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What is This?

Positive Leadership and Employee Well-Being

E. Kevin Kelloway[1], Heidi Weigand[1],
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Abstract

We report two studies examining the relationship between positive leadership behaviors and employee well-being. In the first, data from 454 nursing home employees showed that (a) a newly developed measure of positive leadership was distinct from transformational leadership and (b) positive leadership behaviors predicted context-specific and context-free well-being after controlling for transformational and abusive leadership. In the second study, data from a daily diary study ($N = 26$) showed that (a) positive leadership predicted positive, but not negative, employee affect and (b) positive leadership interacted with transformational leadership to predict employees positive affect.

Keywords

positive leadership, leadership, well-being, employee well-being

The nature, and effects, of leadership remain one of the most researched topics in organizational behavior (Barling, Christie, & Hoption, 2010). Arguably, the vast majority of this research has been conducted within a paradigm that suggests that leadership is important to the extent that it is associated with, or predictive of, organizationally relevant outcomes such as employee attitudes, performance, or motivation (Kelloway, Turner, Barling, & Loughlin, 2012). There is also a large and rapidly expanding body of literature that has begun to consider the implications of organizational leadership for employee well-being (for reviews, see Kelloway & Barling, 2010; Kelloway, Sivanthan, Francis, & Barling, 2005; Kuoppala, Lamminpaa, Liira, & Vainio, 2008; Mullen & Kelloway, 2010).

Much of this research has focused on the leaders' role as the source of organizational injustice (see, e.g., Kivimaki, Elovainio, Vahtera & Ferrie, 2003; Kivimaki et al., 2005) or on the health-related effects associated with having a transformational leader (see, e.g., Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007; Kelloway et al., 2012; McKee, Driscoll, Kelloway, & Kelley, 2011). In general, this research has suggested that supervisor behavior has a greater effect on employee mental well-being than many other factors, including stress, life, and work events (Gilbreath & Benson, 2004). In the current study, we expand this focus by considering the implications of recent developments in positive psychology for leadership and individual health in organizations (Fullagar & Kelloway, 2012)

Positivity

The advent of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), positive organizational behavior (Luthans, 2002; Wright, 2003) and, more broadly, positive organizational scholarship (Kelloway, 2011) has had substantial implications for understanding individual well-being. Fullagar and Kelloway (2012) have suggested that three areas of research have particular implications for understanding workplace health, via psychological capital (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007), flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), and positivity (Fredrickson, 1998, 2001). Extant research has articulated the relationships between employees' psychological capital and health (Avey, Luthans, Smith, & Palmer, 2010), and between flow and well-being (Fullagar & Kelloway, 2009) in organizational settings. In the current study, we consider the implications of positivity for organizational leadership and employee well-being.

Fredrickson's (1998, 2001) broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions provides a theoretical framework that explains the association of positive affective states with the development of personal resources that are critical for individual well-being. In essence, the theory holds that positive

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emotions have two functions. First, they broaden our aware-ness, cognitive thought processes, and action repertoires and, second, they enable us to build skills and resources that have long-term impact on our psychological and physical well-being (Fredrickson, 1998).

The empirical data largely support these propositions. For example, there are data indicating that positive emotions broaden momentary thought-action repertoires (see Isen, 2000, for a review). More specifically, positive emotions induce thought patterns that are more creative (Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987; Isen, Johnson, Mertz, & Robinson, 1985), flexible (Isen & Daubman, 1984), and effi-cient (Isen, Rosenzweig, & Young, 1991). Moreover, posi-tive emotions broaden the scope of attention (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005; Gasper & Clore, 2002).

Positive emotions are also associated with physical skill and health (Danner, Snowdon, & Friesen, 2001) and characteristics such as optimism and resilience (Algoe & Fredrickson, 2011; Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh, & Larkin, 2003). Furthermore, the effects of positive emotions appear to be long-lasting and can help individuals withstand adverse conditions and improve coping (Algoe & Fredrickson, 2011). For example, Fredrickson & Levenson (1998) found that individuals who viewed a fear-eliciting film tended to more rapidly return to prefilm levels of cardiovascular activa-tion when positive emotions were induced compared with when sad or neutral emotions were induced.

