

Walking the extra mile: The role of collective self- conceptual

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الملخص:

إن صور التعاضد، الانتماء، التضحية والاعتزاز بالوطن التي صنعها المناصرون الجزائريون في المونديال الأخير وإن كانت تدعو للإعجاب والافتخار، فإنها كذلك تثير التساؤل حول أهمية الشعور بالانتماء للجماعة في تحديد سلوكيات الأفراد وأدائهم، وفي جعلهم مستعدون للتضحية من أجل الجماعة وأهدافها. إن قدرة المنظمة على تحفيز أفرادها على التضحية من أجل أهدافها مرتبطة بجعل تمثيل الذات عند القادة والأتباع مبني على أساس هوية جماعية مشتركة (سلام 2004). فقد دلت الدراسات على أن ربط مفهوم الذات بالبعد الجماعي سمة مهمة من سمات القيادة الفعالة (لورد وبراون 2004، شامي وآخرون 1993)، وأن تنشيط البعد الجماعي عند الأتباع شرط أساسي لتبنيهم السلوكيات السياقية (نيك وآخرون 1996 عن لورد وبراون 2004)، التي وإن كانت غير رسمية أو مأجور أو معاقب عليها فإنها تؤدي في مجموعها إلى فعالية المنظمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية :

التعاضد؛ الانتماء؛ الجماعة؛ التضحية.

Abstract

The beautiful images of solidarity, of a *sense of belonging*, of sacrifice and national pride that Algerians demonstrated during the World Cup call for admiration and pride, but also raise the question about the importance of a sense of belonging to the

group in determining individuals' behaviors and performances, and willingness to sacrifice for the group.

linking self-concept to the collective is an important aspect of effective leadership (Lord and Brown, 2004, Shamir et al., 1993), and studies provided evidence that one can expect much higher levels of organizational citizenship behaviors and processes like self-leadership with collective-level identities (Neck, Stewart, & Manz, 1996 in Lord and Brown, 2004).

Keys words :

solidarity; sacrifice; group; behaviors.

Introduction

The turbulent and highly dynamic social, political and economic environments have made the continuity and successfulness of groups, organisations and societies dependent—more than ever before—on intrinsically motivated followers, who willingly sacrifice self-interest for the collective-interest, and contribute keenly to the attainment of an attractive collective vision by going over and above the call of duty.

Few decades ago, Katz (1964) argued about the importance of a class of innovative and spontaneous behaviors, which are beyond role requirements but essential for the accomplishment of Organizational functions (*Farh and All, 2004*). More recently, as the job market became more aggressive, researchers have become increasingly interested -in addition to the more traditional technical proficiency aspects of performance-by the psycho-social aspects of performance, **convinced that it is necessary that all employees go above and beyond what is**

formally required by jobs' descriptions in order for organisations to remain competitive.

Borman and Motowidlo (1993) in particular, theorised that individual performance can be categorised into either task performance or contextual performance. The latter is defined as a non-task-related work behaviors and activities that contribute to the social and psychological aspects of the organisation. They have – like many other scholars- asked for studies to focus on this type of behaviors, given that, on the one hand, researches are scarce compared to task behaviors, and on the other hand, because contextual performance encompasses an array of important and organisationally relevant behaviors believed to hugely help the effectiveness of the organisation, such as: (a) persisting with enthusiasm and extra effort as necessary to complete one's own task activities successfully; (b) volunteering to carry out task activities that are not formally part of one's own job; (c) helping and cooperating with others; (d) following organisational rules and procedures; and (e) endorsing, supporting, and defending organisational objectives (Borman and All, 2001).

According to Podsakoff and All(2000) , contextual behaviors can be expected to be related to an array of positive outcomes through: (a) enhancing coworker and managerial productivity; (b) freeing up resources so they can be used for more productive purposes; (c) reducing the need to devote scarce resources to purely maintenance functions; (d) helping to coordinate activities both within and across work groups; (e) strengthening the organisation's ability to attract and retain the best employees; (f) increasing the stability of the organisation's

performance; and (g) enabling the organisation to adapt more effectively to environmental changes.

The results of a series of studies cited by Podsakoff and All (2000) found that contextual behaviors accounted for about 19% of the variance in performance quantity; over 18% of the variance in performance quality; about 25% of the variance in financial efficiency indicators (operating efficiency, food cost percentage, and revenue full-time-equivalent); and about 38% of the variance in customer service indicators (customer satisfaction and customer complaints).

However, despite the intuitive plausibility of the assumption that contextual behaviors enhance organisational performance, the processes through which followers are influenced to give up their own goals and work hard towards the accomplishment of the *organisation's vision* and mission are not well established.

