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Review

Leadership, self, and identity: A review and research agenda

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Abstract

This article reviews empirical research on the role of follower self-conception in leadership effectiveness, and specifies an agenda for future research in this area. The review shows that several aspects of follower self-conception (i.e., self-construal, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-consistency) may be affected by leadership, and may mediate the effects of leadership on follower behavior. There also is consistent evidence that follower self-construal moderates the impact of leadership on follower attitudes and behavior. Two key themes for future research are defined. First, future research should focus on the development of theory about the role of relational self-construal in the leadership process. Second, it seems particularly valuable to develop theory about the interplay of different aspects of follower self-conception in leadership effectiveness, including the interactive effects of these aspects of self. Working backwards from these theoretical models of follower self-conception, specific leader behavior relevant to these aspects of self should then be identified.

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Keywords: Follower self-concept; Follower self-construal; Follower identification; Follower identity

Contents

1. Introduction	826
2. Self, Identity, and Motivation	827
2.1. Framework for the review	828

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3.	Self-concept as a mediator of leadership effectiveness	829
3.1.	Self-construal	829
3.1.1.	Collective self-construal/social identification	830
3.1.2.	Relational self-construal/personal identification	832
3.2.	Self-efficacy	833
3.2.1.	Personal self-efficacy	833
3.2.2.	Collective self-efficacy	835
3.2.3.	Relational self-efficacy	836
3.2.4.	Conclusion	836
3.3.	Self-esteem	837
3.4.	Self-consistency	838
3.5.	What have we learned? What is missing?	839
4.	The self-concept as moderator of leadership effectiveness	841
4.1.	Self-construal	841
4.2.	Other aspects of the self-concept.	844
4.3.	What have we learned? What is missing?	845
5.	Discussion and conclusion	846
	Acknowledgements.	849
	References	850

1. Introduction

As several leadership theorists have proposed, influence on others is the essence of leadership (e.g., Yukl, 1998)—only in its influence on others may we observe leadership. Leadership effectiveness is critically contingent on, and indeed often defined in terms of, leaders' ability to motivate followers towards a collective goal, mission, or vision (Chemers, 2001). The logical implication of this proposition is that, to understand leadership effectiveness, we need to understand leadership's effects on followers. In other words, to understand leadership, we need to develop theories of the psychological processes that translate leader behavior into follower action. Leadership research has, however, focused more on the leader (leader traits and behavior; cf. Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1998) than on these psychological effects on followers, and the enterprise of understanding leadership still seems to have much to gain by research that concentrates on psychological effects on followers (Hunt, 1999; Lord & Brown, 2004).

In recent years, this picture has started to change, especially with growing research that focuses on the role of follower self-concept and identity (e.g., De Cremer & Tyler, *in press*; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord, Brown, & Freiberg, 1999; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a,b). The aim of the current article is twofold. First, it offers a state-of-the art review of published empirical research in leadership from this self and identity perspective, to take stock of the existing evidence for the role of follower self-concept in leadership effectiveness. Second, it defines a research agenda to guide future research efforts in this area.

We first introduce the concepts of self and identity, and then present the framework that guides and structures this review, and helps to identify directions for future research. This framework specifies follower self-concept as both mediator and moderator in the relationship between leadership and follower behavior. Separate sections are devoted to reviewing empirical evidence and directions for future research for the mediator and the moderator role of follower self-concept. We conclude by summarizing the key points of our analysis and highlighting key themes for future research.

2. Self, Identity, and Motivation

The way that we perceive ourselves, our self-concept or identity has profound effects on the way we feel, think, and behave, and for the things we aim to achieve (for an overview, see [Leary & Tangney, 2003](#)). Therefore, if leadership can change the way in which followers perceive themselves, leadership may have great consequences for organizational, work group, and individual functioning. What then, exactly, is this self-concept?

The self-concept can be viewed as the knowledge a person has about him or her self. This knowledge about the self may cover many different areas; for instance, knowledge of the competencies one has and does not have, knowledge of one's attitudes and values, and knowledge of one's likes and dislikes, and of what one aspires to become. People tend to have clear conceptions of the self on some dimensions and rather vague or more schematic conceptions of the self on other dimensions. The more important the particular dimension is to someone, and the more they believe they occupy an extreme position on the dimension, the more crystallized, or clear, self-conception is ([Markus, 1977](#)).

The self, thus, is a knowledge structure that helps people organize and give meaning to memory and behavior ([Kihlstrom, Beer, & Klein, 2003](#); [Kihlstrom & Klein, 1994](#)). For instance, information may be stored better in memory when it is self-relevant, and self-relevant information may be more systematically linked to other information. In addition, the self evolves from interaction with others, and functions as a regulator of these social interactions (e.g., [Lord & Brown, 2004](#); [Sedikides & Gregg, 2003](#)). Our idea of ourselves arises, to a large extent, from our experiences of how we react to the behaviors of others, and how others react to us. In addition, social interactions and social structures also provide identities for us (e.g., social context may lead people to perceive themselves in terms of their professional affiliation, their role in their family, or their political orientation).

Importantly, the self is not unidimensional. A person's overall self is typically represented as a set of categories, each of which represents a distinct self or identity ([Markus & Wurf, 1987](#); [Showers & Zeigler-Hill, 2003](#); [Stets & Burke, 2003](#)). These distinct selves or identities are typically tied to a particular social context. This means that people can have an identity for each of the different personal and social positions or role relationships they hold in a specific social context. Thus, self as manager is an identity, self as employee of organization *X* is an identity, and self as a husband is an identity. The number of identities and the specific content of each of them vary from person to person. We regard the salient identity thus as being equivalent to the activated part of the self-concept, and we will use the terms self-concept, self, and identity interchangeably.

Very important in light of the present discussion is the fact that the self is highly dynamic. The specific content of the self-concept is dependent on the situation. As such, the self may be seen as a collection of modular processing structures (self-schemas) that are elicited in different contexts or situations and have specific cognitive, affective, and behavioral consequences (e.g., [Lord et al., 1999](#)). It is the activated portion of the overall self-concept that, at that specific time, guides information processing, affect, and behavior. So, although people may have many distinct selves, only one of them tends to be salient or activated in any specific context. This activated portion of the self-concept may be referred to as the working self-concept ([Lord & Brown, 2004](#); [Markus & Wurf, 1987](#)). Which part of the self-concept will be activated is dependent on cues in the social context and on the immediate past history. For instance, a person's identity as a daughter or son may be made salient when they receive a phone call from their father, and their identity as an employee may become salient when a colleague enters the room.

It should also be noted that there is a future-oriented aspect to self-conception. Self-conceptions do not only describe how we are at a certain point in time. Markus and Nurius (1986) suggested that we also have an array of possible selves. These possible selves are future-oriented schemata of what we think we could potentially become (for better or for worse). In this respect, Higgins (1987) distinguishes between ideal selves (how we would like to be) and ought selves (how we think we should be). Comparisons between one's current self-view and possible, ideal, or ought selves may have important motivational consequences. The outlook on becoming someone who is potentially "better" or "different" as compared to one's current self-view may inspire substantial effort, and also promote patience with existing unsatisfying conditions by focusing individuals on progress and development (Lord et al., 1999).

A key point in relation to a self-concept analysis of leadership effectiveness is that self-conception may differ in the level of inclusiveness at which the self is construed. Research on self-categorization, self-construal, and social identity describes how the self may not only be defined in terms of unique, individuating characteristics that distinguish the individual from others (the personal self), but may also be extended to include others (e.g., Hogg, 2003; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). At the collective level of self-construal, self-conception is referred to as social identity (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) or collective self (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Hogg & Williams, 2000; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). The concept of social (or collective) identification is also used to reflect the extent to which the self is defined in collective terms (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Social identification or collective self-construal implies a psychological "merging" of self and group that leads individuals to see the self as similar to other members of the collective, to ascribe group-defining characteristics to the self, and to take the collective's interest to heart (Hogg, 2003; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001; Turner et al., 1987).

An extended sense of self may also be more personalized, and be based on the individual's roles in relationships with significant others such as their family and close friends (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). Such relational self-construal renders mutual benefit and mutual interest more salient, and motivates the individual to take the other's interest to heart. The relational self has received less research attention than the collective self, but has attracted increased attention in recent years (e.g., Lord & Brown, 2004; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001).

Self-construal is not a trichotomy, but a matter of degree. People may, to a greater or lesser extent, define self in personal, relational, and collective terms. The strength or salience of different self-construals may vary across situations, group memberships, relationships, and time (Aron, 2003; Brewer, 2003; Hogg, 2003; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001; Turner et al., 1987).