Based on these data, Fullagar and Kelloway (2012) noted that increasing the frequency and duration of positive emotional experiences would have a beneficial impact on both physical and mental health. Indeed, it has been sug-gested that a ratio of 3 positive to 1 negative emotion leads to flourishing mental health (Fredrickson, 2009). Although it is not possible, or even desirable (because they are often contextually appropriate; Algoe & Fredrickson, 2011) to eliminate negative emotions, the available data suggest that increasing positive emotions in the workplace would have salutary effects on individual well-being.

Positive leadership: The current research. We believe that these findings have important implications for leadership in organizations. In particular, the available data suggest that an important role for organizational leaders is to cre-ate or facilitate positive emotions in their followers. Accordingly, we define positive leadership as leadership behaviors that result in followers' experiencing positive emotions.

Most researchers will readily recognize that the notion of leaders acting positively toward followers is, at least implic-itly, a component of modern leadership theories. Thus, showing concern for the welfare of others is an aspect of consideration—one of the two major components of the behavioral approach to leadership (Fleishman, 1953; Kerr, Schriesheim, Murphy, & Stogdill, 1974). Leader–member exchange (Gerstner & Day, 1997) theory focuses on the

quality of the leader–follower relationship. One of the dimensions of transformational leadership is based on indi-vidualized consideration shown to followers by the leader (e.g., Bass & Riggio, 2006).

More recently, there have been several investigations of leader positivity where positivity was defined in terms of the leaders' psychological capital. Avey, Avolio, and Luthans (2011) conducted a field experiment in which they demon-strated that when leaders enacted the features of psychologi-cal capital (i.e., hope, optimism, resilience, and self-esteem), follower positivity and performance were enhanced. Norman, Avolio, and Luthans (2010) similarly showed that leader pos-itivity (defined as psychological capital) resulted in followers reporting more trust in leaders and higher perceptions of leader effectiveness.

Importantly, for the purposes of the current study, Avey, Hughes, Norman, and Luthans (2008) reported on a field study in which leader positivity was predictive of employee empowerment and contributed to the prediction of employee empowerment over and above the prediction attributable to transformational leadership. These findings are important in that they suggest that current theories of leadership do not fully account for leader positivity.

In these studies, leader positivity was defined as employee perceptions of leaders' psychological capital (i.e., hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience). As outlined earlier, we take a different (albeit related) approach. We define posi-tive leadership behaviors as those behaviors that are enacted by leaders and result in increasing followers' experience of positive emotions.

Study 1

In our first study, we set out to develop a measure of posi-tive leadership behavior that meets psychometric standards and offers incremental prediction of relevant outcomes. In particular, we hypothesized that

> *Hypothesis 1*: The behaviors comprising positive leadership will form a unidimensional scale.

Additionally, given that transformational leadership the-ory is the single most studied of all leadership theories (Barling et al., 2010; Judge & Piccolo, 2004), it is important to demonstrate the contribution of positive leadership behav-iors over and above followers' perceptions of leaders' trans-formational leadership. Accordingly, we hypothesize that

> *Hypothesis 2*: Positive leadership will be empirically distinct from transformational leadership.

Finally, we draw on Warr's (1987) distinction between context-specific (i.e., work-related) and context-free (e.g., life in general) mental health to propose that

Hypothesis 3a: Positive leadership will contribute to the prediction of context-specific mental health over and above the prediction attributable to transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 3b: Positive leadership will contribute to the prediction of context-free mental health over and above the prediction attributable to transformational leadership.

Method

Participants and procedure. Questionnaire packages were distributed to all 1,600 employees of a long-term care facility in eastern Canada. Just more than 500 ($N = 508$) questionnaires were returned, and 454 of these were retained for further analysis after data cleaning and discarding incomplete questionnaires. As would be expected from the demographic profile of the employee population, the majority (85%) of respondents were female. Respondents worked an average of 38.5 hours a week and had been employed with the organization for between 5 and 10 years. The average (modal) age of employees was between 35 and 40 years. Participants were given the opportunity to enter a draw for gift certificates after completing the survey, and all study procedures were reviewed and approved by the research ethics board of the university.

