

**Taking One for the Team: The Role of Social Identity-Focused Leadership
in Enhancing Well-Being and Performance of Followers**

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**Taking One for the Team: The Role of Social Identity-Focused Leadership in
Enhancing Well-Being and Performance of Followers**

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*"Now this is the Law of the Jungle —
as old and as true as the sky;
And the Wolf that shall keep it may prosper,
but the Wolf that shall break it must die.*

*As the creeper that girdles the tree-trunk
the Law runneth forward and back —
**For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf,
and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack.**"*

Rudyard Kipling

(1994; excerpt from the poem "The Law of the Jungle"; emphasis added)

Danksagung

Die Danksagung ist nicht Teil der Veröffentlichung.

Contents

Deutsche Zusammenfassung	1
English Summary	4
Introduction	7
Theoretical and Empirical Background	11
<i>The Social Identity Approach</i>	11
Social Identity Theory (SIT).	11
Self-Categorization Theory (SCT).	13
Application of the social identity approach in organizational contexts.	16
<i>The Social Identity Approach to Leadership</i>	18
Identity leadership.	18
Leader's vision and social identity.	19
The Present Research	21
<i>Manuscript 1: Identity Leadership and Well-being: Team Identification and Trust as Underlying Mechanisms</i>	22
Rationale and theoretical background.	22
Methods.	22
Results.	23
Discussion.	23
<i>Manuscript 2: Identity Leadership, Social Identity Continuity and Well-being at Work during COVID-19</i>	24
Rationale and theoretical background.	24
Methods.	24
Results.	25
Discussion.	25
<i>Manuscript 3: Doing it for the Club: Soccer Coaches' Identity Leadership Predicts Players' Effort, Turnover Intentions, and Performance</i>	26
Rationale and theoretical background.	26
Methods.	26
Results.	26
Discussion.	27
<i>Manuscript 4: How to Capture Leader's Vision Articulation? Development and Validation of the Vision Articulation Questionnaire (VAQ)</i>	28
Rationale and theoretical background.	28

Methods.....	28
Results.....	29
Discussion.....	29
General Discussion	31
<i>Strengths and Limitations</i>	33
<i>Avenues for Future Research</i>	36
<i>Practical Implications</i>	40
<i>Conclusion</i>	42
References	43
Appendix	53
<i>Appendix A: Manuscript 1</i>	54
<i>Appendix B: Manuscript 2</i>	88
<i>Appendix C: Manuscript 3</i>	118
<i>Appendix D: Manuscript 4</i>	146
<i>Appendix E: Lebenslauf inkl. Publikationsliste</i>	167
<i>Appendix F: Eidesstattliche Erklärung des Verfassers</i>	169

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Dissertation untersucht die Beziehung zwischen Führungsverhalten und dem Wohlbefinden sowie der Leistung von MitarbeiterInnen mit dem *Social Identity Approach to Leadership* (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011), der auf der *Theorie der sozialen Identität* (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) und der *Selbstkategorisierungstheorie* (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) basiert. Die Grundidee dieses Ansatzes besteht darin, dass Führungskräfte darum bemüht sein sollten, eine geteilte soziale Identität und somit ein „Wir-Gefühl“ innerhalb ihres Teams zu schaffen und erhalten (Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014).

In dieser Arbeit untersuchten wir vier Fragestellungen. Erstens: Was sind die zugrundeliegenden Mechanismen der positiven Beziehung von *Identity Leadership* (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018) und dem Wohlbefinden von MitarbeiterInnen (Manuskript 1)? Zweitens: Welche Rolle spielt die wahrgenommene Kontinuität sozialer Identität am Arbeitsplatz für das Wohlbefinden in Krisenzeiten und wie können Führungskräfte dieses Gefühl von Kontinuität fördern (Manuskript 2)? Drittens: Wie sieht die Beziehung zwischen Identity Leadership von Trainern und dem Funktionieren des Teams aus und welcher Mechanismus liegt hier zugrunde (Manuskript 3)? Letztlich: Wie können wir die Artikulation einer Vision durch Führungskräfte aus einer sozialen Identitätsperspektive konzeptualisieren und messen (Manuskript 4)?

Konkret untersuchten wir in Manuskript 1 die Beziehung von Identity Leadership mit Teamidentifikation, Vertrauen in die Führungskraft und dem Wohlbefinden von MitarbeiterInnen (in Form von Arbeitszufriedenheit, Work Engagement und Burnout). Wir nahmen an, dass Teamidentifikation und Vertrauen in die Führungskraft die Beziehung zwischen Identity Leadership und Wohlbefinden mediieren. Studie 1 (querschnittlich; $N = 192$) bestätigte die positiven Beziehungen zwischen Identity Leadership und Teamidentifikation sowie Vertrauen in die Führungskraft und Wohlbefinden (im Sinne einer

höheren Arbeitszufriedenheit, eines höheren Work Engagement und geringerem Burnout). Zusätzlich medierte Teamidentifikation den Zusammenhang mit Arbeitszufriedenheit und Work Engagement, während Vertrauen in die Führungskraft den Zusammenhang mit Burnout medierte. Studie 2 (experimentell; $N = 72$) lieferte kausale Evidenz für die positive Beziehung zwischen Identity Leadership und Teamidentifikation sowie Vertrauen in die Führungskraft.

In Manuskript 2 untersuchten wir mit einer Querschnittsstudie ($N = 363$) die Wichtigkeit erlebter Kontinuität von sozialer Identität am Arbeitsplatz für das Wohlbefinden von MitarbeiterInnen (im Sinne von Arbeitszufriedenheit, Einsamkeit am Arbeitsplatz und Burnout) während der Coronavirus-Pandemie. Außerdem untersuchten wir die Beziehung der erlebten Kontinuität von sozialer Identität und Identity Leadership. Dabei berücksichtigten wir sowohl Identity Leadership von formellen Führungskräften als auch von anderen Teammitgliedern. Die Ergebnisse zeigten eine positive Beziehung der Kontinuität von sozialer Identität mit Arbeitszufriedenheit sowie eine negative Beziehung mit Einsamkeit. Bezüglich Führung zeigte sich, dass Identity Entrepreneurship von Teammitgliedern (also das Schaffen eines „Wir-Gefühls“, Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014) mit einer stärker wahrgenommenen Kontinuität von sozialer Identität am Arbeitsplatz einherging. Demnach zeigte sich ein indirekter Effekt von Identity Entrepreneurship der Teammitglieder auf Arbeitszufriedenheit und Einsamkeit über die Kontinuität von sozialer Identität.

In Manuskript 3 ging es um Identity Leadership im Sportkontext. Querschnittliche Daten von 24 Fußballteams ($N = 247$) wurden genutzt um die Beziehung von Identity Leadership der Trainer mit Indikatoren für das Funktionieren und die Leistung des Teams zu untersuchen. Team Effort und Turnover Intentions wurden als bisher vernachlässigte Indikatoren für das Funktionieren des Teams untersucht. Die Ergebnisse zeigten eine positive Beziehung von Identity Leadership mit Team Effort, Individual- und Teamleistung. Zudem

zeigte sich eine negative Beziehung mit Turnover Intentions. Teamidentifikation medierte diese Beziehungen und wurde demnach als zugrundeliegender Mechanismus identifiziert.

Letztlich wurde in Manuskript 4 die Artikulation einer Vision durch Führungskräfte aus einer sozialen Identitätsperspektive näher untersucht. Basierend auf dem theoretischen Modell von Stam, Lord, van Knippenberg und Wisse (2014) wurde der Vision Articulation Questionnaire (VAQ) entwickelt. Die Validierung des Fragebogens wurde in zwei Querschnittsstudien durchgeführt (Studie 1: $N = 191$; Studie 2: $N = 350$). Die finale Version des Fragebogens bestand aus 22 Items für sieben Faktoren: Verständlichkeit, Selbstwert, Befähigung, gemeinsame Werte, Zwischenziele, Promotionsfokus und Personalisierung.

In Summe erbringen die vier Manuskripte Belege aus verschiedenen Kontexten dafür, dass Führung, die auf Prinzipien des Ansatz der sozialen Identität beruht (Haslam et al., 2011; Stam et al., 2014; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987), für AnhängerInnen förderlich ist und weitere Aufmerksamkeit aus Forschung und Praxis gleichermaßen verdient.

English Summary

The present dissertation examines the relationships between leader behavior and employees' well-being and performance using the *social identity approach to leadership* (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011) that is based on *social identity theory* (SIT; Tajfel and Turner, 1979) and *self-categorization theory* (SCT; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). The core notion of this approach is that leaders should create and maintain a shared social identity among their team (i.e., a sense of 'we-ness'; Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014).

In the present work, we examined four questions. First, what the underlying mechanisms behind the positive association of *identity leadership* (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018) and employees' well-being are (Manuscript 1)? Second, what role does the perceived continuity of social identity at work play for employees' well-being in times of crises and how can leaders foster that sense of continuity (Manuscript 2)? Third, what is the relationship between coaches' identity leadership and team functioning outcomes and what is the underlying mechanism (Manuscript 3)? Lastly, how can we conceptualize and measure vision articulation of leaders from a social identity viewpoint (Manuscript 4)?

Specifically, in Manuscript 1 we examined identity leadership and its relationship with team identification, trust in the leader, and employees' well-being (i.e., job satisfaction, work engagement, burnout). We hypothesized that team identification and trust in the leader mediated the relationship between identity leadership and well-being. Study 1 (cross-sectional; $N = 192$) supported positive relationships between identity leadership and team identification as well as between trust in the leader and well-being (i.e., higher job satisfaction and work engagement, lower burnout). Additionally, team identification mediated the association with job satisfaction and work engagement, trust in the leader mediated the association with burnout. Study 2 (experimental; $N = 72$) provided causal evidence for the

positive relationship between identity leadership and team identification as well as trust in the leader.

In Manuscript 2 we cross-sectionally ($N = 363$) investigated the importance of perceived continuity of social identity for employees' well-being (i.e., job satisfaction, loneliness at work, burnout) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, we examined the relationship of social identity continuity and identity leadership of formal and informal leaders (i.e., fellow team members). Results indicated a positive relationship between perceived social identity continuity and job satisfaction as well as a negative relationship between continuity and loneliness. As for leadership, team members' identity entrepreneurship (i.e., 'crafting a sense of us', p. 1003, Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014) was associated with an increase in experienced social identity continuity at work. This accounted for an indirect effect of team members' identity entrepreneurship on job satisfaction and loneliness via social identity continuity.

Manuscript 3 was concerned with identity leadership in a sports context. Cross-sectional data from 24 soccer teams ($N = 247$) was used to examine the relationship between coaches' identity leadership and indicators of team functioning that have previously been neglected (i.e., team effort and turnover intentions) and performance. Results indicated a positive association of identity leadership and team effort, individual/team performance, as well as a negative association of identity leadership and turnover intentions. Team identification mediated those relationships and was thus identified as an underlying mechanism.

Lastly, in Manuscript 4 we took a closer look at leaders' vision articulation from a social identity perspective. Based on the theoretical model by Stam, Lord, van Knippenberg, and Wisse (2014), the Vision Articulation Questionnaire (VAQ) was developed. Validation of the questionnaire was carried out across two cross-sectional studies (Study 1: $N = 191$; Study 2: $N = 350$). The final version consisted of 22 items for seven factors (i.e., Comprehensibility,

Self-Worth, Empowerment, Collective Values, Intermediate Goals, Promotion Focus, and Personalization).

In sum, the four manuscripts provide further evidence from various contexts that leadership based on principles derived from the social identity approach (Haslam et al., 2011; Stam et al., 2014; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987) is beneficial for followers and thus deserves further attention from scholars and practitioners alike.

Introduction

We all experience leadership. Most of us as followers; some of us as leaders as well. This experience is not limited to leadership in organizations. We can also experience leadership in our leisure time (e.g., in the context of sports) or simply as citizens of a country ruled by a government. The omnipresence of leadership in our lives makes it unsurprising that scholars have spent a great deal of time and energy over the last century on determining what “good” or “effective” leadership actually is (van Knippenberg, 2011). In a nutshell, one could say that leadership “is primarily about getting people to do things” (Haslam & Reicher, 2007; p. 128). But leadership is not only a common phenomenon – it is also a multi-billion industry. According to TrainingIndustry (2019), companies worldwide spent around \$3.4 billion in the development of their leaders in 2018. Why the vast expenditure? Existing evidence suggests that leadership has the potential to successfully enhance the well-being and performance of employees and thus ultimately also increases the profit of the organization itself (Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, 2003; Montano, Reeske, Franke, & Hüffmeier, 2017). But what exactly is *effective leadership*? The present dissertation aims to contribute to an answer to that question by examining leadership using a foundation in social psychological theory as explained in more detail below.

Past research has identified several leadership styles and behaviors that are associated with favorable outcomes such as performance and well-being of followers. Well-known examples of those behaviors or styles are transactional and transformational leadership (Bass, 1990; Judge & Piccolo, 2004), ethical leadership (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005) and authentic leadership (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). All of these leadership styles consist of some combination of “positive” leadership behaviors. Transformational leadership in particular has been the subject of extensive research over the last decades and has therefore been one of the most dominating conceptualizations of positive leadership (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). Transformational

leadership at its core consists of motivating followers to perform exceptionally and to work towards long-term organizational objectives, e.g., by communicating an attractive vision along with high expectations or being perceived as a charismatic role model (Felfe, 2006; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). However, despite its popularity, transformational leadership has recently faced substantial criticism. In their seminal work, van Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013) argued that transformational leadership lacks a clear and theoretically anchored conceptualization. They also contended that existing measures of transformational leadership suffer from methodological problems. Moreover, some scholars argue that the transformational leadership approach has not fully acknowledged the importance of group processes for the study of leadership and is at the core more focused on leaders as individuals (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011). This shortcoming is most relevant to the present work and its importance shall be explained in the following.