A large body of research, predominantly from social and personality psychology, informs us about the role of the self-concept in shaping perceptions, attitudes, and behavior (for an overview, see Leary & Tangney, 2003). Of particular relevance to the study of leadership effectiveness, this research also ties various aspects of self-conception to motivation and goal-directed behavior. Rather than reviewing the relevant literature here, we address these issues when we discuss the different aspects of self that have been associated with leadership, or that might fruitfully be associated with leadership.

2.1. Framework for the review

The key point in the self-concept analysis of leadership effectiveness is that the self-concept is dynamic. Different situations bring different aspects of the self to the fore, and the self-concept changes

through exposure to external stimuli. Here, then, lies the potential influence of leadership. Leadership may affect which aspects of the self are salient, and may bring about more enduring changes in follower self-conception. These contextually salient and enduring changes in the self-concept may subsequently feed into follower attitudes and behavior. Because motivation that flows from self-conception is intrinsic to the individual, the effectiveness of leadership that influences follower motivation and behavior through follower self-conception may be assumed to be less contingent on monitoring and external rewards (cf. Ryan & Deci, 2000).

To uncover these processes, we need to consider research on leadership's effects on follower self-concept—especially research in which mediational models of leadership, self, and follower attitudes and behavior are tested. The first section of our empirical review focuses on this type of research. As has been highlighted in self and identity analyses of leadership effectiveness (Hogg, 2001; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord et al., 1999; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a), follower self-concept may also inform followers' responses to leadership. In this way, follower self-concept may function as a moderator of leadership effectiveness. To shed more light on these processes, the second section of the empirical review focuses on research pertaining to this moderator role of follower self-conception. This distinction between the moderator and mediator role of follower self-concept is the first ordering principle in this review.

The second ordering principle is the distinction between different levels of self-construal. A qualitative difference between self-construal and other aspects of self-conception is that self-construal, first and foremost, is about the level of inclusiveness at which the self is defined. All other aspects of the self can, in principle, be defined at these different levels of inclusiveness. Self-conception may, for instance, reflect evaluations of the personal self (i.e., self-esteem), but also evaluations of the collective self (i.e., collective self-esteem; Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990). The question we therefore raise throughout the review (in addition to reviewing evidence concerning self-construal per se) is how aspects of follower self-conception at these different levels of inclusiveness relate to leadership effectiveness. In sum, the empirical evidence we review is structured according to a model of leadership effectiveness that (a) proposes both a mediator and a moderator role for follower self-conception, and (b) recognizes that aspects of follower self-definition function at different levels of self-construal.

3. Self-concept as a mediator of leadership effectiveness

Empirical research on follower self-concept as a mediator of the relationship between leadership and follower attitudes and behavior has mainly focused on self-construal (typically operationalized as identification) and self-efficacy. To a lesser extent, self-esteem and self-consistency have also been objects of study. By more than happy coincidence, these are aspects of the self that were all proposed by Shamir et al. (1993) to mediate the effectiveness of charismatic leadership.

3.1. Self-construal

A substantial body of research on self-categorization, social identification, and self-construal shows that self-construal affects behaviors that are typically seen as relevant to leadership effectiveness (for overviews, see Haslam, 2001; Haslam, van Knippenberg, Platow, & Ellemers, 2003; Hogg & Terry, 2001; van Knippenberg, 2000). When the self is defined in collective terms, collective interest is

experienced as self-interest (i.e., as collective self-interest), and individuals are intrinsically motivated to contribute to the collective good (e.g., contribute to collective task performance, van Knippenberg, 2000; cooperate towards collective goals, De Cremer & Van Vugt, 1999; also see Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994; Hogg & Terry, 2001). Moreover, self-construal in collective terms is likely to render more collectivistic values salient that feed into motivation to contribute to the collective (Lord & Brown, 2001; Shamir, 1990). When self-definition is tied to the collective, people are also more inclined to remain members of the collective turnover declines (Mael & Ashforth, 1995).

Accordingly, tying sense of self to the collective has been proposed to be an important aspect of leadership effectiveness (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2002; Shamir et al., 1993; Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord et al., 1999; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). Indeed, in line with this notion of self-construal, converting followers' motivation from self-interest to collective interest has been proposed to be the essence of charismatic and transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; House, 1977; Shamir et al., 1993).

Below, we discuss evidence for the role of collective self-construal (social identification), followed by research on the role of relational self-construal (personal identification). Note that the focus on collective self-construal and relational self-construal, respectively, in these studies suggests an implicit contrast with personal self-construal. Because the role of social and personal identification is underscored in theories of charismatic and transformational leadership, most of the evidence discussed here comes from studies of charismatic and transformational leadership. These studies are discussed first, after which we focus on the issue of self-construal in non-charismatic/transformational leadership.

3.1.1. Collective self-construal/social identification

In a laboratory experiment focusing on group member cooperation in providing a public good, De Cremer and van Knippenberg (2002) found that identification with the collective mediated the interactive effect of leader self-sacrifice and leader procedural fairness (voice) on follower cooperation. In a similar vein, De Cremer and van Knippenberg (in press) studied in a laboratory experiment as well as in a scenario experiment the interactive effect of leader self-sacrifice and leader display of self-confidence, and found that this interactive effect on perceptual–attitudinal measures of leadership effectiveness was mediated by social identification.

In a large survey of bank employees and their branch managers, which also addressed personal identification (cf. relational self-construal; see below), Kark, Shamir, and Chen (2003) studied the relationship between a general measure of transformational leadership and empowerment—operationalized as self-efficacy, collective efficacy, and organization-based self-esteem. They found that social identification mediated the positive relationship between transformational leadership and these aspects of the self-concept. Similar findings were obtained by Conger, Kanungo, and Menon (2000), who assessed the relationship between a general measure of charismatic leadership, social identification, and empowerment in a cross-sectional survey, and found that social identification mediated the positive relationship between charismatic leadership and empowerment.

In addition to this mediational evidence, a number of other studies provide evidence for the relationship between aspects of (charismatic and transformational) leadership and social identification/collective self-construal. Paul, Costley, Howell, Dorfman, and Trafimow (2001) conducted a scenario experiment in which they exposed participants to alleged leader communications that either were inspired by the idealized influence (charisma) aspect of transformational leadership proposed by Bass

(1985; i.e., reference to collective mission, beliefs, and values, and to collective effort), or by the individualized consideration aspect of transformational leadership proposed by Bass (1985; i.e., reference to employees as unique individuals, and to attempts to take unique individual needs and desires into consideration and to the development of individuals). A self-description measure showed that the communication inspired by idealized influence made collective self-construal salient, whereas the communication inspired by individualized consideration made personal self-construal salient.

Shamir, Zakay, Breinin, and Popper (1998) studied leadership in the Israeli military, and found that leader supportive behavior and leader emphasis on collective identity were positively related to follower identification with their unit, whereas leader exemplary behavior was unrelated to unit identification. Unexpectedly, leader emphasis on ideology was negatively related to unit identification, possibly because the ideology had a poor match with follower values (cf. the discussion of self-consistency below). In another study of leadership in the Israeli army, Shamir, Zakay, Breinin, and Popper (2000) focused on the relationship between leaders' emphasis on collective identity (cf. Shamir et al., 1998), shared values (a measure similar to emphasis on ideology in the study of Shamir et al., 1998), and inclusive behavior (labeled supportive behavior by Shamir et al., 1998), and followers' identification with the unit. They found that all three elements of leadership were positively related to unit identification.

In an experimental study of leadership after a merger between two groups, Duck and Fielding (2003) compared responses to leaders whose premerger group was the same or different to participants' premerger group (i.e., ingroup vs. outgroup), as a function of whether the leader took a decision that favored participants' premerger ingroup or outgroup. They found that identification with the merged group was unaffected by whether or not the leader's decision favored the premerger ingroup or outgroup if the leader was from the ingroup, whereas leaders with origins in the premerger outgroup elicited lower levels of identification if their decision favored the outgroup rather than the ingroup.

The available evidence not only supports the proposition that leadership may affect follower identification with the collective, and that this effect on identification mediates effects on follower attitudes and behavior, it also points to a number of specific aspects of leadership that may affect identification. Consistent with theories of charismatic and transformational leadership that propose that building collective identification is an important aspect of charismatic leadership (Shamir et al., 1993), leadership's influence on collective identification is linked to leader behaviors that have been proposed as aspects of charismatic and transformational leadership: self-sacrifice (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1998; Yorges, Weiss, & Strickland, 1999), display of self-confidence (Conger & Kanungo, 1987), emphasis on collective identity, emphasis on shared values, and display of supportive/inclusive behavior (Shamir et al., 1993).

