

## Leadership: Time for a New Direction?

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**Abstract** *After reviewing the literature on leadership that culminated in what has been described as the 'New Paradigm', this article discusses the research which has led to the development of what might be regarded as a 'New New Paradigm' model. The research was based on a gender-inclusive and black and minority ethnic-inclusive sample of over 3,500 managers and professionals, at different levels (chief executives, top, senior and middle managers), working in the UK National Health Service and local government. The model that emerged, which led to the development of a diagnostic 360-degree feedback instrument, the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire, has been found to be sufficiently robust as to generalize to private sector and other public sector organizations. Apart from having been inclusive at all stages of its development, the model is new in that it is based on a 'nearby' rather than 'distant' or 'heroic' approach to leadership, using a Grounded Theory methodology. It leads to an understanding of leadership that goes beyond transformational models and, recognizing the significance of Greenleaf's concept of 'servant leadership', focuses on the development of the individual, in an organizational context.*

**Keywords** *gender-inclusive; nearby; paradigm; questionnaire; transformational*

### Introduction

The history of leadership since the earliest formal studies in the 1930s has been the subject of recent reviews (for example, Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2002a; Northouse, 2001; Wright, 1996). Dissatisfaction with the relevance of the 1970s situational models of leadership as, in essence, simply balancing concern for task and production with a concern for people, in the context of the tumultuous change that followed the major recession of the 1970s, led some writers to regard them as best described as relating to 'management', as distinct from what we now regard as 'leadership'.

What emerged out of the new approach to studying leadership – i.e. dealing with the realities of constant change – came to be known as 'New Paradigm' models, which relate to concepts such as 'charismatic leadership' (Conger, 1989; House, 1971), 'visionary leadership' (Sashkin, 1988), and 'transformational leadership' (Bass, 1985). Whereas earlier 'old paradigm' models see leadership as a process, that (a) involves influencing others, (b) occurs within a group context, and (c) involves

goal attainment (Northouse, 2001), more recent definitions of leadership have emphasized the role of leader as ‘defining organizational reality’ (Bryman, 1996). Other recent research interest has centred on relationships between leaders and followers, with some writers stressing the need to study ‘followership’. This has been argued as important, not only because all leaders are also followers, but also because modern notions of leadership place considerable emphasis on the power and importance of followers in ultimately legitimizing and enabling leadership (for example, De Pree, 1993; Lee, 1993). This last period saw the growth of attention to differences between ‘leaders’ and ‘managers’ (cf. Kotter, 1990).

A number of instruments have been devised to measure leadership, including those of Tichy and associates (Tichy & Devanna, 1986), Conger and Kanungo (Conger, 1989), and, most notably, Bass and Avolio (Bass 1985, 1998; Bass & Avolio, 1990a, 1990b). The last of these is described as ‘transformational’ because of Bass’ belief that an essential distinguishing feature of leaders is their ability to transform followers ‘to perform beyond expectations’. In this, Bass subscribes to Burns’s (1978) belief that, by engaging the followers’ higher needs, transformational politicians move followers beyond their self-interest to work for the greater good, and that, as they do so, they become self-actualizing, and become leaders themselves. This, Burns and Bass contrast with transactional leadership, which is epitomized by trading promises for votes.

Currently, Bass and Avolio see transactional leadership as comprising three dimensions: (a) management-by-exception passive, (b) management-by-exception active, and (c) contingent reward. On the other hand, transformational leadership – seen as the most active and effective style – comprises: (a) attributed idealized influence (attributed charisma), (b) behavioural idealized influence (behavioural charisma), (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual stimulation, and (e) individualized consideration.

## Leadership and distance

A seminal study by Shamir (1995) provided evidence of differences in the way in which ‘distant’ leaders are perceived, in contrast to perceptions of ‘close’ or ‘nearby’ leaders. Exploration of the implications of this distinction has been the focus of studies of the relationship between leader behaviour and leader-subordinate distance (see Antonakis & Atwater, 2002, for a review).

We became increasingly concerned with the almost unquestioning acceptance of a body of ‘received wisdom’ on the nature of leadership, which pervaded the most commonly read texts in both the business and the academic literature. This is not to say that there was no variety in the models being offered, but of the most commonly accepted models, they were virtually all based on US studies. There were other reasons for discontent, which are explained below.

### The dominance of US models

While recognizing and valuing the ground-breaking research emanating from the US, we were interested in whether dimensions of transformational leadership, which have emerged from North American studies were similar to those found in UK

organizations, particularly those in the public sector. The issue of the generalizability of US approaches to leadership has also been raised by other researchers, including North American writers, (e.g. Adler, 1983a, b; Erez, 1990; Hunt & Peterson, 1997; Smith & Bond, 1993; Smith et al., 1989; Smith & Peterson, 1988; Triandis, 1990, 1993).

Also, US research on the new transformational paradigm has been based, in the main, on observations of top managers in organizations, rather than middle and lower level managers (Bryman, 1996). This contrasts with earlier leadership research, such as the Ohio State studies of the 1950s and 1960s, which focused on the styles of lower level managers and supervisors. It is, perhaps, also worthy of comment that since leadership, particularly 'new paradigm leadership', is seen primarily as a social influence process (e.g. Bass, 1985, 1990a, b; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bryman, 1992, 1996; Hogan et al., 1994; Parry, 1998; Yukl, 1994), some of the new leadership models have been based on data collected by researchers interviewing chief executives and senior managers, rather than data collected directly from those they are responsible for managing.