First of all, coming back to the omnipresence of leadership in our everyday lives, Reicher, Haslam, and Hopkins (2005) pointed out that whenever one refers to a leader, one also (at least implicitly) refers to a belonging group (e.g., a nation, an organization, a work or sports team). Thus, leadership in its essence seems to be inextricably linked with a “group”. Two particularly salient studies illustrate the importance of group processes in leadership. In their prison study conducted in 2001 in cooperation with the BBC, Reicher and Haslam (2006) investigated the behavior of 15 participants that were randomly assigned to one of two groups: guards (high-status) or prisoners (low-status). This study was a “remake” of Zimbardo’s classic Stanford Prison Experiment from 1971 (see e.g., Zimbardo, 1975), aiming to test predictions of social identity theory (Haslam & Reicher, 2007; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). One of the main findings of the research by Haslam and Reicher (2006) was that the guards’ identification with their own group decreased over the course of the study and they increasingly struggled to coordinate collective behavior. In contrast to that, the prisoners’ identification with their group increased along with their ability to work together effectively.

This increase/decrease in social identification was accompanied by an increase/decrease in group leadership, respectively (Haslam & Reicher, 2007). Finally, the prisoners were able to overthrow the regime of the guards (Reicher & Haslam, 2006). The BBC prison study therefore suggests that a shared group or social identity is a key component of the emergence and success of leadership (Haslam & Reicher, 2007; Steffens, 2012).

Another study that illustrates the importance of social identity for the success of leadership is one conducted by Steffens and Haslam (2013): The authors analyzed speeches of Australian Prime Ministerial candidates from 1901 until 2010 and found that in 80% of the analyzed elections the successful candidate used more collective pronouns (i.e., ‘us’ and ‘we’) than the losing candidate. Consequently, it seems that leaders who call upon a common social identity have more influence over followers and that feeling empowered to speak in the name of a collective and thus demonstrating ‘oneness’ is predictive of success in leadership (Haslam, Steffens, & Peters, 2019; Steffens & Haslam, 2013).

These studies identify that a common social identity is at the core of successful leadership. As Haslam et al. (2011) put it, “it is social identity that allows people both to lead and to be led” (p. 46). The *social identity approach to leadership* (Haslam et al., 2011) offers a theoretical framework to guide leadership scholars and thus expands a mostly descriptive literature (Haslam et al., 2019; van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). This body of literature explains not only *that* leadership is effective but also explains *why* that is the case (Haslam et al., 2019; Steffens, Franssen, & Haslam, 2020). Scholars are gathering more data that supports the claims of Haslam and colleagues and demonstrates positive relationships of *identity leadership* (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018) with relevant outcomes in both the organizational (e.g., van Dick et al., 2018) as well as in the sports context (e.g., Franssen, McEwan, & Sarkar, 2020). Even with these strides in the field, there is still work to do. More specifically, the present dissertation aims to contribute to the leadership and social identity literature by examining in more depth, (a) what relationships exist between

identity leadership and well-being, functioning and performance of followers in various contexts, (b) what the underlying mechanisms of these relationships are, (c) and how leaders can successfully communicate and contribute to a sense of ‘we-ness’ – even in times of crises.

Before looking at the manuscripts that are at the heart of this dissertation, I will first provide an overview of the most relevant theories, concepts and empirical results that form the foundation of the present work.

Theoretical and Empirical Background

The Social Identity Approach

Social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel and Turner, 1979) and *self-categorization theory* (SCT; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) constitute the *social identity approach*, whose basic notion is that people can think of themselves both as individuals (i.e., in terms of “I” or “me”; *personal identity*) and as group members (i.e., in terms of “we” or “us”; *social identity*) (Haslam, 2001; van Dick & Kerschreiter, 2016). The latter – people’s social identity – comprises aspects of one’s self-concept that are derived from one’s belongingness to certain groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). A group is defined by Tajfel and Turner (1979) as “a collection of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same social category, share some emotional involvement in this common definition of themselves, and achieve some degree of social consensus about the evaluation of their group and of their membership of it” (p. 40.). Whether people think of themselves as an individual or as a group member is contextually dependent and has the potential to significantly alter behavior. As Haslam, Fransen, Boen, and Reicher (2020) put it: “Social identity, then reflects the capacity for groups to be internalized into our sense of self (‘who we are’) so that in a wide array of contexts the way we see the world – and the way we behave within it – is not simply a reflection of our individuality but also of group memberships that we share with other people.” (p. 17).

Social Identity Theory (SIT). According to van Dick (2001; cf. Tajfel & Turner, 1979), the “psychological core of SIT” (p. 269) is that (1) individuals want to boost their self-esteem and have a positive self-concept; (2) the self-concept is partly derived from the social identity that is built upon one’s memberships in certain groups; (3) to achieve *positive* social identity, it is necessary that one’s own group is evaluated positively as compared with other relevant groups. These propositions hold under the conditions that the individual is identified

with a certain group to some extent and that this group membership has *salience* (i.e., psychological relevance) in the given situation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; van Dick, 2001).

Haslam et al. (2020) further summarized the key notions of SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) as follows: (a) group members' potential avenues to achieve a positive social identity are limited by the *social reality* and (b) how group members cope with these constraints is determined by the *perceived social structure*, that comprises the elements of *permeability* of group boundaries, *stability* and *legitimacy* of the position of one's ingroup compared to relevant outgroups. In other words: since people seek to maintain or achieve a positive self-concept and, as part of that, a positive social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), they employ different strategies to enhance their self-esteem depending on the given social context especially if they are members of low-status groups (cf. Haslam et al., 2020): If they perceive group boundaries to be *permeable* (i.e., they think leaving their group and joining another is possible), they will pursue *personal mobility* to try and join a higher-status group (e.g., an employee who leaves their organization to join a bigger one with a higher revenue). However, if group boundaries are perceived impermeable (e.g., employees cannot imagine quitting their job at an organization because they have worked there for 30 years), the group members might rather work collectively to try to change their low-status for the better. If the relations with other groups are perceived as *secure* (i.e., legitimate/just and stable/unlikely to change), *social creativity* strategies will be employed to alter the way in which the comparison with relevant groups takes place. For example, assume that a university professor perceives her university to have a lower status than the universities of her collaborators because the number of papers published per year is significantly lower at her university than at the universities of her collaborators. That professor could instead judge the universities' relative status by looking at the quality of teaching. This metric would enhance the perceived status of the own university relative to a comparison based on papers published. If relations to other groups are perceived as *insecure* (i.e., illegitimate/unjust or unstable/likely to change), the low-status

group would engage in *social competition*. A classic example for this is sports teams competing against each other to potentially enhance their relative status by winning games (cf. Haslam et al., 2020). These ideas are summarized in Figure 1 below.

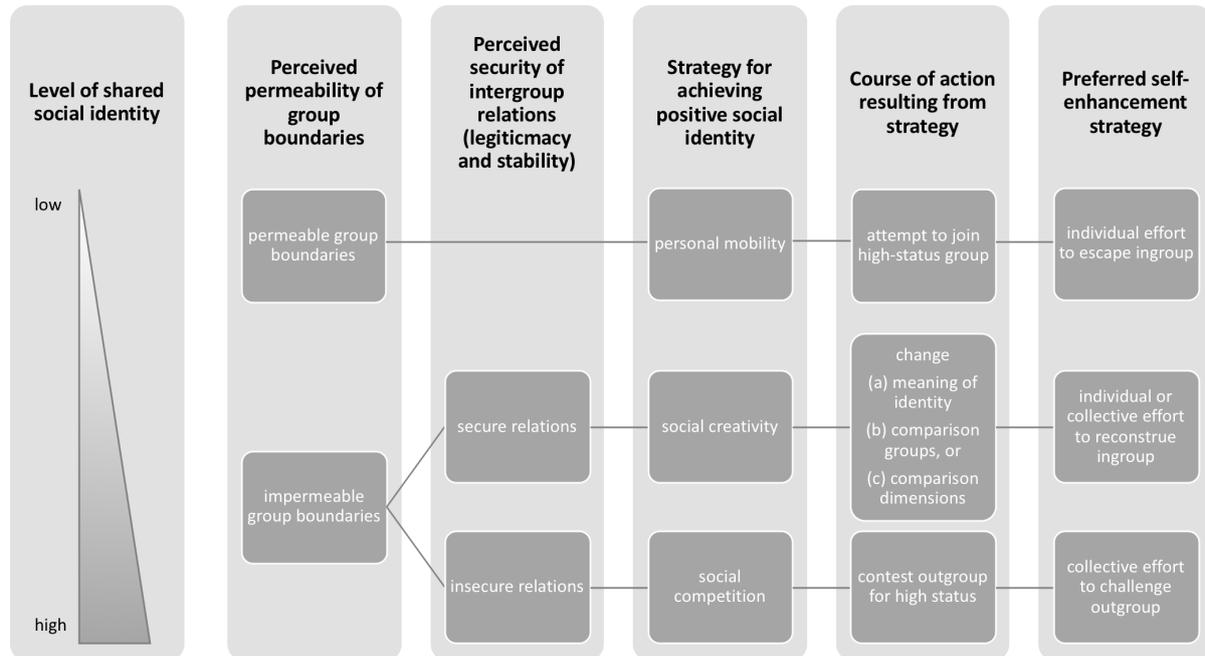


Figure 1. Predictions of SIT about social context and self-enhancement strategies (taken with permission from Haslam et al., 2020, p. 19)

Self-Categorization Theory (SCT). SCT extends and generalizes social identity theorizing (Haslam et al., 2020). At the core of SCT lies the process of *depersonalization* that is defined as “the process of ‘self-stereotyping’ whereby people come to perceive themselves more as the interchangeable exemplars of a social category than as unique personalities defined by their individual differences from others” (Turner et al., 1987, p. 50). In other words, depersonalization describes the process of no longer thinking about one’s self in terms of “I” (i.e., *personal identity*; Turner, 1982) but in terms of “we” (i.e., social identity) (Haslam et al., 2011). For depersonalization to happen, people must perceive themselves as sharing the same category with other people. This results in individuals recognizing their similarities (or differences) with other individuals which leads to “ingroup-outgroup categorizations” or

“social categorizations” (Turner et al., 1987, p. 45). As argued by Turner (1982), this process of depersonalization forms the basis for group behavior and makes the emergence of group behavior possible in the first place (see also Haslam et al., 2011). Collaboration and collective action become possible through depersonalization, since the group defines guiding principles (e.g., in terms of values, norms and interests) and ultimately what actions are taken in service of the group (Haslam et al., 2011). As Haslam et al. (2011) put it: “We only act as group members because, and to the extent that, we are able to think about ourselves as ‘we’ and not just ‘I.’” (p. 52).

Having examined the conditions leading to perceived group membership, the question then becomes: *when* do people categorize themselves as group members and *which* particular social identity becomes salient? As summarized by Haslam et al. (2011), SCT research suggests that this largely depends on the variables of *fit* and *readiness* (see also Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994). Fit consists of both *comparative* and *normative* fit (cf. Haslam et al., 2011). Comparative fit is the notion that people will define themselves in terms of a certain group when the perceived similarities between members of that group are larger than the perceived similarities with members of *other* groups that are present in a given context (i.e., *metacontrast principle*; Turner et al., 1987). For example, Harvard students, who also happen to be fans of the Boston Red Sox, would rather define themselves as ‘Harvard students’ when they are at a campus bar in Boston that is filled with both Harvard and MIT students wearing t-shirts of their alma mater. However, they would probably rather perceive themselves as ‘Red Sox fans’ when they are attending a baseball game at Fenway Park (because even if other Harvard and MIT students were around, these categories would not explain similarities and differences between people as well in the given context). Normative fit applies to the perceived *content* of the social categories in a given context. The normative fit (and thus the likelihood of social categorization) is higher when the content of the perceived categories matches the perceiver’s expectations (Haslam et al., 2011). In the given

example, this would imply that our fictitious Harvard students and Red Sox fans would be more likely to self-categorize themselves as Red Sox fans when the other Red Sox fans in the stadium behave accordingly (e.g., because they do not cheer when the opposing team scores).

Comparative and normative fit, however, are not the only determining factors for self-categorization. An individual's readiness to use a certain category (i.e., *perceiver readiness* or *accessibility*) also plays an important role (Haslam et al., 2011; Oakes et al., 1994). Whether a person is "ready" or not to use a particular category is largely determined by past experiences (Haslam et al., 2011). For example, a person would be more likely to categorize themselves as a 'psychologist' in a given situation if they had previously classified themselves in this way. This past *social identification* is thus an important determinant of a person's readiness to employ a particular social categorization (Haslam et al., 2020, 2011; Oakes et al., 1994). It is important to note that *social identity* and *social identification* are not the same things. Postmes, Haslam, and Jans (2013) discussed this issue and defined identification (in a Tajfelian' sense) as an individual's "*positive emotional valuation of the relationship between self and ingroup*" (p. 599), while social identity rather "refers to the group as a (perceived) entity" (p. 599), which implies some degree of social sharedness and consensus (Postmes et al., 2013). Lastly, future perceiver readiness is also increased by enacting the social identity in the present through establishing a record of social identification, which makes future salience of a particular social identity become more likely (Haslam et al., 2020; Oakes et al., 1994). The whole process of a social identity becoming salient is depicted in Figure 2 below.