In addition, the charisma manipulation in the Paul et al. (2001) scenario study, and the general measures of charismatic and transformational leadership in the studies by Conger et al. (2000) and Kark et al. (2003) similarly link charismatic and transformational leadership to follower identification with the collective. In this sense, then, the above studies may be seen as evidence that charismatic and transformational leadership derives part of its effectiveness from its effect on follower identification with the collective. At the same time, however, it should be noted that the results of Paul et al. (2001) for individualized consideration (i.e., an aspect of transformational leadership) and the findings of Shamir et al. (1998) for emphasis on ideology show that not all aspects of charismatic and transformational leadership necessarily heighten follower identification with the collective (cf. Kark & Shamir, 2002).

Whereas most aspects of leadership studied in relation to identification concern charismatic and transformational leadership, the exceptions seem to be leader procedural fairness (De Cremer & van

Knippenberg, 2002) and leaders' group origin and degree of group favoritism (Duck & Fielding, 2003). Although leader (procedural) fairness is not typically studied in relation to leadership, there is increasing recognition that leader fairness is an integral part of leadership (e.g., De Cremer & Alberts, 2004; De Cremer & Tyler, in press; De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2003). Moreover, more recent work on procedural fairness has shown that procedural fairness is positively related to collective identification (Tyler & Blader, 2000). This suggests that efforts to integrate the literature on social and organizational justice (e.g., Konovsky, 2000; Tyler & Lind, 1992) with research on leadership effectiveness may work fruitfully from a self-concept perspective (De Cremer, 2003a; Tyler, 2003; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a). Leaders' group origin and group favoritism are discussed in more detail when we review research on leader group prototypicality and leader group-orientedness below.

3.1.2. *Relational self-construal/personal identification*¹

Although several studies have addressed the relationship between leadership and collective self-construal (social identification), empirical evidence for leadership's relationship to relational self-construal (personal identification) is scarcer. As Aron (2003) and Aron & McLaughlin-Volpe (2001) outline, self-conception may be extended to include significant others (i.e., relational self-construal). Such a psychological merging of self and other leads people to experience less of a distinction between their own and other's interests, in much the same way as an extended self-conception to include a social group (i.e., collective self-construal) leads people to take collective interest to heart (Aron & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2001). Indeed, as Andersen and Chen (2002) argue, relational self-construal also incorporates motivations, affect, and evaluations tied to the others included in self-conception.

Accordingly, just like a psychological merging of self and group may motivate group-oriented efforts, self-conception that includes the leader (i.e., personal identification with the leader) may motivate followers to be loyal to the leader, and cause followers to experience the leader's interest as a shared interest. Accordingly, leadership that promotes personal identification with the leader may contribute to leadership effectiveness (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Kark & Shamir, 2002; Kets de Vries, 1988; Shamir et al., 1993; cf. Kelman, 1958).

Kark et al. (2003) also focused on the relationships among transformational leadership, follower personal identification with the leader, and follower dependence on the leader. They found that personal identification with the leader mediated the positive relationships between transformational leadership and dependence. Shamir et al. (1998) found that leader supportive behavior and emphasis on collective identity were positively related to identification with and trust in the leader, whereas emphasis on ideology and exemplary behavior were unrelated to identification with and trust in the leader. It should be noted, however, that this combination of personal identification and trust renders it less clear as to what extent these results pertain to personal identification rather than trust.

There is, thus, some modest initial evidence that elements of charismatic and transformational leadership are positively related to personal identification with the leader. Whether personal

¹ The term *personal identification* is used to refer to identification with one particular other person (cf. Kark et al., 2003; Kelman, 1958) and is used interchangeably here with relational self-construal (i.e., which, for the purposes of this review, reflects self-conception that includes the leader). Personal identification should not be confused with personal self-construal, which reflects self-conception in individuating terms that does not incorporate others in the sense of self.

identification also mediates the relationship between leader behavior and indicators of leadership effectiveness (e.g., follower performance or satisfaction) yet remains to be confirmed.

Kark et al. (2003) show that personal identification and social identification may be associated with different outcomes (cf. Lord et al., 1999; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). Kark and Shamir (2002) suggest that some aspects of charismatic and transformational leadership may be primarily associated with personal identification, whereas others are primarily associated with social identification (cf. van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a). In combination, then, this suggests that aspects of leadership that feed into personal identification have other effects than leader behaviors that elicit social identification. This proposition remains to be tested. As a first step, research may investigate whether different aspects of (charismatic and transformational) leadership indeed may be differentially associated with follower personal and social identification.

Another important issue is the possibility that relational self-construal/personal identification plays a role in the dyadic leadership processes studied within the framework of leader–member exchange (LMX) theory (Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Schriesheim, Castro, & Cogliser, 1999). LMX theory states that effective dyadic leadership may be grounded in high-quality exchange relationships between leader and follower. However, this perspective is informed more by social exchange theories (e.g., Graen & Cashman, 1975; Hollander, 1958; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997) than theories of self-concept and identity, and it is unclear to what extent high-quality LMX relationships reflect follower relational self-construal including the leader. Investigating this issue would seem an important avenue for future research.

3.2. *Self-efficacy*

Self-efficacy reflects beliefs about one's ability to organize and execute courses of action necessary for attainment of a goal (Bandura, 1997; Maddux & Gosselin, 2003). Self-efficacy relates to an individual's beliefs about personal control and agency. Efficacy beliefs heighten the likelihood that people will strive to achieve certain goals, be persistent in their goal-directed behavior, and succeed in their pursuit of these goals (Bandura, 1997; Judge & Bono, 2001). In support of this proposition, a meta-analysis by Stajkovic and Luthans (1998) of 144 studies on self-efficacy and measures of work-related performance revealed a correlation of $r=0.38$ between self-efficacy and performance; it should be noted, however, that this may also reflect a positive effect of performance on self-efficacy. In addition, self-efficacy is related to career choice (Hackett & Betz, 1995), job attitudes (Saks, 1995), training proficiency, learning and achievement (Martocchio & Judge, 1997; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991), task persistence (Bandura, 1997), and goal-directed behavior (Judge & Bono, 2001). Evidently, self-efficacy is related to important organizational outcomes.

3.2.1. *Personal self-efficacy*

Not surprisingly, a number of studies have investigated the extent to which leaders can boost followers' efficacy beliefs. The leadership literature suggests that transformational leaders help to build follower self-efficacy by, for instance, expressing confidence, developing follower potential, providing (timely) feedback, and emphasizing the relationship between persistence and important goals and values (Avolio & Bass, 1988; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Shamir et al., 1993). This heightened self-efficacy, in turn, may explain better performance and more positive work attitudes among followers of transformational leaders. In the following, we review recent research that has focused on the mediating

qualities of self-efficacy in the leadership–performance relationship. Subsequently, we turn to the effects of leader behaviors on follower self-efficacy per se.

Evidence for the mediating role of self-efficacy in leadership effectiveness comes from a laboratory experiment by [Shea and Howell \(1999\)](#). They showed that when individuals received no feedback on task performance, individuals who worked for charismatic leaders outperformed those working for noncharismatic leaders, and that this relationship was mediated by self-efficacy.

Somewhat more equivocal evidence comes from an experiment by [Kirkpatrick and Locke \(1996\)](#) in which they manipulated three elements of charismatic leadership (vision, communication style, and task implementation). Leader vision was found to affect follower self-efficacy and follower self-efficacy was found to be related to follower performance. Only leader task implementation behavior affected follower performance, however, and this effect was not mediated by self-efficacy. [Jung and Avolio \(1998\)](#) did not find a mediating effect of follower self-efficacy in the relation between transformational leadership and performance. Although these studies show that leadership may affect follower self-efficacy, evidence for the proposed mediating role of self-efficacy in leadership effectiveness is thus more mixed.

Additional evidence for the relationship between leadership and follower self-efficacy comes from studies that did not focus on self-efficacy as a mediator in the leadership–performance relationship. In a field experiment, [Dvir, Eden, Avolio, and Shamir \(2002\)](#) compared military leaders who received transformational leadership training with leaders who received the routine, nontransformational training. They observed higher self-efficacy among the direct followers of leaders who received the transformational training, and higher performance among their indirect followers (potential mediation by self-efficacy was not tested). [Eden \(1992\)](#) reviewed field experiments in the Israeli military, showing that leaders with high expectations about follower performance engage in leadership that heightens follower self-efficacy and performance. As already noted above in our discussion of this study, [Kark et al. \(2003\)](#) found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and follower self-efficacy.

[Chen and Bliese \(2002\)](#) collected data from soldiers in combat units, and focused on the question on whether leadership climate at different organizational levels had differential effects on follower efficacy measures. They reasoned that leaders at a higher organizational level are typically more concerned with assigning or clarifying work roles, while direct supervisors are the ones that are more likely to be consulted when soldiers face work-related stressors. The differential focus of leaders from various hierarchical levels would also result in leadership being related to follower self-efficacy through different processes. Indeed, they found that the extent to which soldiers had positive leader perceptions of higher management related to their level of self-efficacy through role clarity, while the extent to which soldiers had positive leader perceptions of their direct supervisor related to their level of self-efficacy through psychological strain.