One plausible explanation comes from a growing field of research that focuses on how the way people see themselves (called self-concept) may guide their thoughts and action. Self-concept is conceptualised as a knowledge structure that helps people organise and give meaning to memory and behavior, that has specific cognitive, affective, and behavioral consequences (van Knippenberg and All, 2004).

This line of research, posits, in particular, that by activating the collective level of the self, the information-processing, normative, and motivational bases of behavior all change (Lord and Brown 2004), and one can expect much higher levels of organisational citizenship behaviors and processes like self-

leadership (Neck, Stewart, & Manz, 1996 in Lord and Brown, 2004).

A major implication of such assumptions is that leaders' capacity to marshal support for their plans and to ensure that followers act on them will be enhanced to the extent that they are able to promote the collective interests and aspirations of the group (Haslam et al., 1998 in Haslam and Platow, 2001). According to Haslam and Platow (2001), self-categorisation theory makes four predictions regarding the impact of activating social identity rather than personal identity. First, this is expected to lead individuals to see themselves as relatively interchangeable representatives of a particular social category, sharing self-defining norms, values, and goals with other members of that category (in-group members). Second, it provides group members with a common perspective on the reality that leads them (a) to expect to agree with each other on issues related to their group membership and (b) to actively seek agreement through processes of mutual influence. Third, it provides group members with motivation (and expectations of ability) to coordinate their behavior with reference to emergent group norms (e.g., those norms that define the in-group as different to, and better than, other groups). Finally, it leads group members to work collaboratively to advance the interests of the group as a whole (their collective self-interest), even to the detriment of themselves as individuals (their personal self-interest).

Leadership and followers' contextual behaviors

Motowidlo (2003) separated the performance domain into two dimensions: task performance and contextual performance.

Task performance involves activities that directly transform raw materials into the goods and services that are the organization's products. In addition, task performance includes activities that maintain the technical core of an organisation by replenishing raw materials, distributing finished products, providing planning, coordination, supervising, or staff functions that enable the organization to function effectively and efficiently.

In contrast, contextual performance is defined by Scotter and Motowidlo (1996) in terms of two separate facets called interpersonal facilitation and job dedication. Interpersonal facilitation comprises a range of interpersonal acts that help maintain the interpersonal and social context necessary to support effective task performance, while Job dedication concerns self-disciplined behaviours like following the rules, working hard, and taking initiative to solve problems at work.

Contextual performance as described by Motowidlo (2003), includes an array of positive behaviors susceptible to contribute to organisational effectiveness through:

- 1- impacting the psychological, social, and organisational context of work, such as influencing others to carry out organizationally valuable work, defusing hostility and conflict, and encouraging interpersonal trust;
- 2- impacting group members' performance through sharing knowledge with others, preparing adequately for job assignments, and proactively addressing work issues;
- 3- - showing actions that affect the tangible resources of the organisation. This can include conserving office

supplies, electricity, and preventing theft or waste of organisational resources.

The concept of contextual behaviors is closely linked to effectiveness in many leadership theories and studies, with leadership efficiency seen in relation to the ability to influence followers to go over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization. For instance, discussing the superiority of transformational/charismatic types of leadership, House (1977), Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) argued that contrary to a transactional leadership founded on an exchange process in which the leader provides rewards in return for the subordinate's efforts, transformational/charismatic behaviors are believed to augment the impact of transactional leader behaviors on employee's outcome variables; because *"followers feel trust and respect toward the leader and they are motivated to do more than they are expected to do"* (Yukl, 1989 in M. Podsakoff and All 1990).

Furthermore, referring to the positive effects of transformational leaders, M. Podsakoff and All (1990) acknowledged that while the effects of transformational behaviors on employee in-role performance are interesting, they do not capture the most important effects of transformational leader behaviors. The real essence of transformational leadership is that these leaders lift ordinary people to extraordinary heights, cause followers to do more than they are expected to do and perform beyond the level of expectations.

Nevertheless, given such very promising findings, it is surprising that there is a lack of research concerning what such successful leaders change in their followers. One strong explanation is given by the research in the field of self-concept: these studies posit that transformational/charismatic leadership is successful in motivating followers to transcend their own self-interests for the sake of the team or the organisation through shaping followers' self-construal and shifting the level of representation of the self from a private (personal) to collective level.

Leadership and followers self-conceptual

The self-concept can be viewed as the knowledge a person has about himself, not only in terms of unique, individuating characteristics that distinguish the individual from others (the personal self), but may also be extended to include others. Stated otherwise, persons seek to achieve self-definition and self-interpretation (i.e., identity) in three fundamental ways: (a) in terms of their unique traits, (b) in terms of dyadic relationships, and (c) in terms of group membership (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001).