Measures. Positive leadership was measured by five items. The items were developed based on focus groups with staff in another health care facility who were asked to identify actions of leaders that resulted in the employee feeling "better" or "more positive" at work. Respondents were specifically asked to focus on behaviors that were common rather than exceptional "grand gestures." Five items emerged from this process. In the current survey, each participant was asked to reflect on the past 4 months of work and to indicate how often their supervisor had (a) thanked them, (b) praised them for their job performance, (c) cheered them up, (d) gone out of his or her way to help them, and (e) complimented them. Each item was rated on a 5-point scale with higher scores indicating a higher frequency of the behavior.

Transformational leadership was measured with Carless, Wearing, and Mann's (2000) seven-item measure of Global Transformational Leadership. The source publication provides evidence for the convergent and discriminant validity of the measure. In the current study, items were rated on a 7-point response scores with higher scores indicating more transformational leadership ($\alpha = .97$).

Context-specific mental health was assessed with two measures. First, we used four items (current study $\alpha = .85$) from Allen and Meyer's (1990) eight-item measure of affective commitment. Affective commitment has been identified as an index of context-specific mental health (Warr, 1987). Second, a single item measured overall job satisfaction. Again, Warr (1987) identified job satisfaction as a measure of

context-specific affective well-being. Although the use of single-item measures is generally discouraged, the available data suggest that overall job satisfaction can be adequately measured with the use of a single item (Nagy, 2002; Wanous, Reichers, & Hudy, 1997). In the current study, we used a 7-point response scale for these measures with higher scores representing greater commitment to the organization and greater overall job satisfaction.

Context-free mental health was measured by the six-item item (current study $\alpha = .96$) positive affective well-being scale. The scale is based on the positive-high-arousal items from the Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale (VanKatwyk, Fox, Spector, & Kelloway, 2000) with the stem changed from "My job makes me feel" to "In general, I feel." Respondents rated each item on a 7-point scale with higher scores indicating greater well-being.

In addition, all respondents provided demographic information (i.e., age, sex, organizational tenure, hours worked each week)

Results

Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for all study variables are presented in Table 1.

We began conducting a series of confirmatory factor analyses. A one-factor model provided an acceptable representation of the new positive leadership scale, $\chi^2(5) = 30.23$, $p < .01$; normed fit index (NFI) = .97, *incremental fit index (*IFI) = .98, comparative fit index (CFI) = .98, with all items loading substantially on the factor (standardized parameters ranged from .76 to .83). Cronbach's alpha for the five-item scale was .82. A second confirmatory factor analysis included the items from the Carless et al. (2000) short scale of transformational leadership. To reduce the parameterization of the model, we used an item-parceling approach to develop three indicators of transformational leadership. The two-factor model provided an acceptable fit to the data, $\chi^2(19) = 55.27$, $p < .01$; NFI = .98, IFI = .99, CFI = .99 and a better fit than did a one-factor model, $\Delta \chi^2(1) = 1658.54$, $p < .01$. Standardized parameter estimates for the two-factor model are presented in Table 2. As shown, positive leadership was only moderately correlated (disattenuated $r = .37$) with transformational leadership.

We next conducted a series of hierarchical regressions in which affective commitment and positive affective well-being were predicted by demographic variables (i.e., age, sex, organizational tenure, hours worked each week), transformational leadership, and positive leadership. As shown in Table 3, in all three cases, the measure of positive leadership contributed incrementally to the prediction of the criteria. After controlling for demographic variables and transformational leadership, positive leadership was significantly associated with affective commitment to the organization ($\beta = .14$, $p < .01$), job satisfaction ($\beta = .13$, $p < .01$), and positive affective well-being ($\beta = .16$, $p < .01$).