[Philips \(2001\)](#) showed that the amount of decision influence a leader accords to the members of high-performing teams is related to team member self-efficacy. Philips reasoned that if the team does well, and one has a say in team decision making, one may feel competent, and hence one's task efficacy may be enhanced. In contrast, members of well-performing teams who are not given any say in decision making may feel superfluous or invaluable group members, which, in turn, may depress self-efficacy. In addition, [Choi, Price, and Vinokur \(2003\)](#) found that leaders who are perceived to be more supportive contribute positively to follower self-efficacy (in contrast, [Shamir et al., 1998, 2000](#) found leader supportive behavior to be unrelated to follower self-efficacy).

Rendering the evidence for the relationship between leadership and follower self-efficacy somewhat more mixed, Shamir et al. (1998) expected to find greater self-efficacy among followers whose leader emphasized ideology and collective identity, and displayed exemplary behavior. However, their field study in the military did not confirm this. Exemplary behavior and emphasis on collective identity were unrelated to self-efficacy, and ideological emphasis had a negative relationship with self-efficacy (also see Shamir et al., 2000).

3.2.2. *Collective self-efficacy*

Whereas the studies discussed above focused on personal self-efficacy, efficacy may also be defined at other levels of self-construal. Efficacy at the level of collective self-construal, collective efficacy, also referred to as group efficacy or group potency (Guzzo, Yost, Campbell, & Shea, 1993; Sosik, Avolio, & Kahai, 1997), is defined as “a group’s shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 477). Collective efficacy relates to the extent to which people believe that they can work together effectively to accomplish their common goals (Maddux & Gosselin, 2003).

Because collective efficacy may influence group goal setting, effort, persistence, and performance (Bandura, 1997), collective efficacy too may be associated with important work-related outcomes, such as motivation and persistence (Durham, Knight, & Locke, 1997; Mulvey & Klein, 1998), and group viability, learning, and self-development (Pescosolido, 2003). As for self-efficacy, then, researchers have asked if and how leadership may raise follower collective efficacy. Shamir et al. (1993), for instance, argue that leadership’s effect on collective efficacy is one of the processes through which charismatic leadership is effective. A couple of studies have focused on this mediating role for collective efficacy in the leadership–performance relationship.

Jung and Avolio (1998) studied the effects of transformational leadership on follower performance in an Asian–American and a Caucasian–American sample, and found that collective efficacy mediated transformational leadership’s impact on performance in the Asian–American sample, but not in the Caucasian–American sample. Jung and Avolio suggest that perhaps the stronger group orientation among collectivistic Asian–American people may lay the basis of this finding. Taggar and Seijts (2003) found that collective efficacy mediated the relationship between the extent to which an emergent leader displayed typical leadership behaviors and the extent to which team members showed appropriate staff (or follower) behaviors and team performance. Collective efficacy was high when the emergent leader initiated structure often in a situation in which team members showed appropriate staff behaviors, and this, in turn, predicted team performance.

Jung and Sosik (2002) found that transformational leadership was positively related to empowerment. Empowerment was positively related to collective efficacy, which, in turn was positively related to group members’ perceived group effectiveness. Hoyt, Murphy, Halverson, and Watson (2003) pointed specifically to the relation between leader efficacy beliefs, collective efficacy, and performance. They found that leaders’ self-efficacy for the task was associated with their collective efficacy, which, in turn, predicted follower collective efficacy. Follower collective efficacy had a strong effect on group performance.

A number of other studies also provide evidence for the relationship between leadership and collective efficacy. Sosik et al. (1997) hypothesized that because anonymity in a group decision support system environment enhances the salience of the group by reducing attention to individual differences, it

would strengthen transformational (as compared with transactional) leadership's effect on collective efficacy (group potency). Results supported this prediction.

This relationship between transformational leadership and collective efficacy was also obtained by Kark et al. (2003). Focusing on charismatic rather than transformational leadership, Shamir et al. (1998) found that leader supportive behavior was positively related to collective efficacy, whereas exemplary behavior and emphasis on collective identity were unrelated to collective efficacy, and ideological emphasis had a negative relationship with collective efficacy. These results were partly replicated by Shamir et al. (2000), with the exceptions that supportive/inclusive behavior was unrelated to collective efficacy, and exemplary behavior was not assessed.

In line with findings by Hoyt et al. (2003), Pescosolido (2001) showed that follower group efficacy perceptions were related to the self-efficacy beliefs of informal group leaders. Similarly, Watson, Chemers, and Preiser (2001) showed that the leaders' confidence, or the extent to which the leader was self-assured of his or her own qualities as a leader, predicted group members' collective efficacy. In addition to self-efficacy, Chen and Bliese (2002) also focused on the question as to whether leadership climate at different organizational levels had a relationship with follower collective efficacy. They observed that the extent to which followers had positive leader perceptions of higher management was related to collective efficacy. Indeed, high-level leadership was more closely related to collective efficacy than to self-efficacy.

3.2.3. *Relational self-efficacy*

In principle, self-efficacy might also be defined at the relational level of self-construal. To our knowledge, the idea of relational self-efficacy has so far gone uninvestigated. In leader–follower relations, relational self-efficacy would refer to one's beliefs about the leader–follower dyad's capability of organizing and executing the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments. Following the same logic as for personal self-efficacy and collective self-efficacy, relational self-efficacy may be expected to be related to outcomes important to leadership effectiveness. Future research will have to judge the merits of this proposition.

3.2.4. *Conclusion*

In sum, there is some evidence that leader behavior may affect both follower self-efficacy and follower collective efficacy, and that follower efficacy may mediate leadership effects on follower performance. Exactly which leader behaviors yield these effects is less clear, partly because of inconsistent findings, and partly because of the use of broad manipulations or measures of charismatic and transformational leadership rather than more specific operationalizations of leader behavior. In this respect, we raise two issues.

First, leadership research may not always have focused on the aspects of leadership that may be most relevant to follower efficacy, or may have “diluted” the effects of relevant leader behaviors by incorporating these in broader measures. Emphasizing collective identity in itself, for instance (cf. Shamir et al., 1998, 2000), may not be the most direct way to influence follower efficacy because it directly influences self-construal rather than performance beliefs. Leader behavior like role modeling (Conger & Kanungo, 1987), expressing confidence in followers, and expressing high performance expectations (Bass, 1985; Eden, 1992; Shamir et al., 1993), and an individualized focus on follower needs and capabilities (Bass, 1985), in contrast, are likely to be more directly related to follower efficacy (cf. Bandura, 1997). An important challenge for research in leadership and follower efficacy would seem

to be to develop more specific theory about the relationship between leader behavior and follower efficacy beliefs.

Second, even though self-efficacy may be an important factor in motivation, persistence, and performance, expecting to be able to do something is, in itself, not enough to motivate behavior. Rather, efficacy may be a precondition for preferences or desires to translate into action. From this perspective, we might distill a clearer picture of the role of follower efficacy in leadership effectiveness if we also focus on interactive effects of efficacy and other aspects of the leadership process. Van Knippenberg (2000), for instance, proposes that self-efficacy and collective efficacy are preconditions for social identification (i.e., collective self-construal) to translate into action on behalf of the collective (also see Stürmer & Simon, *in press*; Terry & Hogg, 1996). Similarly, we may propose that leadership that builds follower efficacy is more likely to be effective in mobilizing followers for collective goals if followers identify with the collective—or, put differently, if it is accompanied by leadership that engenders follower collective identification.

3.3. *Self-esteem*

Self-esteem may be described as the evaluative component of the self and as “a self-reflexive attitude that is the product of viewing the self as an object of evaluation” (Campbell & Lavalley, 1993, p. 4). Self-esteem has been associated with key outcomes such as enhanced initiative, higher satisfaction, and greater happiness, and in several studies, positive correlations between self-esteem and job performance are reported (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003; Gardner & Pierce, 1998; for a meta-analytic review, see Judge & Bono, 2001). Research has also begun to devote more attention to the role self-esteem plays in group functioning (e.g., McAllister & Bigley, 2002; Pfeffer, 1998), and it has become increasingly clear that self-esteem is not only an important psychological need, but also an important economic need (Branden, 1998). Self-evaluations reflected in self-esteem play an important part in employee reasoning, decision making, and action regulation (e.g., Wiesenfeld, Brockner, & Thibault, 2000). Moreover, research has also demonstrated that individuals with high self-esteem as opposed to low self-esteem respond differently to conflict situations, task interdependence, and relationships with others (Brockner, 1988; Duffy, Shaw, & Stark, 2000; Leary & Baumeister, 2000).