Studies based on researchers' views can, of course, provide valuable insights into leadership. However, it is important to distinguish between (1) the models of leadership which have evolved from data collected as a result of researchers interviewing top managers, (2) studies based on eliciting the perceptions of managers, at all levels, construing managers at the top level (i.e. 'distant' leadership), and (3) studies based on eliciting the perceptions of managers, at all levels, construing their immediate line manager/supervisor (i.e. 'close' or 'nearby' leadership). The distinction between 'distant' and 'close/nearby' leadership is particularly important. If one describes a particular model of leadership without making it perfectly clear what is the exact nature of the focus, and the method of data collection, there is a serious danger of confounding our understanding of the phenomenon. This view is consonant with those expressed by Antonakis and Atwater (2002), cited above.

## **A desire to be inclusive**

### **Gender**

In spite of over 60 years of leadership research, it would seem that no serious attempt has been made, in any of the mainstream research into the nature of leadership, to ensure that samples of subjects, from whom notions of leadership were gathered in order to develop a model, include a significant, if not fairly equal proportion, of females to males. Since the early 1990s, however, a number of studies have found gender differences with respect to aspects of leadership style preference. These include that:

- women are more likely to construe leadership in transformational terms, men in transactional (e.g. Alban-Metcalfe, 1995; Sparrow & Rigg, 1993);
- women are more likely than men to describe the style of leadership they adopt as being transformational, with men more likely to describe their leadership in transactional terms (Rosener, 1990); and
- women are significantly more likely to be described by their direct reports as adopting a transformational style (irrespective of the sex of their direct

report), (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2003a), with men more likely to be described as adopting a *laissez-faire*, or management-by-exception style (e.g. Bass, 1998; Bass & Avolio, 1990a, b, 1994; Bass et al., 1996; Druskat, 1994).

### **Culture and leadership**

Recent attention has focused on the extent to which notions of leadership (both transformational and transactional) generalize from one culture to another. Here, both 'emic' or idiographic, and 'etic' or nomothetic approaches (Berry, 1969; Den Hartog et al., 1999) have provided evidence of leadership behaviours that are cross-cultural, and those that are culturally specific. The extensive, international investigation of the generalizability of concepts of leadership among a total of 62 cultures (Den Hartog et al., 1999) led to the identification of 21 lower order and 6 higher order concepts. Using a combination of emic and etic approaches, evidence was presented to support their hypothesis of the generalizability of specific aspects of charismatic/transformational leadership.

A recent study by Booyesen (1999), in which attributes of leadership were elicited from black and white South African bank managers, has pointed to significant differences in what is seen as appropriate leadership behaviour. Unfortunately, studies of this kind, which gather data from individuals from different ethnic and cultural groups, are still comparatively rare.

### **The dangers of charismatic leadership**

There is a distinct shift in thinking, away from extolling the charismatic-inspirational, or as is often described, 'heroic' models of leadership, and even a growing antipathy towards such models. Various reasons are behind this movement, including a concern for the potentially lethal 'dark side' of charismatic leadership. Conger (1998), Mintzberg (1999), and Hogan and colleagues (Hogan et al., 1990), point to the damage that can be inflicted by narcissistic, self-serving leaders – particularly those in the most senior positions, who may not only attribute the organization's success almost exclusively to their own contributions, but perhaps more lethally, ignore or punish any form of criticism or advice offered to them. Mintzberg (1999) admonishes the business magazines for selling the cult of 'Heroes of American management', who are glorified for apparently single-handedly 'saving' or 'turning around' global companies, only for those companies and their CEOs to be publicly chastized when infatuation was followed by dramatic failure. In the wake of the recent corporate corruption cases, such as the Enron, Amcom and WorldCom scandals, catastrophes have been attributed, at least in part, to the virtually 'delusional' and/or untempered arrogance of their top executives.

Another line of criticism of the heroic theme has been provided by writers such as Gronn (2002), and Mintzberg (1999), who strongly challenge the concept of leadership residing in one individual, and contributing uniquely to organizational success, asserting that leadership, and importantly, learning from experience, is distributed throughout the organization. Stacey (1999) articulates the dangers of perpetuating the notion of leadership relating to 'special powers' of certain individuals:

the myth that organizations have to rely on one or two unusually gifted individuals to decide what to do, while the rest enthusiastically follow . . . [encourages] cultures of dependence and conformity that actually obstruct the questioning and complex learning which encourages innovative action.

Unsurprisingly, the business literature is placing far more attention on ethics, morality, transparency, and corporate governance. Likewise the leadership literature is seeing a growth in articles on ethical and 'authentic' leadership (e.g. Ciulla, 2004; May et al., 2003).

Finally, it is important to note that the models referred to above were developed around 20 years ago. Given the technological, economic, social, and political changes over this time span, it may well be time for a re-evaluation of our understanding of what is leadership, and its meaning in the 21st century.