Table 1. Study 1: Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations for All Study Variables (*N* = 454)

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Sex	1.85	0.36								
2. Age	4.28	1.06	−.03							
3. Tenure	2.19	1.03	−.03	.27						
4. Hours/week	38.55	12.26	−.02	−.12	.01					
5. Transformational leadership	5.36	1.34	.04	.09	−.09	−.09				
6. Positive leadership	2.63	1.22	.02	.02	.04	.08	.35			
7. Commitment	3.48	1.47	−.04	.03	.02	−.03	.37	.27		
8. Job satisfaction	5.79	1.24	−.01	.20	.01	−.09	.40	.25	.43	
9. Affective well-being	5.19	1.18	−.05	.14	−.06	−.08	.46	.29	.45	.58

Note. r > .11, p < .05. r > 14, p < .01. Sex coded 1 = male, 2 = female.

Table 2. Study 1: Standardized Parameter Estimates for the Two-Factor Model

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2
1. TFL1	.93	
2. TFL2	.97	
3. TFL3	.96	
4. Complimented me		.80
5. Cheered me up		.82
6. Thanked me		.77
7. Helped me out when needed		.79
8. Praised my job performance		.83

Note. All parameters p < .01.

Discussion

The results of our first study offered considerable support to our hypotheses. As predicted, the measure of positive leadership behavior attained acceptable psychometric properties, and positive leadership was distinct from transformational leadership. Moreover, positive leadership behaviors predict context-specific (i.e., affective commitment) and context-free measures of mental health uniquely—controlling for demographic variables and transformational leadership. Taken together, these results suggest that positive-leadership behaviors offer something "new" to the study of how leadership affects well-being.

In identifying the positive behaviors of leaders that are associated with employee well-being, the current findings point the way to interventions designed to change leader behavior to enhance well-being. Certainly, the available data support the effectiveness of leadership development interventions—showing that leadership behaviors can be changed with implications for both attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (see, e.g., Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002; Kelloway, Barling, & Helleur, 2000; Mullen & Kelloway, 2009). Our findings suggest that there would be some considerable value in teaching leaders to engage in more positive interactions with their followers.

Of course, such suggestions are limited by design features of the current study that may require replication and expansion of the existing findings. First, reliance on self-report data might limit our findings to the extent that they are contaminated with common method variance. In the current context, we suggest that a secondary consideration in the effect of common method variance would be to suppress several of our hypothesized effects. Thus, for example, contamination by common method variance would lead to a better fit for the one-factor model, as compared with the two-factor model we estimated. Moreover, common method variance would result in stronger correlations between employee perceptions of transformational leadership and positive leadership behaviors, making it more difficult for us to find the incremental prediction that we hypothesized.

Second, the current conclusions are based on cross-sectional and self-report data. The first consideration suggests that considerable caution be taken in making causal inferences based on the current data and leads to the suggestion that future research use stronger, and in particular, longitudinal designs (see, e.g., Avey, Luthans, & Mhatre, 2008). In our second study, we address this concern by examining positive-leadership behaviors in a longitudinal diary study.

Study 2

The principal goal of the second study was to extend the findings of Study 1 in a longitudinal design. In addition to this methodological consideration, we recognize two conceptual limits on our current results, which we address in our second study.

First, our initial results suggest that positive leadership behaviors are associated with positive mood states and attitudes in their employees. However, mood states vary along the dimensions of both positive–negative and high–low arousal (see, e.g., Russell, 1979, 1980; VanKatwyk et al., 2000; Warr, 1987), and it is important to specify the nature of the leadership behavior–employee mood effect. Consistent with the propositions of Fredrickson's work on positivity we hypothesize that

Table 3. Study 1: Results of the Regression Analysis (betas)

Predictor	Satisfaction	Commitment	Affective Well-Being
1. Age	−.02	−.05	−.07
2. Gender	.17**	−.01	.12*
3. Tenure	−.01	.04	−.07
4. Hours/week	−.05	.05	−.04
5. Transformational leadership	.33**	.33**	.39**
6. Positive leadership	.13**	.15**	.16**
R^2	.20**	.17**	.25**

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

Hypothesis 1: Positive leadership behaviors will be predictive of positive, but not negative, employee affect.