The capacity to influence follower self-esteem therefore seems of importance in a variety of social contexts. Because people’s evaluation of the self is largely grounded in their relationship with others (McAllister & Bigley, 2002), one may expect that interactions with significant others, such as leaders or supervisors, are especially likely to affect one’s level of self-esteem. Indeed, Shamir et al. (1993) propose that charismatic leadership, in part, derives its effectiveness from its effects on follower self-esteem. Yet, up to now, there is little research that concentrates on the effects that leaders may have on follower self-esteem.

An experimental study by De Cremer (2003b) showed that leader consistency, or the extent to which leaders use procedures uniformly and reliably across people and over time, is related to follower self-esteem. Inconsistent leaders were perceived as procedurally less fair, and this influenced feelings of uncertainty about oneself in ongoing interpersonal interaction (cf. De Cremer, van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Mullenders, & Stinglhamber, *in press*). De Cremer based his hypotheses on the group value model (Lind & Tyler, 1988) and the relational model of authority (Tyler, DeGoey, & Smith, 1996) that assumes that people consider self-relevant implications of the procedures enacted by the authority. These models suggest that if leaders use fair procedures, they also symbolically convey the message that

one is respected and valued, which may, in turn, bolster followers' self-esteem (Koper, van Knippenberg, Bouhuijs, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1993).

Following the same reasoning, De Cremer et al. (in press) found, across a laboratory experiment, a scenario experiment, and a cross-sectional survey, that leader procedural fairness (voice) and rewarding leadership (complimenting followers with their achievements and motivating them to reward themselves after a job well done) interacted, such that the relationship between leader procedural fairness and follower self-esteem was more positive when the leader was rewarding. Adding further evidence from the field, Kark et al. (2003) found that transformational leadership was positively related to organization-based self-esteem (i.e., self-esteem specific to the organizational setting).

Just as self-esteem reflects an evaluation of the personal self (i.e., personal self-esteem), collective self-esteem reflects an evaluation of the collective self (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990), of "us" rather than of "me." Collective esteem has mainly been studied in intergroup relations research (Rubin & Hewstone, 1998), and has also been shown to be related to subjective well-being (Bettencourt & Dorr, 1997). To our knowledge, however, it has not been studied in relation to leadership. Yet, analyses of charismatic leadership, especially Shamir et al. (1993), seem to suggest that emphasizing the value of the collective is a part of charismatic leadership, and it would seem worthwhile to study leadership's influence on follower collective self-esteem in future research.

The notion of relational self-esteem seems not to have been proposed before. In leader–follower relations, relational self-esteem refers to the follower's evaluation of self that incorporates the relationship with the leader. Just like personal and collective self-esteem, relational self-esteem might influence performance and well-being. It would seem to be a relevant concept for research in leadership effectiveness.

To conclude, relatively little is known about aspects of leadership that may affect follower self-esteem. Yet, the kind of leader actions that might build follower self-esteem fit well with leader behaviors proposed in models of leadership effectiveness. Leader behaviors such as expressing pride and confidence in individual followers and in the collective, referring to the collective's great history (Shamir et al., 1993), and being procedurally and interactionally fair (Koper et al., 1993; Tyler, 1999), would seem to be factors that may positively affect follower self-esteem as well as may more generally feed into leadership effectiveness.

3.4. *Self-consistency*

In their analysis of charismatic leadership, Shamir et al. (1993) note that people derive a sense of meaning from continuity between past, present, and projected future, and propose that charismatic leadership may in part be effective because it links future goals to past and present, and thus instills a sense of self-consistency. Van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003a) likewise note that a sense of continuity of one's collective identity is important in overcoming resistance to organizational change (Rousseau, 1998; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Monden, & de Lima, 2002), and propose that an important aspect of leadership of change is engendering such a sense of continuity (also see Reicher & Hopkins, 2003; Shamir, 1999). Corroborating this line of reasoning, research on intrinsic motivation and self-concordance (i.e., self-consistency) suggests that people are more intrinsically motivated for goal attainment if goals are consistent with their own important values and interests (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Sheldon & Elliot, 1999).

In an empirical study of the role of self-concordance, Bono and Judge (2003) focused on self-concordance as a mediator of the relationship between transformational leadership and leadership

effectiveness in a survey of nine different organizations and in a laboratory experiment. In the survey, a general measure of transformational leadership was used, and this was related to measures of follower job satisfaction, satisfaction with supervision, organizational commitment, and supervisor-rated job performance. Transformational leadership was positively related to all these outcomes, and self-concordance of work goals partly mediated these relationships. In the experiment, transformational leadership was manipulated by a videotaped communication of an alleged leader who acted out one of two experimental scripts (i.e., transformational vs. nontransformational). As predicted, self-concordance partly mediated the positive effects of transformational leadership on follower creative task performance and extrarole performance.

To our knowledge, empirical evidence concerning the role of self-consistency in leadership effectiveness is limited to the [Bono and Judge \(2003\)](#) study, and more research is needed. In this respect, it may be noted that [Bono and Judge \(2003\)](#) studied personal self-consistency, whereas [van Knippenberg and Hogg \(2003a\)](#) emphasized the importance of collective self-consistency (i.e., continuity of social identity) in effective leadership (also see [Shamir, 1999](#)). Complementing the [Bono and Judge \(2003\)](#) study with a study of leadership's effects on collective self-consistency (e.g., in organizational change) may thus be an interesting direction for future research.

Relational self-consistency has never been studied. In leader–follower relations, relational self-consistency would refer to the follower's sense of continuity of the relational identity that incorporates the (relationship with the) leader, and the perception of the extent to which goal pursuits are consistent with this relational identity. In view of analyses that suggest that the development of a relational identity including the leader may be an important aspect of leadership effectiveness ([Kark & Shamir, 2002](#); [Shamir et al., 1993](#); cf. [Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995](#)), relational self-consistency might prove to be an important factor in leadership effectiveness, too.

Obviously, we not only need to learn more about the role of self-consistency in leadership effectiveness, but also about the aspects of leadership that affect self-consistency. [Bono and Judge \(2003\)](#) focused on broad operationalizations of transformational leadership and it is yet unclear what specific aspects of leadership evoke a sense of self-consistency. In this respect, at least two broad categories might be identified.

First, leadership may highlight the link between collective goals and mission and important aspects of the self (e.g., values; cf. [Lord & Brown, 2001](#)), for instance by sketching how goal pursuit allows followers to realize important personal goals or values. This seems to be the approach taken by [Bono and Judge \(2003\)](#). Second, focusing more on a process of change, leadership may engender self-consistency by outlining how, despite the changes, the core aspects of the self are preserved. Leaders may, for instance refer, to the collective's past to argue that their (change-oriented) vision for the future is highly consistent with the collective's history ([Reicher & Hopkins, 2003](#); cf. [Shamir et al., 1993](#)), or they may highlight the core aspects of identity that remain unchanged even though a lot of other things are changing ([van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a](#)).

3.5. What have we learned? What is missing?

The empirical review in this section clearly corroborates the proposition that leadership effectiveness may be mediated by aspects of followers' self-concept. Although the work is far from done, the conclusion seems justified that leadership may indeed derive its effectiveness from its influence on follower self-concept. The largest body of evidence in support of this proposition comes from research

on collective self-construal/social identification, but the study of relational self-construal/personal identification, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-consistency also furnishes evidence consistent with this proposition.

As is plain from this review, in some areas, more evidence is clearly needed, especially where it concerns the role of aspects of the self-concept at other levels of self-construal (most notably the relational level of self-construal). Research might also broaden the range of leadership aspects studied, for instance by not restricting itself to charismatic and transformational leadership. The study of leader fairness, for example, would seem an important avenue for research, and one that may benefit from analysis in terms of follower self-conception (e.g., De Cremer and Tyler, *in press*). In addition to these very broad suggestions, we would like to highlight three issues.

First, with the exception of the study by Kark et al. (2003), no study focusing on the mediational role of follower self-concept seems to have examined more than one aspect of the self simultaneously. It would seem important that future research assesses the mediating role of different aspects of the self simultaneously. In this way, it may be determined whether different aspects of (charismatic and transformational) leadership are effective through their effects on different aspects of the self (cf. Kark & Shamir, 2002), whether the same aspect of leadership may affect different aspects of the self simultaneously (and more than one aspect of the self mediates leadership effectiveness), or whether some aspects of the self mediate the influence of leadership on other aspects of the self (cf. Kark et al., 2003). Put differently, now that we have evidence that leadership's effects on follower self-concept may be instrumental in mobilizing followers, we need to develop our understanding of the relationship between these different aspects of the self-concept in leadership effectiveness.