Few important concepts need to be clarified:

- First, self-construal is a matter of degree. People may, to a greater or lesser extent, define self in personal, relational, and collective terms. The working –self is the activated portion of the overall self-concept that at a specific time guides information processing, affect, and behavior.

- Second, 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 which are future-oriented schemata of what we think we could potentially

become (for better or for worse) (D. van Knippenberg et al., 2004).

-Third, the collective-self is 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 (D. van Knippenberg et al., 2004). In addition to a belief in categorical membership (i.e., that one shares characteristics with a group of others), there is a set of cognitive beliefs associated with that category, such as stereotypic traits thought to be shared by category members or ideological positions that define the group's goals, and an affective that includes how we evaluate a category and the perceived value placed on the category by others, as well as the affective commitment and closeness we feel toward other members of the category (Ashmore et al., 2004). Since making the collective self-salient transforms how we actually think, feel and behave to conform to the group prototype, it has been posited that tying sense of self to the collective is an important aspect of leadership effectiveness (Shamir et al., 1993;). Leaders are thought to generate extraordinary outcomes for their nations, institutions, organisations, and work groups by shifting followers' conceptions of their identity through displaying behaviors and strategies such as self-sacrificing, collective vision, and showing group prototypicality and group orientideness (Lord and Brown, 2004). For Reicher and All (2005), what makes leadership possible is a shared sense of identity and the way in which leaders act as entrepreneurs of identity in order to make particular forms of identity and their own leadership viable. That is; by helping to create, coordinate and control this sense

of 'who and what we are', they make the shared identity the source of motivations for both leaders and followers to go the extra mile in pursuit of group goals.

When the self is defined in collective terms, the way a person feels, thinks, behaves, and things he aims to achieve change accordingly. And when the definition of self-changes, the meaning of self-interest and self-serving motivations also changes accordingly (Brewer and Gardner, 1996). Collective interest is experienced as self-interest (i.e., as collective self-interest), and because the motivation that flows from self-conception is intrinsic to the individual, individuals are intrinsically motivated to contribute to the collective good (van Knippenberg et al., 2004).

Studies that have considered the role of collective identification in organizational contexts linked it to a number of work-related outcomes such as employee turnover, absenteeism, sick leave, and productivity ... among others. But the findings seem to suggest that while cognitive ability is more predictive of task performance than contextual performance, identification with the group mainly predicts the likelihood of engaging in contextual behaviors. This is because (1) an employee can refrain from contextual than from task behaviors, and (2) task performance is more likely to benefit the self than contextual performance and may therefore be less contingent on group-oriented motivations.

To sum up, many studies (e.g. Podsakof, 1990) have stressed that the most important effects of effective leaders should be on extra-role performance rather than in-role performance. Successful leaders should motivate followers to perform at a level over and above mechanical compliance with the routine

directives by activating their collective identities and making the most salient features of the self-concept those that are shared with other members of the group, and by the group welfare and interests an end in itself.

Yet, it is argued that the identification with a group or organisation will only affect attitudes and behaviors to the extent that social identity is made relevant. In other words, followers need to be influenced to convert their self- definition from a personal term to a collective term.

Two influential variables in making the collective-self salient will be discussed next: the role of leadership and the effect of national culture. Although leadership behaviours and practices are hypothesised to have great consequences on the way in which followers perceive themselves, the way they feel, think, and behave, it is also believed that defining the self at private, relational or collective levels depends on whether the culture is more collectivist or individualistic. Because of the importance of the group and its interests in their lives, individuals from collectivist cultures are more likely to appreciate, and contribute in the kind of behaviors that are not prescribed or rewarded but at the same time highly tied to groups, organisations and societies success (Triandis 2002,2006).

Leaders' role in influencing followers' self-concept

Because the self-concept is dynamic, and because cues in the social context and on the immediate past history decide -to a large extent- which part of the self-concept will be activated (Daan van Knippenberg and All ,2004), leadership is thought to largely affect which aspect of the self is relevant.

Transformational /charismatic leaders for instance, have been shown to be successful because they have the ability to transform followers' self-interests into collective interests, which predispose followers to accept and work toward the collective vision.

Leadership literature *widely recognises* influence as the sine qua non of leadership. Lord and Brown (2004) define Leadership "*as a process through which one individual, the leader, changes the way followers envision themselves*". That is, by displaying an array of effective leadership behaviors and practices, leaders change the way in which followers perceive themselves and transform their needs, values, preferences and aspirations from self-interests to collective interests, which will have great consequences on individual, organizational, and society functioning.