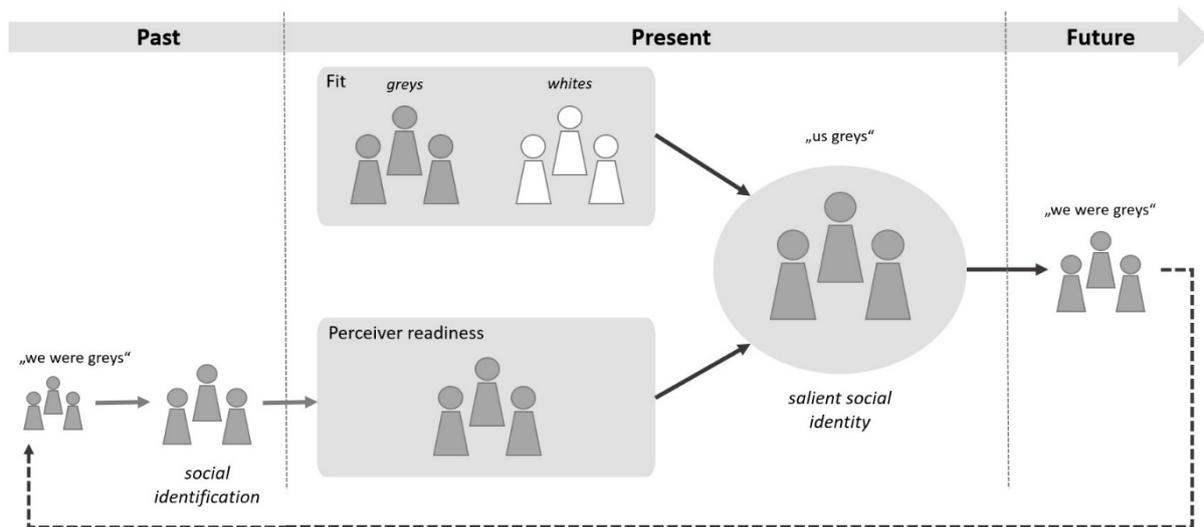


Figure 2. The importance of fit and perceiver readiness for salience of social identity according to SCT (adapted with permission from Haslam et al., 2020, p. 22)

Application of the social identity approach in organizational contexts. While SIT and SCT are universal social psychological theories, they are relevant to organizational contexts in general and to the study of leadership in particular, the latter of which is most relevant to the present dissertation.

Generally, people's identification with and membership in a certain group offers them access to a variety of psychological resources like social support (Haslam, O'Brien, Jetten, Vormedal, & Penna, 2005), a sense of meaningfulness (van Dick & Wagner, 2002) and control (Greenaway et al., 2015). It is because of these benefits that social identity "allows us to fulfill our potential as humans" (Haslam et al., 2019, p. 304). These group-related assets provide an explanation for the abundance of evidence establishing positive associations of team or organizational identification with key employee outcomes. As for empirical evidence for social identification in organizational contexts, Steffens, Haslam, Schuh, Jetten, and van Dick (2017) provided meta-analytical evidence for the positive association of team and organizational identification with employees' health (overall $r = .21$). Another meta-analysis by Lee, Park, and Koo (2015) found positive relationships between organizational

identification and different attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction) and behaviors (e.g., performance) of employees with an average corrected correlation of .41.

Moreover, it is important to note that there is not just *one* social identity in organizations. SCT (Turner et al., 1987) posits that self-categorization can happen on different, hierarchical levels, i.e., (1) the *subordinate level*: self-categorization as an individual (personal identity); (2) the *intermediate level*: self-categorization as a member of a certain group (social identity); (3) the *superordinate level*: self-categorization as a human being (human identity). This can be translated into the organizational context with one's career (subordinate level; personal identity), work teams or departments, the whole organization or one's occupation (intermediate level; social identity) as relevant levels of classification (van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher, & Christ, 2004; van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher, Christ, & Tissington, 2005). In the present dissertation the focus will be on lower-level categories on the intermediate level (i.e., teams). Van Dick et al. (2004) also empirically demonstrated that these different *foci* of identification exist and that they are associated with corresponding work-related behaviors and attitudes (e.g., team climate, job satisfaction).

Now what does this mean for leadership? Reicher et al. (2005) reformulated core assumptions from SCT to illustrate the importance of leadership for social identification in organizational contexts (p. 556):

1. Social identities provide the parameters of mass mobilization.
2. Who is included within a social category determines who will be mobilized.
3. The content ascribed to the social category will determine what they will be mobilized for.
4. The prototypes of the category will determine who will be in a position to direct the mobilization.

Following this line of thinking, by actively shaping social categories and defining the content of social identities, leaders are able to mobilize followers in organizations for the pursuit of collective goals. Not only will leaders succeed in mobilizing followers but followers as well will benefit from having strong ties to their team and organization as illustrated by the meta-analytic results presented above. But how can leaders act as “entrepreneurs of identity” (Reicher et al., 2005; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001) and thus be effective in their leadership activities? The *social identity approach to leadership* attempts to answer this question (Haslam et al., 2011).

The Social Identity Approach to Leadership

Identity leadership. Applying the insights from SIT and SCT to the context of leadership, Haslam et al. (2011) formulated the *social identity approach to leadership*. This approach posits that creation of a shared social identity among followers (i.e., a “sense of ‘we’ and ‘us’”; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014, p. 1003) is at the core of what constitutes effective leadership (Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014). More specifically, the authors argue that *identity leadership* comprises four dimensions of leadership behavior: (a) *identity prototypicality* (i.e., representing core qualities and attributes that make the group distinct from others), (b) *identity advancement* (i.e., promoting and championing the group’s interests and goals rather than personal or other groups’ concerns), (c) *identity entrepreneurship* (i.e., increasing group cohesion and fostering an understanding of what it means to be a group member by clarifying group values and norms), (d) *identity impresarioship* (i.e., providing opportunities for group members to meaningfully live out their shared identity by promoting and establishing events, structures, activities that make the group ‘physically real’, visible and allow it to function successfully) (Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014).

Informed by the work of Haslam et al. (2011), Slater et al. (2014) developed a model that orders the dimensions of identity leadership in hierarchical (i.e., temporal) order and

relates them to specific (leader) actions and outcomes. An adapted version of the authors' model is depicted in Figure 3.

Leader's vision and social identity. According to van Knippenberg and Stam (2014), a "vision" in the context of leadership is defined as "what is conceived and communicated by the leader in terms of an image of a future for a collective." (p. 243). Scholars have regarded vision communication as one crucial part of successful leadership (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). A leader's vision is forward looking and always concerned with the *collective* future (e.g., the future of a team or organization). This means that vision communication can be linked to the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011). More specifically, a vision provides a means for identity leaders to define the *content* of the social identity they are aiming to craft (e.g., in terms of values), which is why vision communication is closely related to *identity entrepreneurship* (Slater et al., 2014; Slater, Coffee, Barker, Haslam, & Steffens, 2019; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014). Vision may be a critical factor in helping identity leaders succeed in crafting a sense of 'we-ness' (cf. Haslam et al., 2011).

In their theoretical model, Stam et al. (2014) explain the basic mechanism underlying successful vision communication: by communicating a vision to their team or organization, a leader may induce followers' development of a *collective possible self* (i.e., "internalized self-images concerning the collective's future"; Stam et al., p. 1177). In other words, the leader paints a picture of how the team or the organization *might be* in the future. This picture is then internalized by followers and becomes part of their self-concept. The internalized possible self then leads to followers engaging in behavior that aims to make the future image of the team a reality. This behavior is referred to by Stam et al. (2014) as *vision pursuit* and can be considered the ultimate goal of successful vision communication. It is important to note here that the more this collective possible self is shared among followers, the more *collective* – instead of *individual* – vision pursuit is likely to happen (Stam et al., 2014). In Manuscript 1

we will take a closer look at *how* leaders can articulate their vision in a way that is successful in terms of actually fostering followers' vision pursuit.

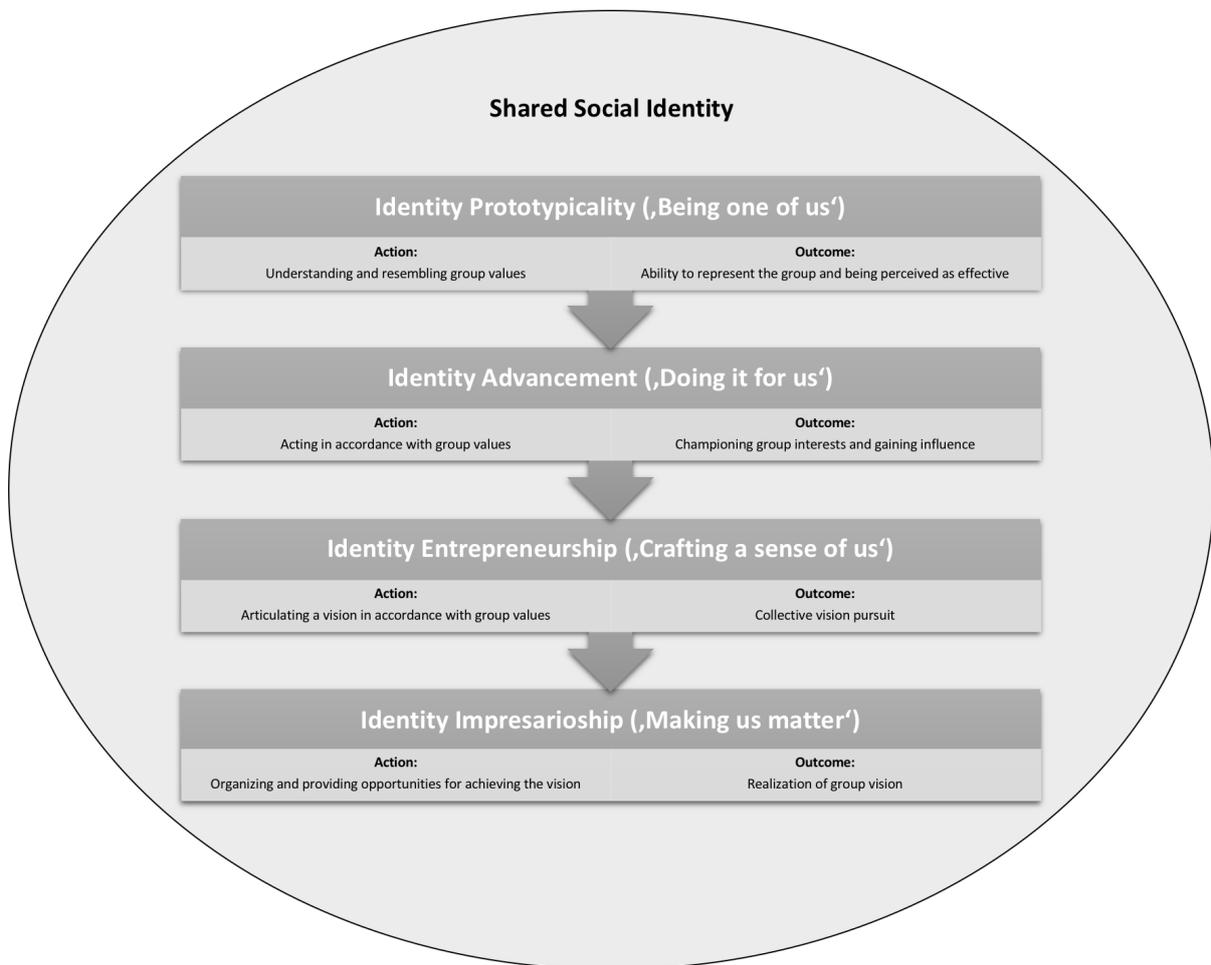


Figure 3. Hierarchical model of identity leadership (integration of figures adapted with permission from Slater et al., 2014, p. 680; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014, p. 1003).

The Present Research

A growing body of research has investigated the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011) in organizational (e.g., Steffens, Yang, Jetten, Haslam, & Lipponen, 2018; van Dick et al., 2018) as well as in sports and exercise contexts (e.g., Fransen, McEwan, et al., 2020; Stevens et al., 2018). The results so far look promising and have revealed positive associations between identity leadership and key indicators of well-being and performance of employees and athletes, respectively. For example, identity leadership in organizations is associated with higher job satisfaction (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018), and higher performance (in the sense of organizational citizenship behavior and innovation; van Dick et al., 2018). In the sports and exercise context, identity leadership has also been associated with higher athlete well-being, team functioning (Fransen, McEwan, et al., 2020) and performance (Stevens et al., 2019). However, several key questions still remain unanswered. The present research tries to answer some of them as outlined below.

- *What are the underlying mechanisms behind the positive associations between identity leadership and well-being as well as team functioning? (Manuscript 1 & Manuscript 3)*

- *How can leaders contribute to maintaining a sense of ‘we-ness’ in times of crises and what means of communication can leaders use to craft a shared identity? (Manuscript 2 & Manuscript 4)*

Manuscript 1: Identity Leadership and Well-being: Team Identification and Trust as Underlying Mechanisms

Citation: Krug, H., Geibel, H. V., & Otto, K. (accepted). Identity Leadership and Well-being: Team Identification and Trust as Underlying Mechanisms. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*.

Rationale and theoretical background. The positive relationship of social identification and health in organizational contexts is empirically well established (for a recent meta-analysis see Steffens et al., 2017) and is theoretically explained by the social identity approach and its conclusions about the positive effects of belonging to groups (see e.g., Haslam, Jetten, Postmes, & Haslam, 2009). The social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011) illustrates how leaders can create and strengthen a sense of ‘we-ness’ within their team. Although some studies have established positive associations of identity leadership and indicators of employee well-being (e.g., Steffens, Haslam, Kerschreiter, Schuh, & van Dick, 2014; van Dick et al., 2018), a thorough investigation of identity leadership and its relationship with employee well-being combined with the study of underlying mechanisms is still needed. The present research aims to address these gaps in the identity leadership literature across two studies.