Second, although we have established that positive leadership behaviors predict employee affect incrementally over established measures of transformational leadership, we have not considered the potential for interactive effects between the two dimensions of leadership. Mullen, Kelloway, and Teed (2011) hypothesized and found that leaders who were seen as both passive and transformational (which they defined as inconsistent leadership) were less effective in promoting safety than were leaders who were transformational but not passive. Given that positive and transformational leadership seem to be distinct behaviors, and that both are indicative of "good" or positive leadership, we hypothesize that

Hypothesis 2: Positive leadership will moderate the effect of transformational leadership on employee positive affect such that the effects of transformational leadership are enhanced when leaders engage in positive leadership behaviors.

Thus, the current study tests two hypotheses that, in combination, explicate the effect of positive leadership behaviors on employee affect. We hypothesize that positive leadership behaviors will be predictive of positive, but not negative, employee affect. Moreover, we hypothesize that positive and transformational leadership will interact to predict positive employee affect. We test both hypotheses in a study using experience-sampling methodology (ESM) in which data were collected from employees twice a week over a period of 3 weeks.

Most research on the subjective experience of leadership has relied on single-time, self-report measures that are vulnerable to such methodological problems as memory biases (Scollon, Kim-Prieto, & Diener, 2003; Smyth & Stone, 2003). Experience sampling, a method of data collection where participants are assessed at repeated moments over the course of time while functioning in their natural settings, offers the potential to overcome these difficulties.

Scollon et al. (2003) have specified five strengths of ESM. First, it enables the study of contingencies between situational conditions and affective and behavioral responses. Second, because ESM data is collected in a real-life context, ecological validity is increased. Third, ESM allows for multilevel analyses both between and within persons. This is particularly relevant when developing an idiographic-level understanding of subjective well-being. Fourth, ESM reduces recall bias by assessing subjective experiences close to the time that they occur. Finally, ESM is most effective in understanding subjective experience when it is used in conjunction with other, more global, self-reports. The product of such a methodology is a dense and systematic description of the external conditions and subjective experience of flow in different situational contexts and at different moments in time.

There are three different types of experience sampling methods (Scollon et al., 2003). *Interval-contingent* sampling refers to data collection that occurs after a designated and preset amount of time. *Event-contingent* sampling is when participants complete self-reports after a predesignated event has occurred. Finally, *signal-contingent* sampling is when self-report data is collected after a prompt by a randomly-timed signal. In the current study, we use an interval sampling approach in which respondents rate their affective well-being and perceptions of leaders' behavior twice a week for 3 weeks.

Method

Participants and procedure. The participants for this study were full-time employees of a Canadian coffee retail organization. The data in this study came from 26 employees who completed a survey six times over a 3-week period for a total of 136 observations (after deletion of missing data). These respondents were full-time workers, the majority of whom were female (73%). Most (87%) had less than 5 years of tenure with the organization (21% had 3-5 years of service, 38% had 1-2 years of service, and 28% had less than 1 year of service). The majority of participants (62%) were in relatively new reporting relationships and had

Table 4. Study 2: Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations of Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Positive leadership	1.97	0.48						
2. Transformational leadership		2.61	.73	.54**				
3. High arousal positive affect	2.51	0.84	.54**	.64**				
4. Low arousal positive affect	2.97	0.80	.47**	.61**	.68*			
5. High arousal negative affect	4.65	0.60	−.05	.09	.03	.26*		
6. Low arousal negative affect	4.55	0.65	−.07	.08	.08	.19*	.88**	

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

reported to their supervisor for less than 6 months, (21% had reported for 6 months to a year and 14% reported to their current manager for 2 to 5 years).