Leaders make followers' collective self-conceptual significant by:

- 1-Showing supportive/inclusive behaviors (Shamir et al., 1993), altruism (Singh and Krishnan ,2005), self-sacrifice and self-confidence, also by
- 2- Emphasising collective identity and common values, and finally,
- 3- Proving they have group-defining attributes and are representative of the group's identity (leader group and prototypicality), and they have the group's best interest at heart (group-orientedness) (Daan van Knippenberg and All 2004).

Four leadership behaviors and practices that have been shown to have great effect in changing followers' perceptions of how they are now and how they may or should be in the future or

whether they see themselves as individuals or as members of larger collectives will be discussed next.

- Showing group prototypicality and group-orientedness: Core to the social cognitive stream is the assumption that leadership is in the eye of followers, and to be accepted, a leader needs to show that he is one of them (i.e. being prototypical), and doing it for them (i.e. displaying group-oriented behavior). That is, by proving they have attributes that define the group and its identity, they have group's best interest at heart, by going the extra mile for the group, making personal sacrifices or taking personal risks on behalf of the group; for instance, leaders should have more influence over their followers, therefore; they should be more effective.

Leaders from different fields use such strategies to make followers identify more strongly, accept the current situation, and work harder for the group.

In the political field for instance, one can find few examples of Leaders who tried hard to project an image about themselves as highly prototypical of the nation, and strived to engage in group-oriented acts to influence followers' identification and social identity to enhance their leadership effectiveness. Gandhi, for example, adopted a sober lifestyle closer to the lives of many of the people he represented, thus; he communicated a close match to the contextually salient prototype of the Indian nation in contrast to the imperial power: Great Britain (Van Knippenberg and Hogg, 2003).

Engaging deliberately in such strategies to influence followers' perception of the leader's group prototypicality and group-orientedness was found to be used by organizational leaders too. Van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003) for instance, described

how regional managers in a service organization “dressed down” – changed from their regular business dress to a jeans-and-sweater outfit – when visiting the organization’s cleaning teams. The explicit aim was to “be more like the team members in order to bridge the gap between management and work floor. The one regional manager who did not dress down when visiting these teams was generally perceived to be less strongly endorsed than other managers.

- Self-sacrificing behaviors:

The extent to which the leader is representative of the group (i.e., group prototypicality) is assumed to interact with self-sacrificing behavior of the leader to influence leadership effectiveness (van knippenberg and van knippenberg,2005). By making personal sacrifices, the leader clearly shows his or her focus on the group’s welfare. This will create the conviction among followers that the leader can be relied on to behave in a group-oriented manner in future, and will create a feeling of obligation to reciprocate among followers even when it is in conflict with their self-interest. In other words, a self-sacrificing leader clearly shows his followers what kind of behavior is expected and appreciated, and influences them to forgo self-interest and commit themselves to the group’s common cause. David De Cremer (2002) even went far claiming that only self-sacrificing leaders were able to transform subordinates’ motives from a personal, pro-self-orientation, to a collective, pro-social - orientation. Subordinates will grant influence to leaders and cooperate with others when leaders are not perceived as being self-motivated, but subordinates are less willing to do this when leaders themselves benefit (Lord and Brown, 2004).

Van knippenberg and van knippenberg (2005) for example, referred to the story of a CEO of a Dutch airline company who decided on a substantial cutback in his own salary when he was faced with the airline company crisis after the attacks on September 11 th, 2001. Only then, did he ask his employees to accept pay restraint and a reduction of working hours Lee Laccoca, CEO of Chrysler, is also well-known to publicly have decided to set his annual salary at US\$ 1 to prove his commitment to Chrysler's plight, and to elicit similar commitment from Chrysler's employees.

- Joining the leader's vision with followers possible selves

When followers' collective identities are salient, a critical task for leaders may be to construct group identities for followers that are both appealing and consistent with a leader's goals (Lord and Brown, 2004). The communication of an attractive vision for the collective allows the follower to make comparisons between his current self-view and possible, ideal, or ought selves.. This may have important motivational consequences given that 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 on progress and development (Lord et al., 1999) D. van Knippenberg et al. (2004)

Indeed, several highly effective political leaders throughout history mobilised followers by painting a picture of what the collective could become. People who were behind the Algerian liberation are well known to have succeeded to get people together working and sacrificing for the collective good (i.e. the independence) through painting a vision of a better future,

away from the French oppressor, in a democratic country in which they keep their identity and live in peace and prosperity.

- Making constant reference to the collective history and collective interest

Fiol, Harris, and House (1999) found that charismatic leaders use more associative referent terms such as “we,” “us,” “our group,” or “our organization” rather than terms that imply disassociation or non-inclusion such as “I,” “you,” or “me.”