Methods. Study 1 employed a cross-sectional online questionnaire including measures of identity leadership, team identification, trust in the leader and work-related well-being (i.e., job satisfaction, work engagement, burnout). The final sample comprised $N = 192$ employees (69.3% female; mean age = 35.93 years). A mediation model was tested with identity leadership as an independent, team identification and trust in the leader as mediating and the well-being outcomes as dependent variables.

Study 2 employed experimental vignette methodology (EVM, cf. Aguinis & Bradley, 2014) to provide causal evidence for the proposed effects of identity leadership on team

identification and trust in the leader. One of two vignettes was randomly presented to university students ($N = 72$) in a between-subjects design. The vignettes described a scenario of a job interview, containing a self-description of a fictitious leader that either displayed *high* or *low* identity leadership. Participants were afterwards asked to complete a questionnaire including measures of identity leadership (as a manipulation check), team identification and trust in the leader.

Results. In line with the hypotheses, Study 1 showed positive relationships of identity leadership and team identification, trust in the leader, job satisfaction, and work engagement as well as a negative relationship of identity leadership and burnout. In partial support of the hypotheses, team identification was also positively associated with job satisfaction and work engagement, but not with burnout. On the other hand, trust in the leader was negatively associated with burnout, but not with job satisfaction and work engagement. Accordingly, the indirect effect on job satisfaction and work engagement via team identification turned out to be significant. The indirect effect on burnout via trust in the leader was found to be significant as well.

In Study 2, results supported the proposed effect of high identity leadership on increased team identification and trust in the leader.

Discussion. The two studies provide further support for the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011) by demonstrating positive relationships between identity leadership and employees' well-being. Moreover, by establishing team identification and trust in the leader as proximal outcomes of identity leadership in organizational contexts and mediators of its effects on well-being, our research contributes to the understanding of the psychological mechanisms behind this novel approach to leadership.

Manuscript 2: Identity Leadership, Social Identity Continuity and Well-being at Work during COVID-19

Citation: Krug, H., Haslam, S. A., Otto, K., & Steffens, N. K. (submitted). Identity leadership, social identity continuity and well-being at work during COVID-19. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*.

Rationale and theoretical background. Social identity research concludes that being a member of groups generally has a positive effect on the health and well-being of people (e.g., Postmes et al., 2013; Steffens et al., 2017). Being a member of multiple groups further enhances well-being because people have even more access to psychological resources that are offered by groups (Jetten et al., 2015). The current COVID-19 pandemic, however, seems to be placing this well-being enhancing effect at risk by disrupting the ways in which our (occupational) social lives work (e.g., by making certain team activities impossible due to imposed social distancing measures). This disruption might endanger a group member's experience of social identity continuity in work-related group memberships. We therefore hypothesized that a reduction in perceived employees' social identity continuity would be associated with lower health and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, we suggested that leadership behaviors (by formal leaders and fellow team members) that specifically aim to build and maintain a sense of 'we-ness' (i.e., identity entrepreneurship and identity impresarioship) should foster this perceived continuity and through this the well-being of employees.

Methods. A cross-sectional online survey was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The final sample comprised $N = 363$ employees. Participants (mean age = 36.31; 68% female) completed measures of identity leadership (Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018), perceived social identity continuity at work (Haslam et al., 2008), and measures of well-being, i.e., job satisfaction (Baillod & Semmer, 1994), burnout

(Kristensen, Borritz, Villadsen, & Christensen, 2005; Nübling, Stöbel, Hasselhorn, Michaelis, & Hofmann, 2005), and loneliness at work (Ozcelik & Barsade, 2018).

Results. Structural equation modeling revealed that perceived social identity continuity was positively associated with job satisfaction and negatively associated with loneliness at work. The perceived social identity continuity was not significantly related to burnout. Thus, we found partial support for the hypothesis that perceived social identity continuity was associated with increased well-being of employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As for the mediation hypotheses, team members' identity entrepreneurship was associated with increased perception of social identity continuity and through this with higher job satisfaction and lower loneliness at work. All other proposed indirect effects turned out to not be significant.

Discussion. Our research supports the significance of social identity continuity in work-related group memberships for the well-being of employees in the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, results identified team members' identity entrepreneurship as an important contributing factor to this experience of continuity. Thus, organizations should pay close attention to their employees experience of a sense of 'we-ness' in times like the current and not solely rely on formal leaders to cultivate this perception.

Manuscript 3: Doing it for the Club: Soccer Coaches' Identity Leadership Predicts Players' Effort, Turnover Intentions, and Performance

Citation: Krug, H., Haslam, S. A., Otto, K., Safi, G., & Steffens, N. K. (submitted). Doing it for the Club: Soccer Coaches' Identity Leadership Predicts Players' Effort, Turnover Intentions, and Performance. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*.

Rationale and theoretical background. Recent studies in the sports and exercise context have provided some support for the positive associations of identity leadership and key outcomes like performance (for reviews, see for example Rees, Haslam, Coffee, & Lavalley, 2015; Steffens et al., 2020). However, we still have no information about identity leadership's relationship with team effort and turnover intentions as key indicators of team functioning. Moreover, *if* these relationships exist, we also do not know *how* they come about. We aimed to approach this lacuna by examining the associations of soccer coaches' identity leadership with player's team effort, turnover intentions and (as a more distal outcome) performance. Team identification was also investigated as a mediating variable of these effects.

Methods. A cross-sectional online study among male amateur soccer players was conducted. The final sample comprised $N = 247$ players that were nested in 24 soccer teams. The players rated their coaches' identity leadership, their own identification with their team, their team's effort, and their own intention to leave the team (i.e., turnover intentions). They also rated their own and their team's performance.

Results. In support of the hypotheses, multilevel regression analyses revealed positive associations between coaches' identity leadership and team effort, performance (individual and team) as well as a negative association between identity leadership and turnover intentions. Also in line with the hypotheses, players' team identification was found to act as a

mediator of these effects. However, the indirect effect on turnover intentions was only marginally significant.

Discussion. The results provide further support for the usefulness of the social identity approach to leadership in team sports contexts by demonstrating the positive association between coaches' identity leadership and team functioning via increased team identification of players. Thus, by focusing on building a sense of 'we-ness' coaches can foster their players' contribution to collective goals and enhance their team's cohesion.

Manuscript 4: How to Capture Leader's Vision Articulation? Development and Validation of the Vision Articulation Questionnaire (VAQ)

Citation: Krug, H., Schummer S. E., & Otto, K. (2020). How to capture leader's vision articulation? Development and validation of the Vision Articulation Questionnaire (VAQ). *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology, 4*, 135-154. doi: 10.1002/jts5.67

Rationale and theoretical background. While vision articulation has long been acknowledged as a pivotal element of successful leadership, existing measures are suffering from a range of methodological issues (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). To address these concerns, we developed the Vision Articulation Questionnaire (VAQ) comprising ten dimensions of effective vision articulation derived from theoretical work by Stam et al. (2014): Comprehensibility (e.g., “My leader expresses him-/herself clearly when he/she talks about the vision.”), Empowerment (e.g., “My leader highlights that we as a team can reach the vision on our own.”), Self-worth (e.g., “My leader values our team when he/she talks about the vision.”), Salience of Collective Values (e.g., “In the vision, my leader names the existing values in our team.”), Consistency of Collective Values (e.g., “My leader sees the vision in accordance with the existing values in our team.”), Relation to Intermediate Goals (e.g., “My leader emphasizes the change of our team goals in line with the vision.”), Change of Intermediate Goals (e.g., “My leader emphasizes the change of our team goals in line with the vision.”), Promotion Focus (e.g., “My leader highlights that our team will evolve through the implementation of the vision.”), Prevention Focus (e.g., “My leader highlights that we protect our team by implementing the vision.”), Personalization (e.g., “My leader points out the meaning the vision has for me personally.”).

Methods. Two cross-sectional studies were conducted to validate the VAQ. After developing items for the dimensions mentioned above and assessing their content validity, we started collecting data to examine factor structure, convergent, discriminant and criterion

validity. Study 1 ($N = 191$) first served factor retention and item reduction purposes.

Furthermore, factor structure, convergent and discriminant validity were examined and initial tests for criterion validity were employed. Study 2 ($N = 350$) aimed to corroborate the results from Study 1 and to extend its findings regarding criterion validity.

Results. In Study 1, factor retention and item reduction led to a revised seven-factor model comprising 22 items for the factors of Comprehensibility, Self-Worth, Empowerment, Collective Values, Intermediate Goals, Promotion Focus, and Personalization. The seven-factor model was supported by confirmatory factor analyses. Correlations with vision-related leadership styles (i.e., transformational leadership, identity leadership) suggested convergent and discriminant validity. Positive correlations (and to some extent partial correlations) with team identification, affective commitment, satisfaction with the leader, and vision pursuit¹ indicated criterion validity. Lastly, the VAQ had unique effects on the investigated outcomes (except affective commitment) beyond transformational leadership, suggesting incremental criterion validity.

Results of Study 2 corroborated the good fit of the revised seven-factor model of the VAQ. As for criterion validity, positive correlations with the outcomes of Study 1 were replicated. Furthermore, positive correlations with other vision-related employee outcomes (i.e., occupational self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and innovative work behavior) were established. Moreover, partial correlations now showed more unique relationships between the VAQ subscales and the examined outcomes.

Discussion. The two studies provide support for the validity of the final 22-item version of the VAQ in terms of factor structure (revised seven-factor model), convergent, discriminant and criterion validity. The VAQ thus accomplishes an important objective in the

¹ To measure vision pursuit as a central outcome of effective vision articulation, we developed a 7-item scale with two subdimensions of vision pursuit (persistence: e.g., “I am ready to actively contribute to the achievement of the vision for a longer period of time.”; flexibility: e.g., “I develop new ideas on how I can contribute to the achievement of the vision.”). For more information see Manuscript 4.

visionary leadership literature by providing scholars with a comprehensive and methodologically sound tool to measure leader's vision articulation based on a solid theoretical framework (see Stam et al., 2014). More research is needed, however, to further test the validity of the proposed measure, e.g., by examining *collective* vision pursuit and thus accounting for the multilevel nature of vision in organizational contexts (cf. Stam et al., 2014).

General Discussion

Social identity and group processes lie at the core of the emergence and success of leadership as described in more detail above. Consequently, the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011) has stimulated an abundance of research in organizational and sports contexts alike (for a review see Steffens et al., 2020). However, key questions have not been answered and therefore, the present dissertation aimed to contribute to this emerging stream of research in various ways.

Manuscripts 1 and 3 were concerned with the relationship between identity leadership and well-being as well as team functioning outcomes and the underlying mechanisms of those relationships. More specifically, Manuscript 1 examined the underlying mechanisms behind the positive relationship of identity leadership and employees' well-being, using a cross-sectional online study (Study 1) along with an experimental vignette study (Study 2). Results of Study 1 supported the positive association of identity leadership with team identification, trust in the leader, job satisfaction, and work engagement as well as the negative association with burnout. Moreover, the indirect effects on job satisfaction and work engagement via team identification along with the indirect effect on burnout via trust in the leader reached significance. The causal relationship between identity leadership and team identification and trust in the leader was established in Study 2. Manuscript 1 aligns with previous research in the organizational context that has found positive associations between identity leadership and well-being (e.g., Steffens, Haslam, Kerschreiter, et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018) and extends previous research in organizational contexts by providing support for team identification and trust in the leader as underlying mechanisms and especially by establishing the causal relationship between identity leadership and mediating variables.

Manuscript 3 investigated soccer coaches' identity leadership and the relationship between identity leadership and team functioning. A cross-sectional online questionnaire was distributed among male soccer teams. Results supported the positive relationship between

identity leadership and team effort as well as individual and team performance. Moreover, a negative relationship between coaches' identity leadership and turnover intentions was found. Again, increased team identification was confirmed as the underlying mechanism. Manuscript 3, extends previous work on identity leadership in sports (e.g., Fransen, McEwan, et al., 2020; Miller, Slater, & Turner, 2020; Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, et al., 2014; Stevens et al., 2020, 2019) by investigating team effort and turnover intentions as key indicators of team functioning that have not previously been investigated.

The second set of research questions was concerned with how leaders can contribute to a sense of 'we-ness' in times of crises and what specific means of communication they can use to craft a shared identity. More precisely, Manuscript 2 focused on the relationship between perceived social identity continuity at work and the well-being of employees during times of crises. It also examined how identity leaders (both formal and informal) can contribute to that sense of continuity. A cross-sectional online study was employed during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Results supported a positive association between experienced social identity continuity and well-being at work in terms of higher job satisfaction and lower loneliness at work. However, it is important to note that we did not find a significant relationship between social identity continuity and burnout of employees. One reason for that might be that other factors are more important for this particular outcome in the context of COVID-19 such as childcare duties or job insecurity, while job satisfaction and loneliness are closer to the leader's and the team's impact. Furthermore, identity entrepreneurship enacted by fellow team members were found to be related to an increase in employees' social identity continuity. Consequently, an indirect effect of team members' entrepreneurship on job satisfaction and loneliness via perceived continuity of social identity was also supported. Our results therefore align with previous findings that advocate the health-promoting effect of having multiple important group memberships (Jetten et al., 2015) and maintaining them during life changing events (e.g., recovery from a stroke: Haslam et al., 2008; entering

retirement: Steffens, Jetten, Haslam, Cruwys, & Haslam, 2016). In a similar vein, the current COVID-19 pandemic can also be regarded as a life-changing event, since it has been accompanied by many and fundamental changes in our everyday lives. Our results provide organizations with guidance on how to foster their employees' well-being: focus on maintaining a sense of 'we-ness' at work. Moreover, organizations should especially rely on and encourage their informal leaders (i.e., team members without formal leadership roles) to craft that 'we-ness'. In demonstrating the positive association of team members' identity entrepreneurship and well-being our work extends previous research that has revealed a positive association between formal leader's identity entrepreneurship and well-being (Steffens, Haslam, Kerschreiter, et al., 2014).