## The present study

Cognisant of the above factors (particularly in relation to leaders, distance, gender and ethnicity, and level in the organization), we set out, using a Grounded Theory approach (Parry, 1998), to elicit the constructs in a gender-inclusive and black and minority ethnic (BME)-inclusive study of transformational leadership. We involved managers across various levels – from middle to top – using repertory grid technique. We elicited constructs from equal numbers of male and female managers and professionals at all levels (Chief Executive; top, senior and middle managers) in a representative sample of NHS Trusts and local government organizations in England and Wales.

The 2000-plus constructs that emerged, from both the NHS and local government, were combined, and content analysed by two psychologists working independently of each other. Forty-eight groupings emerged, each group comprising a mix of constructs from both types of organization. A small group of constructs relating to dealing with politicians were unique to local government, and clearly reflected the particular context of these managers' roles. The common constructs formed the basis of a pilot questionnaire, which was constructed, following the principles of Facet Theory (Donald, 1995). Packs of the pilot questionnaire were distributed to a stratified sample of NHS organizations, which were asked to distribute them along guidelines suggested by the researchers, reflecting roughly, the proportion of managers and professional in the organization, working at middle to top levels. The number of usable responses from the NHS organizations was  $n = 2013$ , approximately half of whom were female, and included over 10 percent of individuals from BME backgrounds. A separate, parallel study was undertaken among  $n = 1464$  managers and professionals working in local government, which has already been reported (Alban-Metcalfe & Alimo-Metcalfe, 2000; Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2001).

## Results

Responses from  $n = 2013$  were divided into two groups: Group A comprised managers at Chief Executive, top and senior management levels; Group B comprised

middle managers; there were approximately equal numbers in each group. The responses from Group A were subject to principal components analysis, including rotation to an oblimin solution. Interestingly, factor 1 accounted for over 44 percent of the total variance. In order to test for robustness, the six-factor solution that emerged was imposed on the Group B data, and congruence between the solutions (Gorsuch, 1983) was found to hold true (range 0.90–0.97). The data for Groups A and B were combined, and congruence between the oblimin and the varimax solution ranged from 0.90–0.93.

Finally, in order to test the generalizability of the solution to managers and professionals from a different organization, the NHS solution was imposed on the stratified sample of  $n = 1464$  local government managers and professionals. The six-factor solution held true (range 0.90–0.94), except that the number of items in factor 4 was reduced from 13 to 4.

The six emergent factors were interpreted as:

- (1) Valuing Individuals (Genuine concern for others' well being and development);
- (2) Networking and Achieving (Inspirational communicator, networker and achiever);
- (3) Enabling (Empowers, delegates, develops potential);
- (4) Acting with Integrity (Integrity, consistency, honest and open);
- (5) Being Accessible (Accessible, approachable, in-touch);
- (6) Being Decisive (Decisive, risk-taking).

Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for each of the six factors and found to exceed  $\alpha = 0.7$  (range  $\alpha = 0.83$ – $0.96$ ). In order to ensure uni-dimensionality (Cortina, 1993), inter-item correlation coefficients were also calculated, and found to exceed  $r = 0.3$  (range  $r = 0.34$ – $0.73$ ).

The validity was tested against five criterion variables (four derived from Bass [1985], plus reduces job-related stress). Correlation coefficients ranged from  $r = 0.47$ – $0.80$ ,  $p < 0.01$  in each case, suggesting a high level of convergent validity. There is also evidence of a high level of discriminant validity, using Wilk's lambda, for whole groups, and for subgroups divided by level, sex, and level and sex. Such findings are consonant with evidence of the effect of situational factors (Alban-Metcalf and Alimo-Metcalf, 2000) and distance (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002).

The foregoing analyses led to the development of the Research Version of the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ).

In order to capture the richness of the constructs that emerged, and for the purpose of developing a Training Version of the TLQ, two further principal components analyses were performed on the remaining items. A further eight factors emerged. In order to establish the robustness and generalizability of each of these new solutions, the same statistical techniques were applied as previously, though it is explicitly recognized that each of these further factors cannot be regarded as statistically significantly separate since they share variance in common with the first six factors. These factors are described in Figure 1, and their construct validity has been discussed elsewhere (Alban-Metcalf & Alimo-Metcalf, 2003a).

### **Content validity**

Firstly, the methodology – based as it was on a Grounded Theory approach – was designed to gain information about the perceptions of individuals who are perceived to possess leadership characteristics, in that they have a particularly powerful effect on others' motivation, self-confidence, self-efficacy, or performance. To interpret such perceptions as reflecting transformational leadership is wholly consonant with the Third Corollary of transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1993), which states that 'whatever the country, when people think about leadership, their prototypes and ideals are transformational' (Bass, 1997: 135). Secondly, in writing the individual items, great care was taken, not only to ensure that – following the principles of Facet Theory (Donald, 1995) – the phraseology was in identical format, but also that they reflected accurately the constructs elicited. Furthermore, following the strictures of Hunt (1996) and others, only items which referred to the behaviour of the leader, as distinct from the effect that s/he might have on others, were included in the analyses. For these reasons, it can be argued that the TLQ can be regarded as demonstrating content validity as a measure of transformational leadership.

### **Construct validity**

The construct validity of the instrument was assessed by considering ways in which each of the factors measures aspects of transformational leadership literature identified in the literature.