All employees were invited to complete a confidential diary study to assess their immediate supervisor's leadership behavior, as well as answer questions relating to their personal well-being. Self-completion diaries have a number of advantages over other data collections methods (Corti, 1993). Like other self-completion methods, diaries can help overcome the problems associated with collecting sensitive information by personal interview, which in this case is an evaluation of the employee's supervisor. They can also be used to supplement interview data to provide a rich source of information on respondents' behavior and experiences on a daily basis related to their supervisor's behavior. E-mail reminders and the company newsletter were used to promote participation in the study. Participants were given the opportunity to enter a draw for gift certificates after each of the six survey periods, and all study procedures were reviewed and approved by the research ethics board of the university.

Measures. Affective well-being was assessed using the 20-item Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale (VanKatwyk et al., 2000). The scale generates four scores each measured by five items, and each subscale represents a combination of low–high arousal and positive–negative affect. Thus, in the current study, separate scores were developed for each of high-arousal positive affect ($\alpha = .90$), low-arousal positive affect ($\alpha = .81$), high-arousal negative affect ($\alpha = .80$), and low-arousal negative affect ($\alpha = .80$). Respondents rated items on a 5-point Likert-type scale, (1 = *never*, 5 = *extremely often*) with higher scores indicating more of the dimension being assessed.

Predictors: We used the five-item ($\alpha = .84$) positive leadership scale developed in the first study. Participants responded using a 4-point Likert-type scale, (1 = *never*, 4 = *more than 5 times*) with higher scores representing higher levels of perceived positive leadership behavior. Items included the following: "my manager cheered me up," "my manager thanked me," "my manager complimented me," "my manager helped me," and "my manager praised me for my job performance."

We used 7 items ($\alpha = .92$) from the Global Transformational Leadership Scale (Carless et al., 2000) to create a transformational leadership scale to which participants responded using a 4-point Likert-type scale, (1 = *never*, 4 = *more than 5 times*) with higher scores representing higher levels of perceived transformational leadership behavior. Items included the following: "my manager communicated a clear and positive vision"; "my manager fostered trust, involvement, and cooperation among team members"; "my manager has been clear about his or her values and practices what he or she preaches"; and "my manager instilled pride and respect in others and inspires me by being highly competent."

Results

Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for all study variables are presented in Table 4. We tested our hypotheses using a multilevel, or mixed, model to account for the nesting of our data (i.e., time periods within individuals, individuals within leaders). Prior to analyses, all scales were person centered to remove the between-person influence from the effects of interest. Thus, our analyses focus on the within-person or longitudinal effects of leadership on well-being. Our hypotheses suggested a moderator effect, and the interaction term was computed as the cross-product of the centered predictors (i.e., transformational leadership and positive leadership). All analyses controlled for respondents' gender, age, organizational tenure, and the length of time they had worked for their current supervisor.

Results of these analyses are presented in Table 5. In support of Hypothesis 1, positive leadership emerged as a significant predictor of high arousal positive affect ($B = 1.55$ $p < .01$) and low arousal positive affect ($B = 1.12$, $p < .01$) but not of either measure of negative affect (high arousal $B = −0.88$, *ns*; low arousal $B = −0.78$, *ns*) after controlling for the effect of demographic variables and transformational leadership.

The interaction of positive leadership and transformational leadership also emerged as a significant predictor of both high arousal positive affect ($B = −0.46$, $p < .01$) and low arousal positive affect ($B = −0.40$, $p < .01$) but not of either measure of negative affect (high arousal $B = 0.22$, *ns*; low arousal $B = 0.15$, *ns*). To understand these effects, we

Table 5. Results of the Mixed Model Analyses (Unstandardized Parameters)

Predictor	HAPA	LAPA	HANA	LANA
1. Sex	0.04	0.22	0.15	0.14
2. Age	0.00	0.00	−0.01	−0.01
3. Tenure	0.19	0.01	−0.02	−0.01
4. Length	0.18	0.04	−0.13	0.16
5. Transformational leadership	1.40**	1.20**	−0.41	−0.29
6. Positive leadership	1.55**	1.30**	−0.88	−0.78
7. Interaction(5 × 6)	−0.46**	−0.40**	0.22	0.16