Ultimately, Manuscript 4 was concerned with the comprehensive measurement of leader's vision articulation from a social identity viewpoint. As a means to craft a shared social identity, vision articulation can also be considered an element of identity leadership (see e.g., Slater et al., 2014). The Vision Articulation Questionnaire (VAQ) was developed based on a theoretical model for vision communication by Stam et al. (2014) and validated across two cross-sectional online studies. In its final form the questionnaire comprises 22 items for seven factors (i.e., Comprehensibility, Self-Worth, Empowerment, Collective Values, Intermediate Goals, Promotion Focus, and Personalization). The VAQ addresses a lacuna in the visionary leadership literature, since well-founded instruments to comprehensively capture leader's vision articulation have been missing so far (van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013; van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014).

Strengths and Limitations

The research included in this dissertation has several key strengths as well as a number of limitations. As for strengths, the presented research is theoretically well-founded in the social identity approach (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987). More specifically, Manuscript 4 is based on a theoretical framework of vision communication by Stam et al.

(2014). The other manuscripts that investigate identity leadership (Steffens et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018) are informed by the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011). One could argue that sound theoretical foundation is not a strength but rather a necessary condition for psychological research. However, past research in the study of leadership has often neglected a sound theoretical conceptualization (van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013).

Moreover, two of the manuscripts employed multi-study investigations to answer the research questions at hand (Manuscript 1, Manuscript 4), which provides for a thorough and nuanced examination of the questions. Manuscript 1 even goes beyond a simple multi-study investigation of the relationship between identity leadership and employee well-being: By conducting the first experimental vignette study focusing on identity leadership in general to the best of our knowledge, we were also able to draw causal inferences about the association of identity leadership with team identification and trust in the leader.

Furthermore, the present dissertation is not limited to a single context, which contributes to the generalization of the results. More specifically, social identity-focused leadership was not only investigated in the organizational context (Manuscript 1, Manuscript 2, Manuscript 4), but also in a team sports context (Manuscript 3). Manuscript 2 also provided for a different context by specifically investigating identity leadership, work-related social identity continuity, and well-being in the times of the current COVID-19 pandemic. This last point in particular offers new theoretical perspectives: we adapted the measurement of identity impresarioship (cf. Steffens et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018) to the novel – more virtual – work context that many employees faced or are still facing during the COVID-19 pandemic due to home office arrangements or other spatial distancing measures. Specifically, we rather measured “virtual impresarioship”. This adaptation might be useful in future studies on identity leadership – not only during the COVID-19 pandemic but also beyond, e.g., in studies on leadership in virtual teams (cf. Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014).

Lastly, Manuscript 3 is among the few studies that have investigated identity leadership by using field data from multiple teams (for an exception in the sports context see Fransen, McEwan, et al., 2020). As explained in the Introduction, leadership is inseparably linked with group processes. This makes it necessary to study leadership in a way that accounts for the group-level structure of the data, which we were able to do in Manuscript 3.

However, Manuscript 3's focus on group level structure also constitutes the first limitation of the present dissertation. While we were able to account for the team structure of the data in Manuscript 3, we were not able to model the proposed relationships on Level-2 (team level) due to the rather small number of Level-2 units (< 30 teams). This is a much needed extension of the present research given the multilevel nature of the construct under investigation. *Social* identity per definition refers to a group level phenomenon (Postmes et al., 2013). As such, there has to be modeling on Level-2 to fully understand the relationships and underlying processes. This will be further discussed in the future research section.

Another limitation of the present dissertation is the use of self-report data only. This may lead to an artificial inflation of the relationships (cf. van Dick et al., 2018). Future research could attend to this issue by also taking other sources of information into account (e.g., objective performance or health data from followers or performance ratings by supervisors, cf. van Dick et al., 2018).

Finally, the present research mostly employed cross-sectional data collections, which makes causal interpretation largely impossible. While Manuscript 1 also used experimentally gathered data and delivered causally interpretable results, the results only concerned the relationship of identity leadership and the proposed mediators (i.e., team identification and trust in the leader). Thus, longitudinal research with at least three points of measurement and further experimental investigations are needed to fully explore the proposed causal relationships and mediation models. For the present research, two points of measurement were planned for Manuscript 3 to be able – at least to some extent – to attribute variance in

performance over the course of the season to the coaches' identity leadership. However, the restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic ended the soccer season abruptly and interfered with our longitudinal design. Especially with regards to well-being, diary studies could also be employed to gather more data about the influence that the daily experience of identity leadership has on the well-being of followers.

Avenues for Future Research

As mentioned briefly above, there is a need for an investigation of the multilevel nature of social identity processes. On a basic theoretical level, social identity is a group-level phenomenon that refers to *shared* perceptions of a certain collective (Postmes et al., 2013). To fully examine the theoretically proposed relationships there needs to be a consideration of data from whole groups. This would allow that sharedness to be *measurable*. Specifically, in the context of leadership research, this would require the use of data from whole teams or organizations that allow for the statistical analyses of the relationships of question on a group level. In their theoretical paper on vision communication, Stam et al. (2014) refer to (collective) vision pursuit as the central outcome of successful vision communication. They describe the process of how individual perceptions of the possible selves created through the leader's vision become shared among group members. This process then leads to group behavior in the sense of collective vision pursuit. In order to investigate the leadership processes that foster this sharedness of followers' perception and to measure collective behavior like collective vision pursuit, future research should employ multilevel data collections that allow for this kind of analysis.

Another research lacuna that deserves further scholarly attention is that of *multiple group memberships* and how leaders can best address membership in multiple groups. We know from social identity research that memberships in multiple important social groups contribute to one's well-being by offering more group-related psychological resources (Haslam et al., 2008; Jetten et al., 2015; Steffens et al., 2016; see also Manuscript 2).

However, while belonging to multiple social groups generally seems to benefit group members, this imposes practical challenges for leaders. For example, think of a soccer coach who has to manage a team and must juggle not only his players' membership in the soccer club, but also their membership in other groups. As players are most likely members of other social groups that are important to them (e.g., their family, a group of friends, another sports team, a music group), this multi-group membership might pose a challenge to their membership in the soccer team. For example, they might not be able to attend every single practice because their other groups require them to be someplace else. The soccer coach then might be inclined to urge players not to pursue their memberships in other groups all too much in order to maintain a functioning soccer team. However, memberships in other groups might be exactly the thing that players would need – and might want – for their well-being. One could argue that the players' memberships in other important social groups should also enhance their performance on the soccer field through enhancing the players' well-being. This would not only be beneficial for the individual player but also for the team as a whole (for the link between well-being and performance see for example Steffens, Haslam, Kerschreiter, et al., 2014). In other words, if multiple identities are important for psychological functioning, then a key task of leaders is not only to cultivate a sense of 'us' within the team they lead (as identity leadership suggests), but also to promote their members' engagement with multiple groups that are important to their sense of self.

But how can leaders actually cope with the challenge of multiple group memberships? And what consequences does this *management* of multiple group memberships really have on followers – not only in the team sports context? To tackle this question and close this gap in the literature, we developed the *Leader Promotion of Multiple Group Membership (LPMGM)* scale to measure leader's management of multiple group memberships (Krug, Haslam, Otto, & Steffens, in preparation). This questionnaire comprises items to measure coaches' or team captains' *encouragement of players' multi-group memberships* (e.g., "My coach/captain

encourages me to be a member of different groups other than my sports team.”) as well as items to measure coaches’/captains’ *facilitation of compatibility between multi-group memberships* (e.g., “My coach/captain helps me to think about how my membership in other groups is beneficial for me as a member of this sports team.”). While this scale is still under development and has not been validated yet, it might provide scholars with a valuable tool to study the impact of leaders’ promotion of their followers’ memberships in multiple social groups. The questionnaire was developed for the team sports context but could also easily be adapted to the organizational context to provide a starting point for a range of studies that could further advance research on multi-group memberships and leadership in organizational as well as sports contexts.

In organizational contexts, too, memberships in multiple groups could pose challenges for leaders and followers alike. A different stream of research has already started to explore multi-group membership in the organizational context: O’Leary and Woolley (2011) have developed a seminal theoretical model that proposes consequences of employees’ *multiple team memberships* (MTM; i.e., simultaneously being a member of more than one work team), which has stimulated a growing body of research (e.g., Crawford, Reeves, Stewart, & Astrove, 2019; van de Brake, Walter, Rink, Essens, & van der Vegt, 2018). However, little is known about the implications MTM has for leadership and studies that investigate MTM and leadership are rare (for exceptions see e.g., Chen, Smith, Kirkman, Lemoine, & Farh, 2018). Since the phenomenon of MTM becomes increasingly prevalent in modern organizations (O’Leary & Woolley, 2011), further scholarly investigation seems all the more necessary. Adopting a social identity perspective might provide a valuable theoretical foundation for future studies that could lead to an integration of organizational and social psychological research streams. An example of how this might be done can be seen in a recent study on MTM by Rapp and Mathieu (2019). The authors used SIT to advance MTM theory and

develop a multilevel model that includes the concept of *parallel identities* (i.e., an individual's simultaneous identification with multiple teams that are not hierarchically nested).

Additionally, future research on identity leadership should further explore the role of *shared leadership* given the group-level nature of social identity. In organizational and sports leadership research, there has been a trend towards shared (i.e., less hierarchical) models of leadership that have shown positive associations with relevant outcomes like team effectiveness or performance (D'Innocenzo, Mathieu, & Kukenberger, 2016; Mertens et al., 2020; Wang, Waldman, & Zhang, 2014). Shared leadership can be understood as “an emergent and dynamic team phenomenon whereby leadership roles and influence are distributed among team members” (D'Innocenzo, Mathieu, & Kukenberger, 2016, p. 1968). In Manuscript 2 we investigated the role of identity entrepreneurship and identity impresarioship enacted by fellow team member. As described above, we were able to demonstrate the positive association between team members' identity entrepreneurship and employees' group-membership continuity and through this with increased well-being. In the sports context, Fransen, Vanbeselaere, De Cuyper, Vande Broek, and Boen (2014) noted that also athletes without a formal leadership role in the team can significantly influence others and thus act as a leader. Consequently, Fransen, McEwan, et al. (2020) have recently been able to demonstrate unique effects of the identity leadership of coaches, team captains and – especially – athlete (i.e., informal) leaders on players' team identification and through this with team functioning and well-being. Future research in both organizational and sports contexts should further engage in the study of shared leadership and for example compare shared *identity* leadership with other forms of shared leadership, since meta-analytic research by Wang et al. (2014) suggested that it matters *what* kind of leadership is shared among team members. This comparison could also be done for the subdimensions of identity leadership – similar to our approach in Manuscript 2 – and for different outcomes (e.g., performance, well-being, attitudes).

Lastly, future research endeavors could also investigate personality traits as moderating variables of identity leadership. In other words: Is identity leadership an equally effective leadership style for all kinds of people? Although evidence does speak in favor of the generally positive impact of the belongingness to groups as outlined above, it could be the case that people with certain characteristics tend to benefit more or less from leadership behaviors that focus on the group. He and Brown (2013), for example, have pointed out in their review that there is little research on the influence of employees' personality on their prospective organizational identification. The authors argue that employees with high agreeableness scores could possibly identify more with their organization because they tend to accept and agree with organizational or leadership practices. On the other hand, employees with high scores on neuroticism might tend to have lower organizational identification due to more experienced negative emotions at work. These propositions could be studied in relation to identity leadership to find out whether this form of leader behavior might be more effective for employees with certain personality traits (e.g., highly agreeable employees).

Practical Implications

Given the results of the present dissertation, it seems appropriate to recommend that organizations (and sports teams alike) invest in the development of the "social identity abilities" of their leaders in accordance with the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011). An answer for how organizations can actually do this is provided by Haslam et al. (2017). The authors developed the *5R program* that aims to foster identity leadership by guiding leaders through five consecutive workshops: (1) *Readying* (i.e., understanding the importance of social identity for leadership), (2) *Reflecting* (i.e., identifying relevant work-related group memberships of team members), (3) *Representing* (i.e., clarifying what the group is about, e.g., in terms of values), (4) *Realising* (i.e., developing strategies to bring the shared social identity – as defined in the previous phase – into reality), (5) *Reporting* (i.e., progress monitoring and troubleshooting). Unlike other leadership development

programs the 5R program requires leaders to actively engage with their team after each workshop to jointly work on the required steps and activities (Haslam et al., 2017).

The present dissertation also suggests, however, that organizations should not only focus on the development of their *formal* leaders. They should rather also focus on the development of their *informal* leaders in the sense of shared leadership (as explained above) to booster a shared social identity within the team (cf. Manuscript 2). In the sports context, Fransen and colleagues designed the 5R Shared Leadership Program (5R^S; Fransen, Haslam, et al., 2020) that aims to foster shared leadership in the team by employing social network analysis to find the best team members for certain leadership roles (see also Mertens et al., 2020). These leaders are then trained to foster a shared social identity within the team according to the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011). Initial experimental evidence suggests that the program is effective in improving the identity leadership skills of athlete leaders, enhancing the team identification of team members along with improving athletes' well-being and maintaining their motivation and commitment (Mertens et al., 2020). However, there is still work to do. For example, so far there is only evidence from eight basketball teams and no proof yet that the 5R^S program has an effect on actual performance (cf. Mertens et al., 2020). Future research could examine the 5R^S program in different contexts (i.e., other team sports) and use other measures for performance (e.g., objective performance indicators) to further explore its effectiveness. Moreover, the 5R^S could also be adapted to be used and evaluated in organizational contexts.