#### **Factor 1 – Valuing individuals (genuine concern for others' well-being and development)**

This factor relates to Burns's (1978) notion of the need for leaders to engage the whole person of their followers, reflected in sensitivity to their needs and feelings, active support of their development, and communicating positive expectations. It can also be seen to share considerable similarity with Bass's notion of 'Individualized consideration', which emerged as third, of three transformational factors, in the MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1994), with the sensitivity to followers' needs aspect of the first stage of Conger's model (Conger, 1989), and with the respectful leadership dimension of Sashkin's Visionary Leadership Framework (Sashkin, 1988).

It is, however, important also to note differences between the UK and US approaches. One difference is that the UK dimension is more complex in terms of the specificity and range of items which load on this factor; this was also found in a study of transformational leadership in local government (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2001). The second is that it includes items relating to valuing and developing the team, as well as the individual. The third, and most important, is that, unlike most US models where vision and charisma dominate, this factor is unequivocally the most important aspect of transformational leadership in the UK sample, explaining more variance than all the remaining factors together. Whether this merely reflects the methodology adopted – i.e. because it is based on close/nearby perceptions of leadership, or whether this was due to the fact that there was a substantial proportion of females in the sample at all stages, or whether it reflects cultural differences, cannot be determined at this stage. Whatever the reason, it

provides an important aspect of difference. Another obvious reason might be that the context was the public sector, where it is often assumed more 'softer' skills are required. This remained unexplored, until we undertook a similar, but smaller study of leadership in the private sector (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2002b), where we found almost identical constructs of leadership, and a similar emphasis on this first factor.

### **Factor 2 – Networking and achieving (inspirational communicator, networker and achiever)**

Factor 2 focuses attention on the way in which the manager is able to inspire both colleagues and members of the external community. In so doing, it highlights the ability to communicate a vision, coupled with the political and social skills necessary to bring about change, including through networking. The communicating and implementing a vision aspects of this factor link directly to stage two of the Conger (1989) framework – communicating the vision; to vision and articulation, identified by Tichy and Devanna (1986); to House's (1971) notions of a charismatic leader; to Sashkin's visionary leadership (Sashkin, 1988; Sashkin & Burke, 1990; Sashkin & Fulmer, 1988); and to communicating the vision personally (Bennis & Nanus, 1985).

The 'networker' aspect of this factor merits comment in the light of Kotter's (1982) conceptualization of vision and charisma, in terms of 'agenda setting' and 'networking'. For Kotter, networking involves establishing as wide a set of contacts as possible, and using interpersonal skills to influence these and other people, and events. Hunt (1996) commented that Kotter's proposal serves to reduce the 'mystique' surrounding charisma, and noted that Luthans and co-workers (Luthans & Lockwood, 1984) and Yukl (1999) incorporated the networking aspects of transformational leadership into their typologies, though, as Hunt (1996: 197) states, made no claim that they tapped 'charisma'. Kotter (1982) also placed emphasis on 'inspiration' and 'motivation' as central components of leadership (as distinct from management), and argued for 'thick networks of relationships' (cited by Hunt, 1996: 198). Hunt also went on to note that 'Kotter's treatment of leadership is similar in some ways to Conger's treatment of the vision of noncharismatic leaders' (Hunt, 1996). In its composition, this factor corresponds to factors identified in the local government research (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2001), but the difference can be attributed to differences in the content of the instruments used.

Factor 2 also shares some characteristics in common with the MLQ, in particular with the 'Inspirational-charismatic' dimension. It has, however, a crucially important additional aspect, which is 'sensitivity to the agenda of different key players/interest groups, such that they all feel they are being served by the vision'. Thus, while there is some similarity between this UK factor and US models cited above, the essential difference is that the UK dimension has a much stronger sense of working *with* 'constituents'/stakeholders, of understanding *their* agenda, and of creating a *shared* vision. Such 'political' sensitivity to the agenda of a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders is of considerable importance in the British public sector, where increased cross-boundary and inter-agency working is demanded by national government. It is not surprising, therefore, that this factor reflects the efforts, conviction, and success of those leaders who can unite all parties

in working towards a shared vision. However, in a more recent study we have undertaken in the private sector (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2003b), this aspect of understanding the needs and agenda of a range of internal and external stakeholders also emerged.

### **Factor 3 – Enabling (empowers, delegates, develops potential)**

The third factor to emerge is concerned with the extent to which empowerment is achieved as a result of the manager trusting her/his staff to take decisions, and encouraging them to take on responsibility, to think of new approaches to problems, and to think strategically.

This aspect of transformational leadership can be interpreted in the context of the work of Sashkin and co-workers. As Hunt (1996: 195) noted in relation to their work, 'Essentially, in the visionary leadership framework, strategic leaders believe they can have a major impact on the organization by empowering organization members to realize the leader's long-term organizational vision'. Conger (1989) places empowerment clearly in the fourth stage of his model, as integral to demonstrating ways of achieving the vision. Although not a dimension in its own right in the MLQ, it constitutes an element of 'Individualized consideration'.

The theme of empowerment has been ubiquitous throughout the leadership models emerging over the last few decades, but the term can be applied to very different power relations between managers and their direct reports (Alban-Metcalfe, 1995). It can be, and arguably is, most often applied to a 'leader' 'granting' her/his direct report an opportunity to exercise discretion, but not so as to reduce the power of the manager. That is, a 'grace and favour' power relationship. Alternatively, it can be the act of a manager to truly enable a direct report to enact their discretion, which as a result, to some extent, disempowers the manager. The tenor of the items in the TLQ appear to reflect the latter example far more closely.