The above-mentioned leadership behaviors should have a stronger impact on individuals who are already chronically predisposed toward a collective identity (i.e., they have accessible collective-level identities). In this article we posit that national culture -through its dimension of individualism/collectivism- may affect - which aspect of the self is salient.

Collectivist cultures' advantage

As a way to distinguish between cultures whose individuals are oriented more toward self-interest and the realization of their own goals from cultures whose individuals would greatly value membership in a group and would look out for the well-being of the group even at the expense of their own personal interests, Individualism-collectivism was found to explain why members of collectivist cultures demonstrate more organizational citizenship behaviors (Moorman and Blakely, 1995), were more likely to enjoy doing what the group expects of them, were more cooperative so as to attain group goals and safeguard welfare (Earley 1989 in Moorman and Blakely 1995), and generated more duties and fewer rights (Y.HONG and AL 2001) compared to individuals from individualist cultures.

One given reason to explain why contextual behaviors may be a type of work behavior which collectivists would choose to perform more often than individualist may be that because such culture makes the collective dimension of the self-salient, which will affect people perception, thinking, values and behaviors.

Because collectivist cultures place greater emphasis on the group's needs, goals, social norms, duty, and shared beliefs, peoples of these cultures have a tendency to cooperate with group members and perform voluntarily behaviors that help the collective without being required, rewarded or even recognized at times, because they are considered helpful to the group.

Bass (1999) postulates that collectivist cultures provide leaders with ready-made opportunities to become transformational. Transformational leadership is more likely to be enhanced further by most subordinates in collectivist cultures already having respect for their leaders and high level of group orientation .That is, transformational leaders' behaviors such as making more references to the collective and focusing individuals on collective goals should have a stronger impact on individuals who are already predisposed toward a collective identity. In one study of Chinese and American individuals, Hong et al (2001) found that fulfilling collective duties is central to the definition of selfhood in Chinese culture, whereas individual rights are more important components of the American's self.

The Arab culture is considered as collectivist in different studies (e.g. Hofstede, 1980 and Globe study, 1991) due to the effects of Islam and tribal traditions which are the two main influencers on different social values, social practices and legal systems in Arab countries (J. Rees and R. Althakhri, 2008, Weir, 2001 ,Carl Arthur Solberg, 2002, Abdalla and alhamoud, 2001).

Tribal teachings make every member's duty to look after the interests of their fellow tribe, clan or family members. Good people are those who endorse the group's values and norms, obey the rules, self-sacrifice and work for the group best interest. Arabs were proud to obey the tribe's rules, costumes and traditions, without questioning its rightfulness at times.

Islam teachings also bring up individuals to be responsible of and work for the welfare of their family, neighbors, countrymen....as clearly found in many "hadith" of prophet Mohamed (peace be upon him) such as "you are a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock".

Moreover, Yasin Sarayrah (2004) found that first Muslim caliphates such as Omar bin al-Khattab, were true servant leaders. However, as stressed by Yasin Sarayrah (2004), although servant leadership is deeply rooted in the Arab/Islamic culture, Saraya (2004) thinks that many elements helped the estrangement of citizens from their original cultural norms, values and practices, such as the negative utilisation of bureaucracy which helped the rise of many negative phenomena.

Conclusion:

In concluding a very interesting article, Alexander Haslam 2004 observed that "For leadership is never a question of going it alone and it is not about being a great individual. If leaders want their followers to go the extra mile, they need to ensure that everyone is in the same vehicle and that the demands and dividends of the journey are shared"

Throughout this article, it has been shown that leaders are influential because of their impact on followers' self-concepts. By defining themselves and their followers in terms of a shared social identity, leaders lead followers towards feeling, thinking and acting on behalf of the collective's norms.

Of great importance to this article is the fact that many studies (e.g. Triandis 2002, 2006) provided evidence that collective societies are more willing to accept and contribute to those activities that are intended to serve the group. Through the upbringing of their members on the valuation of the group's values, goals and interests even at the expense of their personal interests, the activation of the collective dimension of followers' selves will positively reflect on the success of groups, organisations and the society as a whole.

Since the teachings of Islam and the tribal system - two main components of Arab culture - are based on upbringing individuals to commit to the community and to serve its interests, we share the views of Weir (2001) *that "within the philosophical and cultural elements of the Arab world, exists the basis for a successful accommodation with the core requirements of global business in the first part of this millennium. With the styles and approaches of management in the Arab world may be nearer to the epicenter of this new way of doing things than we have hitherto realized"*.

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