More generally, the present dissertation aims to raise practitioners' awareness that *social identity matters* and that leadership is a powerful tool to forge meaningful group identities. In times like the present, where absence from work due to mental illnesses has reached an historic high (DAK, 2020), the positive effect of social identity on well-being should be recognized and fostered by organizations (see e.g., Postmes, Wichmann, van Valkengoed, & van der Hoef, 2019). Organizations and practitioners should also be made to

realize that leadership has the potential to foster well-being (Haslam et al., 2019). In line with previous research (e.g., Steffens, Haslam, Kerschreiter, et al., 2014), the present dissertation offers support for the role that social-identity focused leadership plays in enhancing the well-being of followers – while also enhancing their performance.

Conclusion

The present dissertation has demonstrated multi-faceted support for the value of social-identity focused leadership not only in organizational but also in sports context, for improving team functioning and performance as well as enhancing well-being, and even in times of crises like the current COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, this dissertation is meant to encourage scholars and practitioners alike to further explore the capacities – but also the limitations – of social identity processes in the study and application of leadership.

To conclude this dissertation, let us loop back to the excerpt from Rudyard Kipling's poem "The Law of the Jungle" at the beginning of this dissertation: "For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack." (Kipling, 1994). Phil Jackson, arguably one of the most successful coaches in the history of the NBA, wrote in his book "Eleven Rings: The Soul of Success" (Jackson & Delehanty, 2013) that Kipling's poem inspired him to make this line the motto of his team, the Chicago Bulls, during their successful season of 1990-91. This resonates well with the social identity approach to leadership and the very core of what this dissertation is about: Kipling frames the pack (the 'we' instead of the 'I', the social instead of the personal identity) as the strength of each individual. However, in order to function as an asset for individuals, the 'we' has to have a psychological reality as proposed by social identity and self-categorization theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987). To create this psychological reality in the sense of a shared social identity, leaders as entrepreneurs of identity (Reicher et al., 2005; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001) are needed.

After all, we should thus make it our business to make the 'we' matter.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Manuscript 1

Appendix B: Manuscript 2

Appendix C: Manuscript 3

Appendix D: Manuscript 4

Appendix E: Lebenslauf inkl. Publikationsliste

Appendix F: Eidesstattliche Erklärung des Verfassers

Appendix A: Manuscript 1

**Identity Leadership and Well-being: Team Identification and Trust as Underlying
Mechanisms**

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Title

Identity Leadership and Well-being: Team Identification and Trust as Underlying
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Running Head

Identity Leadership and Employees' Well-being

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Structured Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the present research was to examine the impact of identity leadership on employees' well-being mediated by team identification and trust in the leader.

Design/methodology/approach: In Study 1, $N = 192$ employees participated in a cross-sectional online survey measuring identity leadership, team identification, trust in the leader, and well-being (i.e., job satisfaction, work engagement, burnout). In Study 2, $N = 72$ university students participated in a vignette-study that manipulated high/low identity leadership and tested its effect on team identification and trust in the leader.

Findings: In Study 1, identity leadership predicted higher team identification, trust in the leader, and well-being of employees. Team identification mediated the positive relationship of identity leadership with both job satisfaction and work engagement, while trust in the leader mediated the negative relationship of identity leadership with burnout. In Study 2, team identification and trust in the leader were significantly higher in the high identity leadership condition.

Research limitations/implications: The findings are consistent with the few existing studies on the positive effects of identity leadership. However, due to the correlational nature of the data in Study 1 future longitudinal field research is needed to support the current findings and further establish causality for the model as a whole.

Practical implications: Identity leadership seems to be promising to increase well-being among employees. Thus, leadership development programs to foster identity leadership and collective identity should be implemented in organizations and further tested with respect to well-being.

Originality/value: This research contributes to an emerging body of research on the social identity approach to leadership and supports the recent claims that social identity might be one of the links between leader behavior and well-being of employees. Moreover, this study is

among the first to investigate and experimentally test the underlying mechanisms of identity leadership.

Keywords: Identity leadership, social identity, team identification, trust in the leader, well-being, mediation

Article classification: Research paper

Introduction

The study of identity processes has become one dominant topic in leadership research (Epitropaki et al., 2017). One approach to leadership and identity has derived from social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) and self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987) and is known as the *social identity approach to leadership* (Epitropaki et al., 2017; Haslam et al., 2020). The core notion of this approach is that leadership can only fully be understood if group processes (e.g., in a team or organization) are considered (Haslam et al., 2020). Employees and leaders are seen as members of the same group and thus share a collective identity (Epitropaki et al., 2017). Thus far, research on leadership has widely neglected the fact that leadership is happening in the context of group membership with the leader being a member of that group (van Knippenberg and Hogg, 2003). Therefore, the aim of this study is to contribute to the growing body of research adopting the social identity approach to leadership and to illuminate how identity-focused leader behavior is beneficial for employees by exploring its link with employees' well-being.

High identification of employees with their organizations or teams generally has a positive impact on individual (e.g., work-related attitudes, well-being) and organizational (e.g., performance) outcomes (van Dick and Kerschreiter, 2016). In their social identity approach to leadership Haslam et al. (2020) describe how leaders can build strong shared identities among group members. The authors specify four components of leader behavior, i.e., being a prototypical representative of the group, being a “champion” for the group and working towards collective interests, engaging in identity entrepreneurship and actually constructing a collective identity, and lastly embedding this social identity in real life structures of the group. While a number of studies exists on the effects of leader prototypicality on employees (e.g., Cicero, Pierro and van Knippenberg, 2007), studies comprising the other aspects of identity-related leadership are rare (van Dick and Kerschreiter, 2016).

The idea of considering group processes in the study of leadership, though, is not entirely new. In the study of charismatic-transformational leadership, which has been the most dominant view in leadership research (van Knippenberg and Sitkin, 2013), numerous studies have also focused on group processes (e.g., team climate), collective identification and related (mediating) mechanisms of leader's effectiveness (for a review cf. van Knippenberg and Sitkin, 2013). However, the approach proclaimed by Haslam and colleagues has the potential to exceed what already exists in leadership research. The authors argue that transformational leadership still focuses more on the leader as an individual with "the right (transformational) stuff" (Haslam et al., 2011, p. 42). Charismatic or transformational leadership research does, for example, not acknowledge that leaders themselves are members of the group (i.e., the role of leader prototypicality, van Knippenberg and Hogg, 2003). Furthermore, the social identity approach to leadership now offers a sound theoretical framework explaining *why* leadership has a positive impact on employees (Haslam, Steffens, and Peters, 2019) and thus goes beyond existing leadership research that is often lacking a strong theoretical model to guide research (Haslam et al., 2019; van Knippenberg and Sitkin, 2013).

What is missing to date, though, is sufficient empirical foundation to support this new group-focused approach to leadership. While the social identity approach to leadership seems theoretically promising, the number of studies empirically examining this new approach to leadership is limited so far (van Dick and Kerschreiter, 2016). To validate the effectiveness of a social-identity approach to leadership comprising more than just leader prototypicality, more empirical studies examining the impact of identity leadership on individual and organizational outcomes are needed.

In this paper, we will therefore explore how identity leadership (Steffens et al., 2014b) shapes employees' work-related well-being. Scholarly efforts over the last decades have demonstrated the importance of leadership behavior for the well-being of employees (cf. Skakon et al., 2010). With regards to identity leadership, however, the investigation of its

effect on well-being are still in its infancy (cf. Haslam et al. 2019). The thorough examination of identity leadership's impact on work-related well-being of employees thus seems necessary. In doing that we will also examine the mechanisms behind the impact of identity leadership on outcomes, i.e., investigating a possible mediation via team identification and trust in the leader. Team identification and trust in the leader were chosen as mediators since both constructs have been identified as the "proximal criteria" (van Dick et al., 2018, p. 7) that are sensitive to whether or not a leader has been successful in creating a shared identity. Both mediators have been identified as important for employees' well-being (e.g., Kelloway et al., 2012; Steffens et al., 2017). However, to the best of our knowledge, a mediation model examining the underlying mechanisms of identity leadership's positive impact on employees' work-related well-being has not been examined yet.

Thus, we contribute to the growing body of empirical research on the social identity approach to leadership without limiting the scope to leader prototypicality. Also by examining the impact of identity leadership on employees' well-being, the study is among the first to examine social identity as the link between leadership and well-being (cf. Haslam et al., 2019). Furthermore, by using the Identity Leadership Inventory (Steffens et al., 2014b) as a measure for identity leadership we also contribute to the further validation of the scale within a different sample and context.

The Social Identity Approach to Leadership

Leadership through the social identity lens is seen as "a social influence process that is structured by people's social group membership" (van Dick et al., 2018, p. 2). The theoretical basis of that conceptualization is to be found in the twin theories of social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) and self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987). The basic idea of the social identity approach is that people form their sense of self not only by adopting a personal identity (i.e., defining themselves as 'I' and thinking of what makes them special in comparison to other people), but also by adopting a social identity (i.e., defining themselves

as ‘we’ and thinking of what makes their group special in contrast to other groups) (van Dick et al., 2018). Steffens et al. (2014b) provided the first instrument to comprehensively measure leadership from a social identity perspective. The conceptualization of identity leadership by Steffens et al. (2014b) includes leader prototypicality in the sense of “being an exemplary and model member of the group” (p. 1003). Thus, the authors go beyond existing measures of leader prototypicality that focus more on the averageness of the leader, not taking into account their capacity to be *special* (Steffens et al., 2014b). Moreover, identity leaders according to the authors act as “ingroup champions” (Steffens et al., 2014b, p. 1004) and thus promote and defend group interest and goals advancing the group identity. Also identity leaders engage in identity entrepreneurship, thus creating “a shared sense of ‘we’ and ‘us’ within the group” (Steffens et al., 2014b, p. 1004), e.g., by clarifying group values and norms and thus making group members understand what the group actually stands for and generating group cohesion. Lastly, identity leaders promote structures and activities that make the group visible both to the members of the group itself and to other people, which represents a more “hands-on” facet of identity leadership (i.e., identity impresarioship). Identity impresarioship makes the group matter and allows group members to act as such.

Hypotheses Development

Identity leadership and team identification. Building a shared social identity is the core objective of identity leadership as described above. It is important to note that identification with a group (i.e., social identification) is not the same as a social identity (Postmes et al., 2013). While the latter “refers to the group as a (perceived) entity” (Postmes et al., 2013, p. 599), social identification refers to an *individual’s* identification with a group (i.e., an individual level phenomenon). Social identification (e.g., team identification) is a process “by which social identities are internalized” (Postmes et al., 2019, p. 111). Team identification thus can be seen as a criterion for whether or not a leader has been successful in building that shared social identity (van Dick et al., 2018). Theoretically it can thus be argued

that (successful) identity leadership leads to an increased team identification of employees. First empirical results investigating the effects of identity leadership in organizations support this assumption (Steffens et al., 2014b; van Dick et al., 2018).

Hypothesis 1: Identity leadership relates to higher team identification of employees.

Identity leadership and trust in the leader. As reasoned by van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003), people put trust in fellow members of their group since they pursue the same collective goals and interests. Therefore, leaders engaging in identity leadership and thus crafting a shared collective identity should be trusted more by employees since they show group-oriented behavior (cf. van Knippenberg and Hogg, 2003). In addition to group-oriented behavior, prototypicality itself should increase trust in the leader (van Knippenberg and Hogg, 2003). Prototypical leaders are perceived as trustworthy since employees believe that those leaders care for the group's interest (Giessner and van Knippenberg, 2008). As with team identification, previous empirical research on identity leadership could demonstrate positive relationships of identity leadership and trust in the leader (van Dick et al., 2018).

Hypothesis 2: Identity leadership relates to higher trust in the leader.

Identity leadership, team identification, trust in the leader and employees' work-related well-being. Work-related well-being of employees comprises both positive and negative emotional states according to the theoretical framework by Warr (1990, 2013). Warr's framework of affective well-being consists of four quadrants that encompass states of high or low pleasure and high or low activation (Mäkikangas et al., 2016; Warr, 1990, 2013). According to the review of Mäkikangas et al. (2016) the constructs of job satisfaction (low activation, high pleasure), work engagement (high activation, high pleasure), and burnout (low activation, low pleasure) fit the theoretical model of Warr and have also previously been investigated in longitudinal studies that were included in the review. Therefore, these three

constructs will be used in this study to thoroughly investigate the impact of identity leadership on work-related well-being of employees.

Haslam and Reicher (2006) could show in their BBC prison study that an increase in shared social identity decreased participants' stress level because they experienced more social support and thus a higher ability to cope with stressors. According to this, identity leadership with its core aim to construct a shared social identity among team members should buffer employees against stressors and thus contribute to their well-being. Indeed, the creation of a shared social identity has been identified as one of five possible pathways through which leadership can have a health-promoting effect on employees (Wegge et al., 2014). First empirical evidence supports this assumption: Steffens et al. (2014a) could, for example, demonstrate that identity entrepreneurship increased work engagement and reduced burnout of employees.