Once again, a corresponding factor emerged in the local government research (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2000).

### **Factor 4 – Acting with integrity (integrity, consistency, honest and open)**

In this factor, which also emerged in the local government data, the emphasis is upon integrity, and openness and honesty in dealings with others, and on being consistent and equitable in the way in which the manager treats different members of staff. The relevance of this factor is encapsulated in the observation of Burns (1978: 20), that transformational leadership is a process whereby 'leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation'. The integrity of the leader is clearly prerequisite to the realization of the process.

All the major models of transformational and charismatic leadership refer to the importance of the integrity of the leader. Bass, in particular, has pointed to the critical importance of integrity in distinguishing the authentic from 'pseudotransformational' leaders (e.g. Bass, 1998; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). In Bass's model of transformational leadership, integrity resides most explicitly in the 'Inspirational-charismatic' dimension, but Bass is at pains to stress the pervasive nature of this quality, stating, 'If such transformational leadership is *authentic* [Bass's emphasis], it is characterised by high moral and ethical standards in each of the dimensions' (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999: 2).

It is worth noting, however, that there are three differences between our study and the representation of integrity in the MLQ. The first is that, in the current study, 'integrity' formed a separate factor in its own right, and was represented in far greater detail and complexity, on a scale with high internal reliability. In contrast, integrity is a relatively small, albeit important, element of a more general 'Inspirational-charismatic' dimension of the MLQ. The second point is that the *Integrity* factor emerging from the UK data is combined with a sense of humility and vulnerability, e.g. 'is prepared to admit when s/he is wrong or has made a mistake'; and emphasizes altruism, e.g. 'regards the good of the organization as more important than satisfying his/her own personal ambition'. The third is that this scale of the TLQ includes items relating to being open to criticism from staff, and being prepared to modify one's views after listening to others' ideas and views, and not being threatened by the effectiveness of others.

Whether the distinction between the US and British connotations of 'integrity' as a component of transformational leadership is due to cultural differences, or to the particular methodology adopted, including, importantly, the views of those managed by the 'leaders', is unclear. Again, one might reasonably have hypothesized that this leadership characteristic may be a particularly important, if not the core representation, of the UK public sector service ethic, and thus reflect an important contextual leadership variable. However, the private sector version of the TLQ also includes the aspect of preparedness to admit one's mistakes, and being willing to admit that, at times, the manager does not know what to do (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2000). Also, it is worth noting that the US leadership literature has relatively recently started to use the term 'humble' in the same context as effective leadership, possibly – at least in part – due to the prominence of Jim Collins's study of successful companies, *Good to Great* (2001), in which he described the strongest theme characterizing the approach of the highly effective leaders as combining personal humility with intense professional will. Another possible influence might be because of the numerous cases of corporate corruption that have received extensive media coverage, and the resultant 'de-bunking' of the mythology of the omniscience of those occupying the highest echelons of mega-corporations.

In his critique of the 'charismatic literature', Yukl (1999) makes the distinction between personal identification with a 'charismatic leader', which 'creates loyal, obedient followers, but may inhibit them from providing feedback to the leader or showing initiative', and a different kind of relationship with the leader, in which 'the primary influence process is internalisation, and task objectives are linked to a follower's core values and self-identity when followers come to see their work roles as an important part of their self-identity' (pp. 294–5).

### **Factor 5 – Being accessible (accessible, approachable, in-touch)**

This factor comprises items that reflect accessibility to the manager of direct reports and other colleagues, 'despite being very busy' (TLQ), and the adoption of an interpersonal style that is neither threatening, nor formal. It also reflects the transformational manager's sensitivity to the impact of her/his actions on staff. This dimension can be seen as one of the requirements for the kind of behaviours measured by the MLQ factor, 'Individualized consideration', and also 'Intellectual stimulation', the focus of attention of which includes enabling followers to look at problems from

many angles. The TLQ factor can be seen to be relevant to these two dimensions in that, unless the direct reports are able to communicate their solutions to their boss, their labours are in vain. However, Factor 5 goes beyond this, since its focus is on day-to-day accessibility and approachability, and also on the manager's commitment '... to developing their own competence as a leader'.

Accessibility and approachability do not appear to be addressed explicitly, as such, by the MLQ. However, sensitivity can be linked directly to two of the Tichy and Devanna (1986) dimensions – 'environmental sensitivity', and particularly, 'sensitivity to members' needs' – and to Conger's model.

### **Factor 6 – Being decisive (decisive, risk-taking)**

This factor, and a corresponding factor in the local government data, can be seen to measure a preparedness to take tough decisions when required, determination to achieve goals, and confidence in oneself. It can, thus, be interpreted as reflecting certain personal characteristics, perceived among UK leaders who are regarded as transformational, in two different public sectors. Hunt (1996) noted, in relation to the work of House (1971), 'Charismatic leaders are differentiated by dominance, self-confidence, need to influence, and strong conviction in the moral rightness of their beliefs' (p. 187). The behaviours that comprise Factor 6 reflect a different tenor from the US model. The difference in tenor may be due to cultural factors, with British managers presenting a more 'low key' manifestation of the construct, or it may reflect a different construct of leadership.