Second, and in part following from this, we need to focus on interactive effects of different leader behaviors. If different aspects of leadership feed into the same aspect of the self-concept, they may interact (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2002, *in press*; De Cremer et al., *in press*; cf. van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, *in press*). In addition, it is also possible that different leader behaviors interact because they feed into different aspects of the self-concept. Van Knippenberg (2000) and van Knippenberg and Ellemers (2003), for instance, proposed that self and collective efficacy are requirements for social identification to translate into efforts on behalf of the collective. Accordingly, we may predict that leader behavior that builds self and collective efficacy and leader behavior that engenders social identification interact in affecting follower behavior. Focusing on the latter kind of interactive effects would also be conducive to developing theory about the relationship between different aspects of the self-concept in leadership effectiveness.

Third, we may fruitfully expand the range of aspects of the self-concept studied. Of particular interest in this respect are possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). As noted in our discussion of the self-concept, possible selves are conceptions of what one could become. Such conceptions may be powerful motivators of behavior when they represent the self as one ideally aspires to be or the self as one believes one ought to be (Higgins, 1987). Leaders who present followers with a motivating possible self may mobilize followers (Lord et al., 1999). As an illustration, consider Alejandro Toledo, president of Peru, who heads a party named *Perú Posible* (Possible Peru)—a name that suggests a vision of what the collective national identity could evolve into (i.e., a possible collective self).

In a similar vein, charismatic and transformational leaders have been proposed to be especially effective in part because they communicate a vision for the collective (Bass, 1985). A clear possibility is that these visions derive their motivating potential in part from their ability to present followers with an appealing possible self. Indeed, Reicher and Hopkins (2001, 2003) argue that several highly effective

political leaders mobilized followers by painting a picture of what the collective could become. Possible selves, in particular, then, would seem to provide a worthwhile avenue for future research.

Follower self-concept is not only proposed to be important to leadership effectiveness because of its mediating role. Theoretical analyses have also accorded follower self-concept an important moderator role. Attention to this moderator role is important to our understanding of leadership effectiveness because it relates to what are, in a sense, boundary conditions for the effectiveness of certain leader behaviors or leadership styles. Moreover, because aspects of follower self-concept that may moderate the impact of leader behavior may, in principle, also be affected by leadership, exploration of the moderator role of follower self-concept may also yield valuable insight into how leadership may affect the boundary conditions for its own future effectiveness. Empirical evidence for this moderating role is reviewed in Section 4.

4. The self-concept as moderator of leadership effectiveness

The self-concept may not only be affected by situational stimuli such as leadership—it may also affect perceptions of, and responses to, situational stimuli (Leary & Tangney, 2003). Accordingly, follower self-concept has also been proposed to be a moderator of leadership processes. This argument is derived almost exclusively from research on (social) identification and (collective) self-construal (Hogg, 2001; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord et al., 1999; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a).

4.1. Self-construal

Social identity analyses of leadership effectiveness have pointed out two aspects of leadership that come into play under conditions of collective self-construal: leader group prototypicality (the extent to which the leader has group-defining attributes and is representative of the group's identity) and leader group-orientedness (the extent to which the leader has the group's best interest at heart) (Haslam & Platow, 2001; Hogg, 2001; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a).

Self-definition in collective terms makes the collective an important point of references for beliefs, attitudes, norms, and values (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Turner, 1991; Turner et al., 1987). As a consequence, leaders who are group-prototypical (i.e., represent this collective reference point) are especially attractive and influential, and therefore more effective. Self-definition in collective terms also leads people to experience the collective's interest as self-interest, and to endorse others who also take the collective's interest to heart and exert themselves in the collective's best interest. As a consequence, leaders who are group-oriented in their attitudes and behavior are more strongly endorsed and can be more effective.

An important point in this argument is that these processes come into play to the extent that people identify with the collective, and collective self-construal is salient. In other words, collective self-construal (social identification and social identity salience) moderates the effectiveness of leader group prototypicality and leader group-orientedness (Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a).

A number of studies support this argument for the moderating role of self-construal for the effects of leader group prototypicality, leader group-orientedness, or both. Hains, Hogg, and Duck (1997)

conducted an experimental study in which they manipulated leader group prototypicality and follower social identity salience and found that leader group prototypicality only (positively) affected follower perceptions of leadership effectiveness under conditions of high social identity salience. A similar pattern of results was observed in experimental research by Hogg, Hains, and Mason (1998), who used a similar setup as Hains et al. (1997) and found that leader group prototypicality was more predictive of favorable leadership perceptions when follower social identity was salient. Fielding and Hogg (1997) observed the same moderating effect of social identity salience for the relationship between group prototypicality and emergent leadership in a correlational study of outward bound groups.

Platow, Hoar, Reid, Harley, and Morrison (1997) experimentally studied responses to leaders that either favored their group (i.e., were group-oriented) or were evenhanded in an allocation decision concerning own group (ingroup) and another group (outgroup) and found that ingroup-favoring leaders were more strongly endorsed, but only under conditions of high social identification. De Cremer and Van Vugt (2002) studied follower cooperation in an experimental game in response to a leader who was either highly committed to the group (i.e., group-oriented) or high on leadership skills (also see below). They found that followers with high levels of identification cooperated more in response to a committed leader, whereas the reverse was true for followers with low levels of identification (for high identifiers, cooperation was also higher when the leader was procedurally fair rather than unfair; cf. Tyler, 1999).

As van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (in press) argue, leader group prototypicality instills trust in the leader's group-orientedness (i.e., a group-prototypical leader, as "one of us," is expected to have the collective interest in mind), and therefore renders leadership effectiveness less contingent on actual behavior that testifies to the leader's group-orientedness. In other words, leader group prototypicality and leader group-orientedness interact in affecting leadership effectiveness. Because leader group prototypicality and group-orientedness both come into play to the extent that followers conceive the self in terms of the group membership shared with the leader, this interactive effect, too, should be moderated by follower self-construal. This proposition is supported in an experiment by Platow and van Knippenberg (2001), who showed that followers who highly identified with the collective endorsed a group-prototypical leader regardless of whether the leader's intergroup allocation behavior favored the ingroup, an outgroup, or was even-handed, whereas they only endorsed a leader who was not prototypical of the group if the leader was ingroup-favoring. Low-identifying followers' endorsement was unaffected by leader group prototypicality and was highest for evenhanded leaders.

The logic that leads to the prediction that leader group prototypicality positively affects leadership effectiveness to the extent that followers conceive the self in collective terms also suggests that, contingent on follower self-construal, leaders with their origin in the ingroup should be more endorsed than leaders with their origin in an outgroup (Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003). In support of this proposition, Van Vugt and De Cremer (1999) found in a study of leadership in an experimental decision situation a preference for ingroup over outgroup leaders for high-identifying followers, but not for low-identifying followers. In a similar vein, Duck and Fielding (1999) studied the interaction between follower social identification and leaders' ingroup vs. outgroup origins and found that only high identifiers endorsed an ingroup leader more than an outgroup leader.

Social identity analyses of leadership also suggest that as followers define the self more in collective terms and as group-related aspects of leadership become more important, more individualized and interpersonal aspects of leadership become less influential (Hogg, 2001; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a).

A first line of evidence for this more general proposition comes from research focusing on follower self-construal as a moderator of the influence of the extent to which the leader matches followers' stereotypic beliefs about good leadership. Lord and colleagues (e.g., Lord, Foti, & DeVader, 1984; Lord & Hall, 2003; Lord & Maher, 1991) have shown that leadership perceptions (e.g., perceptions of effective leadership) are influenced by the extent to which leaders' characteristics match followers' implicit theories of good leadership. Hogg and colleagues (Fielding & Hogg, 1997; Hains et al., 1997; Hogg et al., 1998) argued that the more that followers' self is defined in collective terms, the more important is the match between leaders' characteristics and the group identity (i.e., group prototypicality) relative to the match between leader characteristics and more general leadership schemata. The studies by Fielding and Hogg (1997), Hains et al. (1997), and Hogg et al. (1998) discussed above also incorporated measures or manipulations of the extent to which the leader was leader-stereotypical, and yielded evidence that as leader group prototypicality grew in importance, leader stereotypicality diminished in importance (also see Lord & Hall, 2003; Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001).

A second line of evidence for the proposition that self-construal also moderates the influence of more individualized and interpersonal aspects of leadership comes from research integrating predictions from the social identity analysis of leadership with predictions from LMX theory (Hogg & Martin, 2003; Hogg, Martin, Epitropaki, Mankad, Svensson, & Weeden, *in press*; Hogg, Martin, & Weeden, 2003; also see Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord et al., 1999). Hogg and Martin argue that the individualized, interpersonally oriented leadership that is highlighted in LMX theory (e.g., Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) is more effective when followers define the self in more individualized terms, whereas a more depersonalized leadership style where group members are treated as, to some extent, identical (cf. shared identity) is more effective when social identity is salient. In support of this proposition, Hogg and Martin (2003) and Hogg et al. (2003, *in press*) report the results of experimental and survey research that shows that depersonalized leadership becomes more effective relative to interpersonal leadership with stronger self-definition in collective terms.