One possible mechanism underlying the positive impact of identity leadership is the identification with the own team. As proposed above, identity leadership should increase one's identification with their team. Team identification should then contribute to an increased well-being of employees. From a social identity standpoint, Steffens et al. (2019a) concluded from existing literature that a group identification has a positive impact on employees' well-being as "it provides the basis for a range of social and psychological resources including social support, a sense of meaning and purpose, and a sense of control over one's life" (p. 2). Recent meta-analytic evidence from two studies indeed speaks in favor of the identification-well-being hypothesis. Steffens et al. (2017) found an overall positive relation between team (and organizational) identification and individual health, while Postmes et al. (2019) found an overall negative relationship between social identification and depression. Also recent research in the sports context by Steffens (2019b) was able to identify group identification as a mediator of the effects of identity leadership. Van Dick and Schuh

(2010) also argued for the mediating role of employees' identification between leadership and job satisfaction.

Trust in the leader can be assumed as another underlying mechanism of the positive impact of identity leadership on employees' work-related well-being. As argued above, identity leadership should lead to higher trust in the leader among employees. In turn, trust should foster employees' work-related well-being. Dirks and Ferrin (2002) argued that low levels of trust lead to distress among employees since the leader has the power to influence the employees' jobs in a potentially negative way. According to the authors, this distress has further the potential to impair employees' attitudes. In their meta-analysis, the authors thus found positive relationships between trust in the leader and attitudinal outcomes (e.g., $r = .51$ with job satisfaction, $r = .49$ with organizational commitment). Dirks and Ferrin (2002) further argued that trust is to be seen as a mediator between leader behaviors and employee outcomes. Furthermore, Kelloway et al. (2012) identified trust as a mediator between transformational leadership and well-being of employees. They argued that trust in a leader has a positive impact on well-being "by limiting the perceived level of risk, vulnerability, and stress" (Kelloway et al., 2012, p. 42).

Hypothesis 3: Identity leadership positively relates to work-related well-being of employees.

Hypothesis 4: Team identification positively relates to work-related well-being of employees.

Hypothesis 5: Trust in the leader positively relates to work-related well-being of employees.

Hypothesis 6a-b: The positive relation of identity leadership with work-related wellbeing of employees is mediated through team identification (a) and trust in the leader (b).

The whole theoretical model is depicted in Figure 1.

-----Insert Figure 1 about here-----

The Present Research

In the present research we employed two studies to test the proposed relationships. First, a cross-sectional online study was used to test the overall model including the mediation hypotheses. Second, an online vignette study was used to experimentally test the casual link between identity leadership and the proposed mediators (i.e., team identification and trust in the leader).

Study 1

Methods

Sample and data collection. Participants were recruited online (e.g., via social media platforms) and by personally addressing employees in stores and providing them with a QR code for the link to the survey. The data was collected between July 2018 and January 2019. Participants received no compensation for their participation. After exclusion of 14 participants due to an unrealistically fast completion time of the questionnaire (<4 minutes) or with missings on all variables included in the hypotheses, the final sample consisted of $N = 192$ employees (69.3% female). Mean age was 35.93 years ($SD = 12.66$).

Measures. Identity leadership was measured using the 15 items of the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) by (Steffens et al., 2014b) in the German version by van Dick et al. (2018) on a scale from 1 = disagree completely to 7 = agree completely (e.g., “This leader is a model member of the team.”). Cronbach’s α was .98.

Team identification (i.e., the “positive emotional valuation of the relationship between self and ingroup”, Postmes et al., 2013, p. 599) was measured using an own translation of the Four Item Measure of Social Identification (FISI) by Postmes et al. (2013) on a scale from 1 = disagree completely to 7 = agree completely (e.g., “I identify with my team.”). Cronbach’s α was .88.

Trust in the leader was measured using an own translation of the six items by Podsakoff et al. (1990) on a scale from 1 = not at all true to 7 = completely true (e.g., “I have complete faith in the integrity of my leader.”). Cronbach’s α was .93.

Employees’ work-related well-being was operationalized by including measures for job satisfaction, work engagement and burnout according to the model of Warr (Mäkikangas et al., 2016; Warr, 1990, 2013). Job satisfaction was measured with a single item (Wanous et al., 1997; “How satisfied are you with your job as a whole?”) on a scale from 1 = very dissatisfied to 7 = very satisfied. Burnout was measured using the six items for personal burnout of the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) by Kristensen et al. (2005) in the German version by Nübling et al. (2005) on a scale from 1 = almost never/never to 5 = always (e.g., “How often do you feel tired?”). Cronbach’s α was .92. Work engagement was measured using the nine items of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) by Schaufeli et al. (2006) (e.g., “At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.”). Cronbach’s α was .93.

Data analysis. Prior to hypotheses testing, data was screened for multivariate outliers using Mahalanobi’s distance and studentized deleted residuals. For cases with values above the critical values, Cook’s distance was inspected to determine influential data points. No influential data points were found and thus no cases excluded. Data was further checked for linearity by inspecting scatterplots. Linearity can be assumed.

All hypotheses were tested using bootstrapping. Bias corrected bootstrapping was used for testing the mediation effects since this method shows the highest power in mediation analyses (Fritz and MacKinnon, 2007; Hayes and Scharkow, 2013). Mediation hypotheses were tested using the PROCESS macro for SPSS by Hayes (cf. Hayes, 2018).

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations for all used measures are displayed in Table 1. On a bivariate level, all variables were substantially related in the expected direction with each other.

-----Insert Table 1 about here-----

Identity leadership, team identification and trust in the leader (H1, H2).

Supporting H1 and H2, the regressions of team identification on identity leadership and of trust in the leader on identity leadership were significant as shown in Table 2.

Exploratory analysis of the subdimensions of identity leadership and their relationship with team identification and trust in the leader indicated that only identity entrepreneurship significantly predicted higher team identification ($b = .34, p = .009$) and only identity advancement significantly predicted higher trust in the leader ($b = .49, p < .001$).

-----Insert Table 2 about here-----

Identity leadership, team identification, trust in the leader and employees' work-related well-being (H3, H4, H5). Supporting H3, the regressions of employees' work-related well-being on identity leadership were all significant as shown in Tables 3. In partial support of H4, the regressions of job satisfaction and work engagement on team identification were significant, while the regression of burnout on team identification was not (see Table 3). The regression of burnout on trust in the leader was significant, while the regressions of job satisfaction and work engagement on trust in the leader were not (see Table 3). Thus, the results partially support H5.

Exploratory analysis of the subdimensions of identity leadership and their relationship with well-being outcomes indicated that when subdimensions were simultaneously included as separate predictors of job satisfaction none of the regression coefficients were significant. As for work engagement, only identity entrepreneurship turned out to be a (marginally) significant predictor ($b = .22, p = .06$). As for burnout, only identity advancement turned out to be a significant predictor ($b = -.18, p = .04$).

-----Insert Table 3 about here-----

Team identification and trust in the leader as mediators (H6a-b). Team identification was a significant mediator for the effect of identity leadership on job

satisfaction as well as for the effect on work engagement. Trust in the leader was a significant mediator for the effect of identity leadership on burnout. All other mediations turned out not to be significant. Results thus partially support H6a and H6b. For detailed statistics on the indirect effects see Table 4.

Exploratory analysis of the mediation effects with each of the subdimensions of identity leadership as a predictor variable (and all other subdimensions as control variables, respectively) indicated the following: The mediation effect on job satisfaction ($b = .10$, BCCI = .02, .23) and work engagement ($b = .10$, BCCI = .03, .21) via team identification was only found for identity entrepreneurship. The mediation effect on burnout via trust in the leader was only found for identity advancement ($b = -.08$, BCCI = -.17, -.01). Moreover, the mediation effect on work engagement via trust in the leader was now significant for identity advancement ($b = .07$, BCCI = .001, .17).

-----Insert Table 4 about here-----

Discussion

In line with the hypotheses, identity leadership proved to predict higher team identification and trust in the leader. As for work-related well-being of employees, identity leadership turned out to be a significant predictor for all outcomes. Team identification turned out to increase job satisfaction and work engagement, but did not reduce burnout of employees. In contrast, trust in the leader reduced burnout, but had no impact on work engagement, and job satisfaction. Finally, team identification mediated the effect of identity leadership on work engagement and job satisfaction, whereas trust in the leader mediated the effect of identity leadership on burnout.

Exploratory analyses further revealed, that identity entrepreneurship predicted higher team identification and thus higher job satisfaction and work engagement while identity advancement predicted higher trust in the leader and thus higher work engagement and lower burnout. A possible explanation for this might be that identity entrepreneurship refers to

actually creating a sense of ‘we-ness’ among the team (Steffens et al., 2014b) and is therefore the subdimension that is closest related to team identification. Identity advancement on the other hand might be closest related to trust since defending the interest of the team instead of pursuing personal interests (Steffens et al., 2014b) might be the most important aspect for creating a sense of security that is needed for interpersonal trust. Except for job satisfaction, the results are also widely in line with previous research concerning the relationships of the identity leadership subdimensions with outcomes (cf. van Dick et al., 2018).

Study 2

In order to be able to make causal inferences about identity leadership’s impact on team identification and trust in the leader, we used experimental vignette methodology (EVM, cf. Aguinis and Bradley, 2014) to extend the findings of Study 1.

Methods

Sample and Data Collection. The data was collected in July 2020. One-hundred-and-one students from the authors’ university voluntarily participated in the study. They could receive extra course credit for their participation if needed. Overall, 79 participants completed the study and were randomly assigned to a between-subjects design (identity leadership high vs. identity leadership low). After exclusion of seven participants due to an unrealistically fast completion time of the study (<3 minutes) or because they indicated that they did not carefully respond to the questions, the final sample consisted of $N = 72$ students (66.7% female). The high identity leadership condition (IL-high) consisted of $n = 34$ participants, the low identity leadership condition (IL-low) consisted of $n = 38$ participants. Mean age was 23.14 years ($SD = 4.32$). A sample size of 30 participants per group (total $N = 60$) would have been sufficient to detect a medium to large effect ($d = 0.65$) with a power of 80%.

Experimental procedure. After welcoming participants to the study, giving them information about the study and obtaining their informed consent, participants were asked to picture themselves in a job search scenario. They were told that they had just graduated from

university and were looking for a job. They were further told that they had been invited to a job interview at a company they would like to work for with an excellent reputation that would perfectly fit their study focus and their previous practical experiences. Participants were told that the leader of the team in which they would start working had conducted the interview and that the leader had also given some information about what is important to him/her as a leader and what he/she expects. We designed the self-descriptions of the fictitious leaders informed by the definitions of the dimensions of identity leadership (Steffens et al., 2014b) and the items of the Identity Leadership Inventory (Steffens et al., 2014b; van Dick et al., 2018).

In the IL-high condition, the scenario then presented the self-description of the leader as follows (note that the original vignettes were presented in German): “As with all leaders, it is of course important to me that my team performs well and I thus pay close attention to it. However, I always strive that my team’s health does not suffer as a result and I try to design the work for the team accordingly. I would say that I am a pretty typical member of our team. I think that I also exemplify pretty well what makes us special as a team. It is very important to me to stand up for the interests of the team and also to defend them against resistances if necessary. This also means that I put personal interests or interests of outsiders behind the team’s interests in case of doubt. It is very important to me that there is a sense of ‘we-ness’ within the team and I thus strive that all team members really feel as part of the team. This also means that everyone in the team knows what our team actually stands for. I put a lot of emphasis on structures and activities that bring our team together and support its joint work.”

In the IL-low condition, the self-description of the leader reads: “As with all leaders, it is of course important to me that my employees perform well and I thus pay close attention to it. However, I always strive that the health of my employees does not suffer as a result and I try to design the work for everyone accordingly. For me, there is no such thing as a typical employee, everyone rather stands for him-/herself – including me. While it is also important

for me to consider the interests of my employees, I have to weigh these against personal interests or the interests of outsiders. As a leader, I naturally cannot always think primarily only of my own employees. It is very important to me that everyone feels good at work and I thus strive that this is the case for all employees. This also means that everyone knows what his/her role is. I put a lot of emphasis on structures that are useful for each individual and support him/her in his/her work.”

After that, participants in both conditions were told that a couple of days after the interview they had gotten the message that they would get the job. Because they had also gotten an attractive offer from another company they were told that they wanted to take some time to consider the offer before making a final decision. They were then asked to rate the following statements given that they would take the job and start working in the team.

Manipulation check. We used the four items from the Identity Leadership Inventory Short Form (ILI-SF; Steffens et al., 2014b) in the German version by van Dick et al. (2018) to check the validity of our manipulation (e.g., “The leader is a model member of the group.”; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .79$). *T*-test results ($t(70) = 5.93, p < .001$) revealed that the IL-high condition yielded significantly higher scores on the ILI-SF ($M = 5.63; SD = 0.80$) than the identity IL-low condition ($M = 4.29; SD = 1.08$), indicating a successful manipulation.

Dependent variables. We used the same measures for team identification (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .86$) and trust in the leader (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .90$) as in Study 1 (see above).

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations for all used measures are displayed in Table 5. On a bivariate level, all variables were substantially related in the expected direction with each other.

-----Insert Table 5 about here-----

Identity leadership, team identification and trust in the leader (H1, H2). In support of H1, participants in the IL-high condition reported higher team identification ($M =$

5.19; $SD = 0.99$) than in the IL-low condition ($M = 4.54$; $SD = 1.21$), $t(70) = 2.48$, $p = .016$. In support of H2, participants in the IL-high condition reported higher trust in the leader ($M = 4.69$; $SD = 1.03$) than in the IL-low condition ($M = 3.94$; $SD = 1.22$), $t(70) = 2.79$, $p = .007$.