Note. HAPA = high arousal positive affect; LAPA = low arousal positive affect; HANA = high arousal negative affect; LANA = low arousal negative affect.
**$p < .01$.
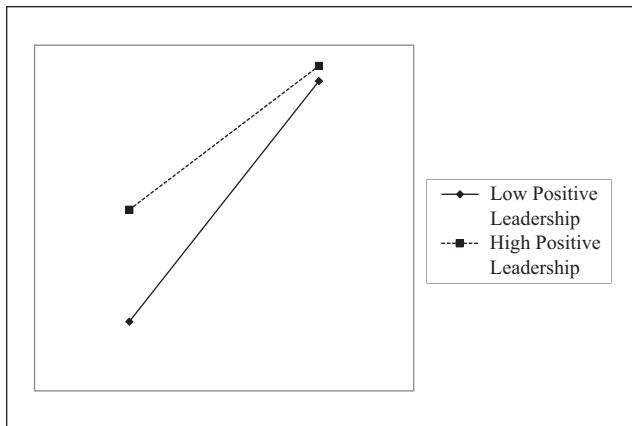
Figure 1. Simple slopes predicting high arousal positive affect
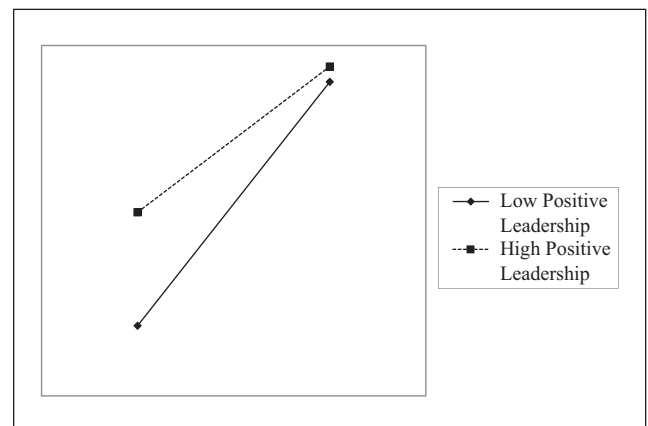
Figure 2. Simple slopes predicting low arousal positive affect

plotted the simple slopes of the interactions terms. For both outcomes (see Figures 1 and 2), similar plots were obtained. Positive leadership was not add to the prediction of positive affect when transformational leadership was high, but it was associated with higher levels of employee positive affect when transformational leadership was low.

Discussion

The results of the current study replicate and expand on our earlier findings. First, as hypothesized, positive leadership behaviors emerged as a predictor of positive, but not negative, employee affect. Moreover, as in our first study, these effects emerged after controlling for transformational leadership suggesting that the measure of positive leadership behaviors added some incremental prediction of the criteria above the known effects of transformational leadership. As we hypothesized, positive leadership behaviors are associated with more positive affect, but not necessarily less negative affect. Again, this is consistent with work on positivity (Fredrickson, 2001) that suggests that increasing the ratio of positive to negative emotions, rather than eliminating negative emotions, is the key to enhancing well-being.

We also hypothesized, and found support, for an interaction between transformational and passive leadership. Extrapolating from the results of Mullen et al. (2011), we suggested that positive leadership would enhance the effect of transformational leadership on employee affect. Although we did find evidence of the interaction of positive and transformational leadership predicting the two measures of positive affect, in both cases, the form of the interaction did not conform to our hypotheses. Rather, positive leadership behaviors were associated with positive affect when transformational leadership was low, but it did not result in significantly higher positive affect when transformational leadership was high. We interpret these findings as suggesting that positive leadership may serve as a partial substitute for transformational leadership behaviors. Even when transformational leadership is low, engaging in more positive leadership results in employees experiencing positive affect although not to the same extent as when transformational leadership is high. When leaders are already behaving in a transformational manner, positive leadership adds little to the prediction of employee positive affect.