What is evident, then, is that each of the factors that emerged from the analyses can be seen to reflect a different aspect of transformational leadership. Furthermore, the whole tenor of the instrument, with its emphasis on 'close'/'nearby' leaders, reveals a predominant emphasis on *what the leader can do for the follower*, which is akin to Greenleaf's notion of 'leader as servant' (Greenleaf, 1970, 1996). This will be referred to again in a later section.

### **Convergent validity**

In order to examine the convergent validity of the instrument, five items (criterion variables) were included within the Pilot Instrument, which were designed to measure the perceived effect of the manager on the individual's 'Achievement', 'Job satisfaction', 'Motivation', 'Satisfaction with leadership style', and 'Stress'. The first four were chosen since they had been used to establish the convergent validity of another, comparable instrument, the MLQ (e.g. Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990a, b). The fifth was chosen for two major reasons: (1) the increasing concern in the NHS with high levels of stress among a range of staff, and the prominence of a recent study sponsored by the Department of Health, which concluded that:

- (i) The mental health of the workforce in NHS Trusts (hospitals) is substantially poorer than that of employees in general, outside the NHS,
- (ii) The overall percentage of probably psychiatric cases (i.e. scoring such high levels of stress on the GHQ-12 to be deemed probable cases of minor psychiatric disorder) among staff in NHS Trusts is 26.8. (Borrill et al., 1996)

and (2) in the light of substantial evidence that leader behaviour, such as allowing greater autonomy and empowerment, and offering greater social support, moderates the deleterious effects of performance pressure (e.g. Fox et al., 1993; Offerman & Hellman, 1996; Quick et al., 1992; Sauter et al., 1990). There is also evidence, from within the NHS, that influence over decisions as to how one carries out one's job is negatively correlated with perceived job-related stress (Borrill et al., 1996; Borrill et al., 1998).

In view of the possibility of 'method variance' effects, caused by collecting all the data through a single instrument (for example, Spector & Brannick, 1995), and 'halo' effects, consequent on the use of self-report data, these results were interpreted as being consonant with the validity of the TLQ, rather than as definitive. This conclusion can be drawn for the sample as a whole, and for when the sample was divided by level, sex, and level x sex. At the same time, it should be noted that given that the present instrument has only recently been developed, evidence from objective criteria is not yet available; as noted, the criterion variables chosen were those employed in the early stages of the validation of a comparable instrument. Furthermore, and more significantly, responses to the Pilot Instrument were collected under conditions which ensured complete anonymity. To have been able to match the self report data upon which the TLQ is based with other-source ratings of, say, effectiveness, would have compromised the anonymity of the responses, and thus, compromised the quality (i.e. the integrity) of the instrument. It was judged that, at this stage, the integrity (construct validity) of the instrument was of primary importance.

## Conclusions

There are major differences between the dimensions of transformational leadership identified in the current study and those described in current major US models of leadership. The first relates to the importance of 'charisma/inspiration'. A central component of the 'new leadership' paradigm is charisma (for example, Avolio, 1994; Conger, 1989; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Den Hartog et al., 1999; Hunt, 1996). In our study, however, the single most important factor, which explained more variance than the sum of the variances explained by the remaining factors, was 'Genuine concern for others' well-being and development'. No single dimension emerged in the British study for 'charisma'. One essential difference, therefore, appears to be that the US models still focus on characteristics of *the leader*, and often a 'distant' leader, such as a chief executive (cf. Bryman, 1996; Shamir, 1995), resulting in 'heroic' models of leadership; in contrast, our UK study, with its focus on 'close'/'nearby' leaders, reveals more of a 'leader as servant' notion of leadership (Greenleaf, 1970, 1996).

Overall, the UK model of transformational leadership appears to be much more consistent with the explanation of Shamir and colleagues, of the *effects* of charismatic leadership. They explained that the potency of some individuals to be perceived as possessing leadership qualities is due to their ability to increase followers' sense of self-efficacy by 'increasing self worth and communicating confidence and high expectations' (Shamir et al., 1993: 585) and then linking followers' goals to 'the present and to values in a framework of a "mission" which serves as a basis for

identification . . . [and for] generating faith by connecting behaviours and goals to a “dream” or an utopian ideal vision of a better future’. However, we believe that it is important to stress that our findings emphasize the importance of the leadership approach of *sculpting a shared vision*, and by that, a *shared meaning of the purpose and the process* of the work-role activities of a group of individuals who come together to achieve a common aim. The constructs of leadership emerging from our data also placed great importance on being sensitive to the agenda of a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, rather than seeking to meet the agenda of only one particular group.

This distinction between US and UK approaches is also consistent with Yukl’s (1999) distinction between the ‘heroic’ model of the charismatic leader, with whom followers identify strongly, and may become passionately devoted to, *versus* the charismatic leader who effects a process of influence encouraging followers to internalize what is being advocated, by linking the task objectives, and the mission, to the followers’ core values and self-identity (p. 295).

