, this would suggest the presence of a personalized relationship. However, if followers with a locomotion regulatory mode respond positively to transformational leadership because it enables them to act on their locomotive tendencies, this would suggest the presence of a socialized relationship. Future work on regulatory mode and leader–follower interactions could build upon the present findings by considering the nature of the leader–follower relationship.

Limitations

Some limitations of our studies should be noted. First, although the mean assessment score was consistent with what has been reported in prior research, the mean locomotion score was higher for the MBA sample (Study 1) than what has been reported in previous validation studies. The high score in locomotion is not surprising given that these MBA students are also employed full-time (and, thus, would certainly qualify as "doers"). However, the executives who comprised this sample of managers may not be representative of the general management population (or the general management population may not be representative of the general population). Given the supportive results obtained in Study 2, which relied on more representative scores, the higher scores offered by the participants in Study 1 are somewhat less concerning. Nevertheless, future research should be conducted with more diverse samples to address potential selectivity issues.

Second, our studies utilized items from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to assess transformational and transactional leadership (either as a manipulation check or as an independent variable). The reliabilities were strong for the transformational leadership scale, but not for the transactional scale used in Study 1. Low reliability for the MLQ's measure of transactional leadership has been a recurring problem in research on leadership style (see Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe et al., 1996). Bass and Avolio (1997, p. 54) report that coefficient alphas for the subscales of transactional leadership tend to range between .53 and .61. Given that these reliabilities fall below acceptable levels (Iacobucci & Duhachek, 2003), future research should attempt to develop more robust measures of transactional leadership or clarify the conceptualization of this construct.

Practical implications

Our results call attention to the importance of leader–follower fit by introducing the "value from fit" concept developed recently by motivation theorists in social psychology (e.g., Higgins, 2000, 2002). To create "value

from fit," leaders may need to tailor their style to suit the regulatory mode of their subordinates. Alternatively, organizations may wish to match their members' general regulatory orientation with a leader whose style will be well received. The value that derives from this matching strategy could translate into motivation gains and more favorable evaluations of organizational leaders, as shown here. In addition, other research suggests that matching can yield performance benefits, as long as the nature of the task is suited to the focal individual's regulatory mode (see Freitas & Higgins, 2002; Freitas et al., 2002). These matching strategies warrant further consideration for researchers and practitioners interested in developing fruitful leader–follower relationships.

Aside from measuring followers' chronic regulatory orientations, firms might also consider inducing changes in followers' regulatory orientations. The fact that regulatory mode can be manipulated as demonstrated here and elsewhere (e.g., Avnet & Higgins, 2003), suggests that one's preferences for a certain leadership style may not be one's destiny. Perhaps anyone can adopt a locomotion mode with the right priming, which, in turn, implies that perhaps anyone can adopt preferences for a transformational leadership style. Transformational leaders interested in developing rapport with followers might consider employing some methods of priming that are aimed at inducing a locomotion mode of self-regulation.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the leadership literature by identifying regulatory mode as an important factor in understanding the effectiveness of transformational leadership. We found that people with a stronger locomotion mode responded more favorably to transformational leadership. Specifically, the extent to which transformational leaders were successful in increasing motivation and eliciting positive evaluations depended on whether those who were being led adopted more of a locomotion mode of self-regulation. Researchers and practitioners might use these findings to identify people with stronger preferences for transformational leadership. Alternatively, they might use methods of priming a locomotion mode to encourage the development of effective leader–follower relationships. Most importantly, future research on leadership style should consider the role of self-regulation in determining when transformational leadership will be more effective in increasing motivation.

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