Related to this is the suggestion that self-construal moderates the effectiveness of transactional vs. transformational leadership. Transactional leadership refers to exchange-based leadership through contingent reward and monitoring to intervene when necessary (Bass, 1985), and has a clear focus on follower personal self-interest. The essence of transformational leadership, in contrast, is that it converts follower motivation from self-interest to collective interest (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Shamir et al., 1993). Accordingly, Lord et al. (1999) and Lord and Brown (2004) have proposed that transactional leadership, with its appeal to the personal self, should be more effective when follower personal self is salient, whereas transformational leadership, with its appeal to the collective self, should be more effective when follower collective self is salient.

Modest initial evidence in support of this proposition comes from a study by Martin and Epitropaki (2001). In a cross-sectional survey, they distinguished between employees high and low in organizational identification, and compared relationships between follower ratings of transactional and transformational leadership, on one hand, and indicators of leadership effectiveness, on the other hand. Results suggested that transformational leadership was more predictive of follower well-being and turnover intentions for the high-identification group as compared with the low-identification group. In addition, results showed that followers' implicit leadership theories were predictive of perceptions of transactional and transformational leadership for low identifiers, but not for high identifiers (cf. Hains et al., 1997; Hogg et al., 1998). It should be noted, however, that differences between the two identification groups were not statistically tested, and a less ambiguous test of self-construal as a moderator of the

impact of transactional vs. transformational leadership would seem a valuable direction for future research.

An interesting point in relation to self-construal and transformational leadership follows from Hogg and Martin's (2003) work on individualized and depersonalized leadership. Individualized consideration is proposed to be an aspect of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985), and Hogg and Martin's findings that individualized leadership is less effective with stronger collective self-construal suggests that the individualized consideration aspect of transformational leadership is less related to leadership effectiveness with increasing collective self-construal (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a). This proposition remains to be tested, but it is an interesting qualification of the proposition that transformational leadership is more effective with higher follower collective self-construal. This may hold for some aspects of transformational leadership, but probably not for all.

Studies of the moderating role of follower self-construal clearly show the integrative value of the self-concept framework. As illustrated by the studies discussed above, the notion of follower self-construal as a moderator of responses to leadership bridges leadership categorization theories and the social identity analysis of leadership, and LMX theory and the social identity analysis, and sheds new light on the transactional–transformational leadership framework and its relationship to other analyses of leadership (Lord & Brown, 2004; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a).

Less developed empirically as well as theoretically is, again, the role of relational self-construal. Social identity analyses have typically worked from a framework only distinguishing personal and social (i.e., collective) self (e.g., Hogg & Williams, 2001; Turner et al., 1987), and lower salience of the collective self is implicitly assumed to reflect higher salience of the personal self. An important question, however, is if and how relational self-construal (personal identification with the leader) may moderate the impact of leadership. Lord and Brown (2004) and Lord et al. (1999) propose that follower relational self-construal renders followers more sensitive to the relational–interactional aspects of leadership such as described by LMX theory (e.g., Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) and analyses of interactional justice (e.g., Bies & Moag, 1986). These propositions largely await empirical testing, but undertaking these efforts would seem to be a valuable direction for future research.

4.2. Other aspects of the self-concept

Aspects of the self-concept other than self-construal have hardly been studied as moderators of leadership processes, and the empirical evidence in this respect is far from clearcut. Murphy and Ensher (1999) argued that follower self-efficacy may affect leader–follower relationships (operationalized as LMX), and may also moderate the relationship between LMX and follower self-efficacy at a later stage. In a study assessing self-efficacy at two points in time, they found that Time 1 self-efficacy was positively related to Time 2 LMX. Time 1 self-efficacy and Time 2 LMX also interacted in predicting Time 2 self-efficacy. LMX was more positively related to Time 2 self-efficacy for followers lower in Time 1 self-efficacy. Murphy and Ensher's reasoning for this interaction suggests that Time 2 self-efficacy would be the consequence of LMX, but in view of their correlational design and their own reasoning concerning Time 1 efficacy and LMX, reverse causality seems equally plausible.

In a related vein, working from the notion that follower self-efficacy might inform leadership perceptions, Schyns (2001) obtained a positive relationship between follower self-efficacy and ratings of transformational leadership in a cross-sectional design. She argued that this relationship reflects the fact

that employees with high self-efficacy see themselves as similar to their leaders and thus perceive them to be transformational (Felfe & Schyns, 2002, in contrast, found no relationship between self-efficacy and ratings of transformational and transactional leadership).

Also working from the notion that follower self-concept might feed into LMX, Engle and Lord (1997) focused on follower self-schemas (i.e., self-conceptions). Self-schemas were operationalized in terms of the extent to which follower self-descriptions matched organizational prototypes of leadership and performance (cf. Lord et al., 1984). Follower self-schemas for performance, but not for leadership, were found to be positively related to both leader and follower ratings of LMX and interpersonal liking. The causal path implied in Engle and Lord's theorizing would suggest a moderator interpretation of these findings, in which self-schemas are conducive to the development of high-quality leader–follower relationships. An alternative reading of these correlational data is, however, that high-quality leader–follower relationships lead followers to incorporate organization–normative characteristics into their self-conception (cf. relational and collective self-construal).

Because none of these studies is experimental in nature (and cross-sectional designs cannot prove causality), it is unclear what must be concluded from these findings. The theoretical analyses presented in these studies suggest, however, that it is worthwhile exploring the possibility that other aspects of follower self-concept besides self-construal may feed into leader–follower relationships and other aspects of the leadership process.

Equally inconclusive because it is not really a study of follower self-concept, an experiment by Weierter (1999) focused on perceptions of leadership of participants who were not in a follower role. Results of this study suggest that high self-awareness (Duval & Wicklund, 1972), in combination with high self-monitoring (i.e., the tendency to be focused on the impression one makes on others; Snyder, 1979), renders people more sensitive to the consistency with own values (cf. self-consistency) of a speech from a leader. Given the proposed importance of self-consistency to the leadership process (see our earlier discussion of self-consistency), developing this analysis in a context actually involving followers may be worthwhile.

4.3. What have we learned? What is missing?

Research engendered by social identity analyses of leadership paints a clear picture of collective (vs. personal) self-construal as a moderator of the influence of the more group-oriented as well as the more individualized and interpersonal aspects of leadership. The obvious missing link is the empirical development of analyses of the role of relational self-construal (Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord et al., 1999). In view of the integrative potential of the focus on self-construal as a moderator, this might be considered a priority for research on leadership, self, and identity.

In addition, research may develop theoretical and empirical analyses of the potential moderating role of other aspects of follower self-concept. If different aspects of leadership feed into different aspects of follower self-concept, they may interact. Following the same logic, we may predict that aspects of follower self-concept may moderate the effects of leader behavior that affects other aspects of the self-concept. Based on the proposition that collective efficacy is a prerequisite for collective self-construal to translate into follower action (van Knippenberg & Ellemers, 2003), for example, we may propose that leadership that engenders collective self-construal is more likely to be effective under conditions of high follower collective efficacy. To take a different example, research in organizational justice suggests that self-esteem moderates the influence of different aspects of

procedural justice (Brockner et al., 1998; De Cremer, 2003b; Vermunt, van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, & Blaauw, 2001). Accordingly, the impact of leader procedural fairness should be contingent on follower self-esteem.

A last point to highlight in this respect is the fact that leader prototypicality of the collective is not something that “just happens to be the case.” As analyses of group prototypicality from a self-categorization perspective have highlighted, changes in the intergroup comparative context may alter group prototypes (Turner et al., 1987), and leaders’ group prototypicality may change accordingly as the intergroup situation changes (Hogg, 2001). At least as important, however, anecdotal evidence suggests that leaders also actively manage the perception of their group prototypicality, and of the group prototypicality of their policies. An observation from the political arena for instance is that leaders may suggest that they, with their party and program, represent the collective national identity (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001, 2003).

Silvio Berlusconi, Prime Minister of Italy, for example, founded a party called *Forza Italia* (Go Italy!)—a name that seems clearly intended to suggest a link with the collective Italian identity, presenting Berlusconi and his party as representatives of that identity. President Toledo of Peru, in a similar vein, may suggest that his party represents the Peruvian identity through its *Perú Posible* name. Related strategies may be used to suggest that the leader personally is prototypical of the collective (Reicher & Hopkins, 2003). Appealing to the nation’s history, for instance, President Toledo of Peru suggested that he is the last of the Inca rulers. Similarly, President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela presented himself as a reincarnation of Simon Bolívar, a historical hero for all of Latin America (Holtwijk, 2004).² Leaders that engage in such actions arguably make (intuitive) use of the moderating effect of follower self-construal by presenting themselves and their cause in ways that appeal to followers who define the self in collective terms (in addition, such leader behavior may of course also work to render the collective salient). Evidence for these processes is anecdotal, however, and more systematic empirical investigation would seem worthwhile.