While we see our findings as reflecting the latter influence process, we would stop short of Yukl’s development of this idea when he states that, ‘When followers come to see their work roles as an important part of their self-identity, successful performance becomes very important for their self-acceptance and self-worth. Followers will make self-sacrifices and exert effort in their work to facilitate achievement of the task objectives’ (Yukl, 1999: 295). Our reservation here is about the suggestion that such ‘followers’ become almost subservient to the organization’s mission. We believe that it is the congruence between the individual’s values and dedication to the service, in this instance healthcare, that strengthens the leader-follower relationship.

The second major difference between US models and the findings of the current study is the far stronger theme in the latter of *connectedness* and *inclusiveness*. While these are referred to as elements within US models, they are far more explicitly detailed and pervasive in the UK data, being reflected in five of the six dimensions identified in this study.

It would seem that there is a far greater sense of proximity, openness, humility, and ‘vulnerability’ in the UK approach to leadership, as reflected in the present research, compared to what emerges from US models. It is not clear to what extent this might be attributed to perceptions of ‘nearby’ as distinct from ‘distant’ leaders (Shamir, 1995), and/or to the fact that we asked individuals to focus on managers who managed them directly, and who had either an unusually positive, or negative, effect on their motivation, sense of well-being, satisfaction, and performance, and/or to the gender-inclusiveness of the study, and to what extent by cultural factors. Certainly, the difference is too great to ignore.

The day before submitting our article to this journal, we had one of those experiences that researchers both dread, and are excited by. We found an article on the internet which fitted the last piece of the jigsaw that we had been searching for. This article provides an invaluable perspective for us of the difference between what has emerged from our research and US research on transformational leadership, particularly the work of Bass and Avolio. The paper we encountered, is entitled ‘Transformational Versus Servant Leadership – A Difference of Leader Focus’ (Stone et al., 2003: 1). In summary, it asserts:

. . . the primary difference between transformational leadership and servant leadership, is the focus of the leader. The transformational leader's focus is directed toward the organization, and his or her behaviour builds follower commitment toward organizational objectives, while the servant leader's focus is on the followers, and the achievement of organizational objectives is a subordinate outcome. The extent to which a leader is able to shift the primary focus of leadership from the organization to the follower is the distinguishing factor in classifying leaders as either transformational or servant leaders.

This distinction encapsulates the essential difference in tenor between our model and the US models with which we have made comparisons, particularly Bass's. Unfortunately, space and time limit further discussion here, though we would note one small area of concern that we have with this summary. Our concern is with the use of the word 'follower'. Stone et al. make the point on several occasions in their paper that, by serving and meeting the needs of others (including most importantly their 'followers'), '[servant leaders] develop relationships where followers are encouraged to follow their lead of service' (p. 9). We would stress the importance of the intention and the impact of servant leaders to affirm the leadership potential of those they serve, and would prefer to use the term 'servant and partner'.

The research leading to the development of the TLQ recognizes the need to define more clearly the social influence process as has been articulated by Parry (1998). Consistent with the Grounded Theory approach adopted here, the factors that emerge are based on individuals' descriptions of behaviours that they attribute to leadership. They, thus, provide a detailed, operational definition of its various components, in a way that can be used to identify characteristics of transformational leadership in organizations and the nature of the influence process, and a guide to meeting developmental need at different levels of management, and to inform selection and promotion decisions, and performance management.

Several writers have encouraged greater use of qualitative methodologies in leadership research, and some have argued the benefits of combining both qualitative and quantitative (for example, Bryman, 1996; Conger, 1998). The current study may be viewed as supporting these suggestions; indeed, we would argue that future research employing similar techniques in other organizations, and cultures, could only benefit this field of study.

Whether differences between the UK and US approaches to the study of leadership are attributable to cultural, organizational, or gender differences has yet to be determined. In the meantime, the present findings suggest the need to be wary of relying exclusively on models which currently dominate the literature.

Given, (i) that the items that comprise the instrument were derived from constructs elicited from an equal number of male and female managers, at all levels (Chief Executive, top, senior, middle), (ii) that the factorial structure that emerged also from separate analyses of male *versus* female managers should be similar to one another, and similar to that reported here, and (iii) that the internal reliability coefficients and inter-item correlations for female and male managers were of the same order of magnitude, and did not suggest the elimination of any item, it seems reasonable to suggest that the TLQ cannot only be regarded as reflecting leader behaviour at different levels in an organization, but also as 'gender-fair'. That the behaviours that

are assessed can be regarded as 'transformational' is suggested both by consonance between the Grounded Theory approach that was adopted and the Third Corollary of Bass and Avolio, and more significantly, by detailed, construct analysis of the six scales that emerged.

### **Subsequent analyses**

Four independent studies of the construct basis of transformational leadership in the UK have confirmed the NHS and local government data. These were among representative samples of managers at different levels in (1) infant, primary and secondary schools (Alban-Metcalfe & Alimo-Metcalfe, 2003c), (2) major UK private sector companies (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2002b), (3) the UK police service (Home Office, 2004), (4) another UK government organization in the field of criminal justice (confidential report). Subsequent principal components of the 'rich' and widely ranging constructs that emerged have led to the development of a Training Version of the TLQ (see Figure 1). This comprises a total of 14 dimensions, which have been divided into 3 clusters, as follows (in each case  $\alpha$  coefficients exceeded 0.83, inter-item correlations exceeded  $r = 0.30$ , and convergent and discriminant validity were found to hold true).