These effects add to our cross-sectional findings reported in the first study in that they show the prediction of affect

from positive leadership across days (i.e., longitudinally). In doing so, our findings also raise an important question for future research. It is commonly recommended that the choice of longitudinal lags be based on theory. At the same time, few theories in organizational behavior provide a basis for specifying such lags (Kelloway & Francis, 2012). We chose to focus on daily interactions because positive behaviors of the type we are interested in (e.g., thanking, praising, cheering up) can be enacted on a daily basis. Moreover, our experience in leadership developments (e.g., Barling et al., 1996; Mullen & Kelloway, 2009) suggests that it is these small daily behaviors that can have the greatest effect. Nonetheless, future research could be profitably directed at exploring other time lags (e.g., weekly, monthly) to determine the nature and duration of the effects we identify.

We believe that these findings offer some implications for interventions in organizations designed to enhance well-being. Kelloway, Day, and Hurrell (2008) reviewed organizational health as comprising primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions—all of which are focused on reducing or mitigating the negative effects of workplace stress. However, they also noted the potential for what they termed *countervailing* interventions that attempted to influence employee well-being by increasing positive, rather than decreasing negative, experiences. Kelloway and Barling (2010) suggested that leadership development interventions were one such countervailing practice that resulted in enhanced individual well-being.

Although the literature is generally supportive of the effectiveness of leadership development interventions (e.g., Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumba, & Chan, 2009; Barling et al., 1996; Dvir et al., 2002), our experience is that it can be quite difficult for leaders to see how they can be "inspirational" or to exert "idealized influence" on a daily basis. In contrast, the behaviors we identify as positive-leadership behaviors (i.e., praising job performance, thanking individuals, cheering people up, helping) are concrete and easily operationalzied within a goal-setting (Kelloway & Barling, 2000; Locke & Latham, 1990) framework. As such, we suggest that they comprise the basis of a training intervention designed to enhance employees' positive affect. Evaluating the effectiveness of such an approach is, we suspect, the most intriguing implication of our results for future research.

In both our studies, we have focused on the well-being of employees as a function of leadership. However, the mental health of leaders may also be affected by their engagement in particular behaviors (Kelloway & Barling, 2010). Thus, for example, expressing gratitude is associated with increased well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Watkins, Woodward, Stone, & Koths, 2003), and leaders who engage in positive behaviors such as expressing gratitude may experience enhanced well-being themselves. Again, this suggestion remains a focus for future research.

Finally, in both our studies, we have focused on the possible interrelationships between positive and transformational leadership. In Study 1, we showed that positive and transformational leadership appear to be empirically distinct constructs and that positive leadership added to the prediction of criteria over and above that explained by transformational leadership. In Study 2, we replicated these results in a short-term longitudinal study and identified an interaction between transformational leadership and positive leadership. Our focus on transformational leadership was based on the status of this construct as the single-most studied leadership theory (Barling et al., 2010). However, we note that our scale included elements related to the provision of feedback (i.e., thanked them, praised them for their job performance) as well as elements related to the quality of interpersonal relationships (e.g., cheered them up, gone out of the way to help them). There is a great deal of research speaking to the efficacy of feedback in organizations (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1997, 2003) and the quality of supervisor-follower relationships (e.g., leader–member exchange, Gerstner & Day, 1997), and it remains for future research to establish whether positive leadership adds to what is currently known about these relationships.

Summary

Extrapolating from the extant literature on positivity (e.g., Fredrickson, 1998, 2001), we presented two studies of leaders' positive behavior. In the first, we developed and demonstrated the psychometric acceptability, of a scale assessing leaders' positive behavior. Our results suggested that such behaviors were empirically distinct from transformational leadership and added to the prediction of context-specific and context-free well-being over and above the prediction attributable to transformational leadership. In the second study, we reported on a diary study in which respondents completed measures twice a week for 3 weeks. We showed that positive leadership was associated with positive but not negative employee affect. Moreover, positive leadership and transformational leadership interacted to predict positive affect such that positive leadership served as a partial substitute for transformational leadership when transformational leadership was low. We suggest that these results have implications for leadership development in organizations and lay the foundation for further empirical enquiry into leaders' positive behaviors.

Authors' Note

Hari Das passed away prior to completion of this article.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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