5. Discussion and conclusion

Our review of the literature had two aims. We discuss both of these in reference to Table 1, which provides an overview of the main findings from research on leadership’s effects on follower self-concept. Following the framework for the review outlined in the Introduction, this overview is structured such that table entries address both the mediator role (implied by the antecedents and consequences entries) and the moderator role of follower self-concept. The different cells of the table reflect the second ordering principle of the review: Different aspects of the self (self-construal, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-consistency) are addressed at different levels of self-concept inclusiveness (individual, relational, and collective).

The first aim of the present study was to offer a state-of-the-art review of published empirical research in leadership, self, and identity to take stock of the existing evidence for the role of follower self-concept in leadership effectiveness. As may be evident from this review, many important questions lay wide open

² Interestingly, similar strategies may also be used to invoke the person rather than the collective. Assassinated Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn founded and headed a political party of which the name left nothing to guess about the focal point of attention—*Lijst Pim Fortuyn*. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Fortuyn indeed elicited high levels of personal identification among his followership.

Table 1

A summary of findings for the antecedents, consequences, and moderator role of follower self-concept in leadership effectiveness

	Level of inclusiveness		
	Individual	Relational	Collective
Self-construal	Antecedents: individualized consideration (antecedents, consequences, and moderators implied by low relational and low collective self-construal)	Antecedents: charismatic/transformational leadership Consequences: self-efficacy, collective efficacy, organization based self-esteem	Antecedents: charismatic/transformational leadership (self-sacrifice, self-confidence, emphasis on collective identity, emphasis on shared values, inclusive behavior, idealized influence); group-oriented behavior (self-sacrifice, ingroup favoritism); ingroup vs. outgroup origins; voice Consequences: cooperation, pursuit of the collective interest Moderator: leader group prototypicality; leader ingroup vs. outgroup origins; group-orientedness (ingroup favoritism; commitment to the group); depersonalized leadership; voice; transformational leadership; implicit leadership theories; leader stereotypicality; individualized leadership
Self-efficacy	Antecedents: charismatic/transformational leadership (vision, support); voice Consequences: performance (moderator: LMX)		Antecedents: charismatic/transformational leadership (supportive behavior, emphasis on ideology [-]); leader self-efficacy; leader collective efficacy; initiating structures Consequences: performance
Self-esteem	Antecedents: transformational leadership; procedural fairness (voice, consistency); rewarding leadership		
Self-consistency	Antecedents: transformational leadership Consequences: performance, job satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, organizational commitment		

Some of the entries are based on correlational research, and labeling these variables as antecedents or consequences reflects the theoretical model of the authors reporting these findings rather than causal evidence.

for investigation, but the clear picture that emerges is that follower self-concept may fulfill both a mediating and a moderating role in translating leadership into follower action. The evidence in support of this conclusion is strongest for the role of collective self-construal/social identification—both for the mediator and for the moderator role. For other levels of self-construal and other aspects of the self-concept, this analysis is less developed theoretically and empirically, but the available evidence is nevertheless quite promising.

An important point to note in this respect is that the mediator–moderator framework for the role of follower self-conception suggests a dynamic model of leadership effectiveness, in which acts of leadership that affect follower self-conception may set the stage for future leadership effectiveness. Leadership that affects follower self-concept may not only engender follower behavior as a direct consequence of this influence on follower self-concept (i.e., at Time 1), it may also affect the effectiveness of subsequent leader behavior (i.e., at Time 2) when Time 1 leadership affects aspects of follower self-concept that moderate the influence on leader behavior. For example, leadership that fosters follower identification with the collective (e.g., leader self-sacrifice) may engender follower contributions to the collective at Time 1 (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2002). In addition, however, it may also set the stage for the effectiveness at Time 2 of aspects of leadership such as leader group prototypicality and leader group-orientedness (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a). Investigating this dynamic process in longitudinal research would seem to be an important challenge for future research.

Our second aim was to propose a research agenda to guide future research. In this respect, we identified several areas for future investigation. Rather than reiterate them here, we highlight two key themes. First, a recurrent theme is that relational self-construal is underinvestigated (illustrated by the empty cells in Table 1) possibly because the distinction between personal and social/collective self has a longer history than the notion of relational self-construal (cf. Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). This relative lack of attention to relational self-construal in leadership research holds for both the mediator and the moderator role of relational self-construal, as well as for the relational level at which other aspects of the self (self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-consistency, etc.) may be defined.

In view of the compelling arguments that leader–follower relationships have an important impact on the leadership process (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Mumford, Dansereau, & Yammarino, 2000), developing theory and research in follower relational self-conception seems to be a key concern for research in leadership and the self-concept. This conclusion is further corroborated by the observation that attention to the moderating role of self-construal is highly conducive to the integration of different approaches to leadership effectiveness into a more comprehensive theoretical framework (Lord & Brown, 2004; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a). Theoretical analyses by Lord and Brown (2004) and Lord et al. (1999) form an excellent starting point for the empirical development of this line of inquiry.

A second theme to emerge is that although research has identified several aspects of the self-concept that may be relevant to the leadership process, our understanding of the interplay between these aspects is rather underdeveloped. At the very least, research should focus on multiple mediators simultaneously (e.g., Kark et al., 2003; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). More important, however, would seem to develop theory about the relationship between different aspects of follower self-conception. An important part of this is to develop hypotheses about interactions between different aspects of the self-concept. One guiding question in this respect could be which aspects of self-conception might motivate by themselves (e.g., possible selves; Higgins, 1987) and which aspects are more likely to function as facilitating conditions (e.g., self-efficacy; van Knippenberg, 2000).

Another notion that would seem to be important in this respect is that of the match in terms of self-construal of leadership targeted at different aspects of the self. Leadership may appeal to the individual (i.e., personal self-construal), to the partner in a relationship (i.e., relational self-construal), and to the group member (i.e., collective self-construal). We predict that leadership is more effective if it is consistent in the level of self-construal(s) that it targets. Leadership to build collective efficacy, for instance, is likely to be more effective when accompanied by attempts to build collective self-construal

than when accompanied by leadership that renders personal self-construal salient (cf. Jung & Avolio, 1999), and leadership that engenders personal identification is likely to be more effective if it appeals to follower esteem and efficacy defined at this relational level.

Directly related to this is the lack of clarity about which aspects of leadership are important for which aspects of follower self-conception, and following from this, which combinations of leader behavior should be more effective. We believe that this state of affairs is a direct consequence of the leader-centered nature of leadership research, and propose that an approach that puts the psychological effects of leadership on followers center stage is likely to be more productive (also see Lord & Brown, 2004). Once we have more developed models of the interplay of different aspects of follower self-conception in leadership effectiveness, we may in a sense work backward to identify specific leader behaviors that affect these processes.

An approach like this that works backwards from models of follower self-conception may point to the need to study leader behaviors that have so far been ignored or understudied in leadership research, such as role modeling that might engender follower efficacy, projecting continuity that might be a source of follower self-consistency, and communicating visions of self-development that may give rise to desirable possible selves. In similar vein, identifying interactive aspects of follower self-conception may work to identify interactive aspects of leader behavior.

The analysis of leadership and follower self-concept is fully in development, and current efforts should perhaps focus more on developing theory and research rather than on applying insights from these analyses to practice. This is not to say, however, that the current insights cannot be translated to implications for practice. Indeed, the clear message is that effective leadership, at least in part, derives from an ability to affect follower self-concept, either by temporarily rendering certain aspects of follower self-concept salient or by causing more enduring changes in follower self-concept. Such effects may derive from charismatic and transformational leadership, which field experiments have shown can be effectively trained (e.g., Dvir et al., 2002).

In addition, and importantly, the current analysis also points to other factors that have received less attention in terms of application in leadership practice, such as selection of group-prototypical leaders, and developing leaders to display group-oriented behavior and to carefully adhere to principles of procedural fairness. Research on the moderator role of follower self-construal also suggests that low-identification situations require different leadership than high-identification situations, and thus that to be effective, leaders need to tailor their leadership to their followers' level of identification with the collective. Future research will, however, have to shed more light on the effectiveness of such measures, and others that may be derived from self-concept analyses, in managerial practice.

It is our firm belief that developing the self-concept analysis of leadership will advance our understanding of leadership processes in all kinds of important ways. As always, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, however, and we hope that the present review presents an invitation to leadership researchers to join us in this endeavor.

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