### **Developmental intervention and an exciting future**

One of the issues raised by Stone and colleagues was how empirically to assess the kind of leadership for which they and we argue. The TLQ has at its heart a focus on the individual, while being set in an organizational context. Because of this, and because the items comprise observable behavioural statements, the kind of guidance it offers is of direct relevance to transforming organizational practice in a way that focuses on the developmental needs and aspirations of individuals. Indeed, it has been used extensively in this way, across a wide spectrum of public and private sector organizations (e.g. Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2003b). What the TLQ offers is an instrument that measures each of the attributes of both transformational leadership and servant leadership identified by Stone et al., and as such provides a valid and robust tool for undertaking diagnostic assessment of the behaviours and qualities required for current and future leadership.

To return to the beginning, we cannot but express our indebtedness to Stone and colleagues for providing us with the missing jigsaw piece, while emphasizing that we are at the exciting beginning of what – until a better term is coined – can be thought of as 'New New Paradigm' thinking.

Notions of leadership are strongly affected by social change, and there is increasing evidence in the western world that there is growing discomfort with the 'heroic' models of 'visionary-charismatic' leadership that have dominated the last two decades of the 20th century. Respected commentators are pointing to the dangers of such powerful influence when found in the hands of individuals with dangerous agendas and/or doubtful integrity. The corporate scandals that have pervaded the business world over the last few years, and the global increase in extreme religious fanaticism and consequent terrorism – the blame for which has been laid by some squarely at the doors of rich nations' (and corporations') exploitation of the weaker

**Figure 1** Scales measured by The Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ)©

Leading & Developing Others	Personal Qualities	Leading the Organization
<p><b>Showing Genuine Concern:</b> Genuine interest in staff as individuals; values their contributions; develops their strengths; coaches, mentors; has positive expectations of what their staff can achieve. (13 items; <math>\alpha = .95</math>)</p>	<p><b>Being Honest &amp; Consistent:</b> Honest and consistent in behaviour; more concerned with the good of the organization than personal ambition. (4 items; <math>\alpha = .93</math>)</p>	<p><b>Networking &amp; Achieving:</b> Inspiring communication of the vision of the organization/service to a wide network of internal and external stakeholders; gains the confidence and support of various groups through sensitivity to needs, and by achieving organizational goals. (12 items; <math>\alpha = .92</math>)</p>
<p><b>Enabling:</b> Trusts staff to take decisions/initiatives on important matters; delegates effectively; develops staff's potential. (6 items; <math>\alpha = .86</math>)</p>	<p><b>Acting with Integrity:</b> Open to criticism and disagreement; consults and involves others in decision-making; regards values as integral to the organization. (9 items; <math>\alpha = .89</math>)</p>	<p><b>Focusing Team Effort:</b> Clarifies objectives and boundaries; team-orientated to problem-solving and decision-making, and to identifying values. (9 items; <math>\alpha = .90</math>)</p>
<p><b>Being Accessible:</b> Approachable and not status-conscious; prefers face-to-face communication; accessible and keeps in-touch. (5 items; <math>\alpha = .84</math>)</p>	<p><b>Being Decisive, Risk-taking:</b> Decisive when required; prepared to take difficult decisions, and risks when appropriate. (5 items; <math>\alpha = .83</math>)</p>	<p><b>Building Shared Vision:</b> Has a clear vision and strategic direction, in which s/he engages various internal and external stakeholders in developing; draws others together in achieving the vision. (7 items; <math>\alpha = .90</math>)</p>
<p><b>Encouraging Change:</b> Encourages questioning traditional approaches to the job; encourages new approaches/solutions to problems; encourages strategic thinking. (8 items; <math>\alpha = .88</math>)</p>	<p><b>Inspiring Others:</b> Charismatic; exceptional communicator; inspires others to join them. (5 items; <math>\alpha = .84</math>)</p>	<p><b>Supporting a Developmental Culture:</b> Supportive when mistakes are made; encourages critical feedback of him/herself and the service provided. (9 items; <math>\alpha = .90</math>)</p>
	<p><b>Resolving Complex Problems:</b> Capacity to deal with a wide range of complex issues; creative in problem-solving. (5 items; <math>\alpha = .85</math>)</p>	<p><b>Facilitating Change Sensitively:</b> Sensitivity to the impact of change on different parts of the organization; maintains a balance between change and stability. (6 items; <math>\alpha = .85</math>)</p>

Notes: 360-feedback Training version.

– can be seen within this context. Whether this ‘dark side’ of charisma be played out in the small business, or on the world stage, we are facing challenges of extraordinary, and potentially terrifying, proportions.

At times of crisis, people become desperate for leadership; the questions are: What form will it take? How can we be sure that we are creating the appropriate environment for it to be nourished? Surely any response must be based firmly on nations and peoples working toward a shared vision, in which all parties are respected in their own right, differences are valued, and decisions are based on principles that are consistent with maintaining human dignity.

While in no way purporting to have the answer, we have ‘unearthed’ a model of leadership which appears to be highly conducive to enabling us to begin to address some aspects of this ‘new world order’. The model emerged from adopting a different methodology from that used in previous studies, including a Grounded Theory approach, and one deliberately designed to be inclusive of gender and ethnicity, and of organizational level and context. Its fundamental themes are ‘servant-hood’, connection, transparency, and partnership. Perhaps its time has come?

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