Additional analyses further revealed that the fictitious leader was also perceived as more likeable in the IL-high condition ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 1.38$) than in the IL-low condition ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.50$), $t(70) = 2.53$, $p = .014$ ("How likeable did you find the leader that was described in the text?"; 1 = not likeable at all, 7 = very likeable). This could indicate that the vignettes not only manipulated identity leadership but also likeability of the fictitious leader. However, the higher likeability ratings could also be a consequence of the identity leadership manipulation.

Discussion

Study 2 provides experimental support for the causal relationship between identity leadership and increased team identification and trust in the leader. Thus, this study corroborates the findings of Study 1 and overcomes its lack of causality. To our knowledge, it is the first vignette study to experimentally test the proposed relationships between identity leadership and team identification as well as trust in the leader. To further investigate the validity of our vignettes and to clarify the relationship with likeability of the leader, we encourage scholars to pay further attention to this issue in future research.

Overall Discussion

The goal of this work was to contribute to the growing body of research on the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2020) using the Identity Leadership Inventory (van Dick et al., 2018; Steffens et al., 2014b).

Implications and Future Research

This study supports the usefulness of the social identity approach to leadership and the validity of the Identity Leadership Inventory (Steffens et al., 2014b). By identifying team identification and trust in the leader as two mediating variables of the effects of identity

leadership on employees' well-being, we contributed to the understanding of the underlying processes.

Unexpectedly, team identification and trust in the leader seem to have differential relationships with the outcomes and act as mediators for different outcomes. While team identification predicted higher work engagement and job satisfaction, trust in the leader predicted lower burnout. One interpretation might be that trust in the leader is not as relevant as team identification for work engagement and job satisfaction (i.e., positive denoted constructs) because it does not create the same “positive energy” that an identification with the team does. Highly identified individuals perceive a fit between the collective and themselves, which results in a feeling of consonance (cf. dissonance theory, Festinger, 1957), which in turn will foster positive emotional responses (Efraty and Wolfe, 1988; Ng, 2015).

Trust on the other hand, according to the definition of Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer (1998, p. 395), “is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions of another”. The definition underscores the point that there must be the risk of a potential loss in a social interaction for trust to be necessary. In the workplace, this loss might include reputation, promotion, compensation, or employment itself (Burke et al., 2007). Employees often face a fundamental social dilemma: They have no direct information about the trustworthiness of a leader or, in general, an authority. Fairness heuristic theory posits that cooperation with authorities can lead to better individual performance but also bears the risk of exploitation (Lind, 2001), which could be the reason for the crucial impact on burnout. The negative association of trust in the leader and burnout has already been evidenced (Lambert et al., 2012). However, as both identification and trust can be seen as forms of psychological attachment that are associated with positive outcomes (Ng, 2015), future research should examine if the distinct relationships of team identification and trust in the leader with the investigated outcomes are robust.

All in all, identity leadership seems to be promising also to practitioners considering its positive impact on a variety of well-being outcomes. There have been first efforts to develop a training program for leaders in order to make them effective crafters of a collective identity (i.e., the 5R program, Haslam et al., 2017). In the light of the results of this study suggesting the positive impact of identity leadership on employees' well-being, future research should further investigate the 5R program in order to determine its usefulness and its possible advantages over other leadership development programs especially with regards to health and well-being. As argued by Haslam et al. (2019) the program has the potential to promote sustainable health through its positive impact on group identity development in organizational practice.

Strengths and Limitations

Study 1 operationalized work-related well-being of employees by using three different constructs (i.e., job satisfaction, work engagement, burnout). As the present results demonstrate, it is important to include more than one indicator of well-being since there are differential relationships with the mediating variables (i.e., team identification and trust in the leader). This is often neglected in studies on well-being where most studies only use one indicator (Mäkikangas et al., 2016). By simultaneously including three constructs that fit well in the theoretical model by Warr (Mäkikangas et al., 2016; Warr, 1990, 2013) we were able to comprehensively investigate the impact of identity leadership on employees' well-being. Furthermore, by including the Identity Leadership Inventory measuring more than just leader prototypicality this study allows a holistic test of the social identity approach to leadership. Also this study is among the first to test the German version of the Identity Leadership Inventory (van Dick et al., 2018).

Another strength of the present research lies in the experimental manipulation of high/low identity leadership in Study 2. Thus, causal interpretation of identity leadership's effects on team identification and trust in the leader are possible.

However, there are a few limitations to the present research. Study 1 is based on cross-sectional self-report data only. Future research is thus needed to validate and generalize the present results with longitudinal studies that also entail more than just self-report data (e.g., objective health data). By doing this, causality could be established for the whole model and reversed causation could also be examined (e.g., if employees who are more satisfied and feel better also view their leader more positively).

Another shortcoming of Study 1 is that there was no account for the team or organizational level. This would be especially interesting considering the team level nature of the identity leadership construct aiming at constructing a shared collective identity. Scholars should therefore consider this in the future investigation of the identity leadership construct.

Lastly, Study 2 relied on a student sample. While the vignettes were designed in a way that makes it easy for students to picture themselves in the given scenario, future research that uses samples from the working population would help to generalize the present findings (cf. Aguinis and Bradley, 2014).

Conclusion

In sum, the present research is a valuable contribution to the growing body of research on identity leadership. This approach has strong theoretical roots in social psychology (cf. Haslam et al., 2020) and goes beyond established leadership styles in explaining the group processes involved in leadership. The present research demonstrates the effectiveness of identity leadership and identifies team identification and trust in the leader as mediating variables of the effects on work-related well-being. Thus, this study supports the claim made by scholars (Haslam et al., 2019) that social identity might be one explanatory link between leadership behavior and well-being.

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Table 1*Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients for all used measures in Study 1*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Identity leadership	4.47	1.69	-					
2. Team identification	4.86	1.31	.58**	-				
3. Trust in the leader	4.82	1.63	.83**	.56**	-			
4. Job satisfaction	5.05	1.53	.58**	.54**	.56**	-		
5. Work engagement	4.55	1.13	.49**	.53**	.47**	.69**	-	
6. Burnout	2.78	0.91	-.42**	-.24**	-.41**	-.41**	-.38**	-

Note. $N = 188-192$. ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed)

Table 2*Regression of team identification leadership and trust in the leader*

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>p</i>
Team identification on identity leadership ($R^2 = .33$)			
Constant	2.92 (2.39, 3.46)	0.27	<.001
Identity leadership	0.44 (0.34, 0.54)	0.05	<.001
Trust in the leader on identity leadership ($R^2 = .68$)			
Constant	1.27 (0.95, 1.61)	0.17	<.001
Identity leadership	0.79 (0.71, 0.86)	0.04	<.001

Note. $N = 188$. 95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence intervals of *b* reported in parentheses. Confidence intervals and standard errors based on 10,000 bootstrap samples.

Table 3*Regressions of outcomes on identity leadership, team identification and trust in the leader*

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>p</i>
Outcome: Job satisfaction			
Step 1 ($R^2 = .34$)			
Constant	2.78 (2.11, 3.45)	0.34	<.001
Identity leadership	0.51 (0.39, 0.64)	0.07	<.001
Step 2 ($R^2 = .40, \Delta R^2 = .06$)			
Constant	1.71 (0.83, 2.63)	0.45	<.001
Identity leadership	0.22 (-0.05, 0.52)	0.14	.108
Team identification	0.27 (0.07, 0.47)	0.10	.006
Trust in the leader	0.22 (-0.03, 0.44)	0.13	.103
Outcome: Work engagement			
Step 1 ($R^2 = .24$)			
Constant	3.07 (2.57, 3.58)	0.26	<.001
Identity leadership	0.33 (0.23, 0.43)	0.05	<.001
Step 2 ($R^2 = .34, \Delta R^2 = .10$)			
Constant	2.05 (1.36, 2.78)	0.37	<.001
Identity leadership	0.11 (-0.04, 0.25)	0.07	.128
Team identification	0.30 (0.14, 0.46)	0.08	<.001
Trust in the leader	0.12 (-0.04, 0.28)	0.08	.154
Outcome: Burnout			
Step 1 ($R^2 = .18$)			
Constant	3.78 (3.43, 4.11)	0.17	<.001
Identity leadership	-0.22 (-0.29, -0.15)	0.04	<.001
Step 2 ($R^2 = .22, \Delta R^2 = .04$)			
Constant	4.12 (3.66, 4.59)	0.23	<.001
Identity leadership	-0.06 (-0.20, 0.06)	0.07	.365
Team identification	-0.04 (-0.16, 0.08)	0.06	.554
Trust in the leader	-0.19 (-0.32, -0.04)	0.07	.008

Note. $N = 188$. 95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence intervals of *b* reported in parentheses. Confidence intervals and standard errors based on 10,000 bootstrap samples.

Table 4

Indirect effects of identity leadership on job satisfaction, work engagement, and burnout via team identification and trust in the leader

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	BCCI
Job satisfaction			
Total	0.29	0.11	0.09, 0.50
ILI → TI → JS	0.12	0.04	0.03, 0.21
ILI → TR → JS	0.17	0.10	-0.02, 0.37
Work engagement			
Total	0.22	0.07	0.10, 0.38
ILI → TI → WE	0.13	0.04	0.06, 0.21
ILI → TR → WE	0.09	0.06	-0.03, 0.22
Burnout			
Total	-0.16	0.05	-0.26, -0.05
ILI → TI → BO	-0.02	0.03	-0.07, 0.04
ILI → TR → BO	-0.15	0.05	-0.25, -0.04

Note. $N = 188$. BCCI = 95% bias corrected confidence intervals. Confidence intervals and standard errors based on 10,000 bootstrap samples. IL = identity leadership. TI = team identification. TR = trust in the leader. JS = job satisfaction. WE = work engagement. BO = burnout.

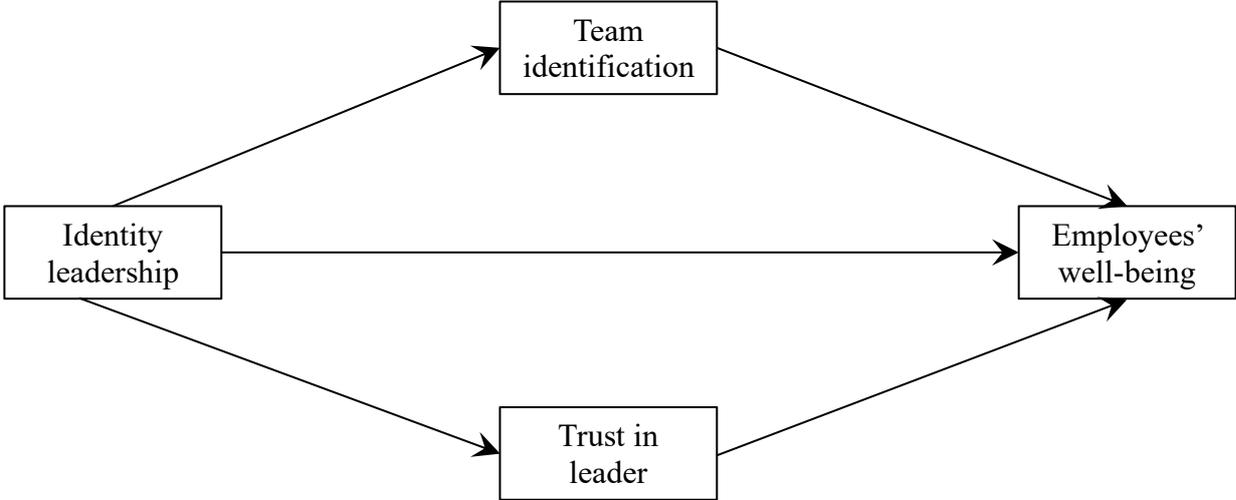
Table 5*Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients for all used measures in Study 2*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2
1. Identity leadership	4.92	1.17	-	
2. Team identification	4.85	1.15	.63**	-
3. Trust in the leader	4.29	1.19	.71**	.71**

Note. $N = 72$. ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed)

Figure 1

Effect of identity leadership on employees' well-being mediated by team identification and trust in the leader.



Appendix B: Manuscript 2

**Identity Leadership, Social Identity Continuity and
Well-being at Work during COVID-19**

Authors: Henning Krug, S. Alexander Haslam, Kathleen Otto, Gahis Safi, Niklas K. Steffens

Status: Submitted to *Journal of Managerial Psychology*

Running head: IDENTITY LEADERSHIP AND WORKPLACE WELL-BEING DURING
COVID-19

Identity Leadership, Social Identity Continuity and Well-being at Work during COVID-19

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Abstract

Purpose: The COVID-19 pandemic has led to widespread remote working that has posed significant challenges for people's sense of connection to their workplace and their mental health and well-being. In the present work, we examined how leaders' identity leadership is associated with the well-being of employees in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, we examined how both leaders' and team members' identity leadership is associated with employees' social identity continuity, and through this with their job satisfaction, burnout and loneliness at work.

Design/methodology/approach: Employees ($N = 363$) participated in a field study during the current COVID-19 pandemic and completed measures of their leader's and team members' identity leadership (i.e., entrepreneurship and impresarioship), social identity continuity, job satisfaction, burnout and loneliness at work.

Findings: Results revealed that to the extent that employees perceived greater social identity continuity, they were more satisfied with their work and felt less lonely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, mediation analyses revealed indirect effects of team members' identity entrepreneurship on job satisfaction and loneliness via an increase in social identity continuity.

Originality: The findings underline the importance of identity leadership and social identity continuity for the workplace well-being of employees in times of the current crisis.

Keywords: COVID-19, social identity, identity leadership, identity continuity, health, well-being

Article classification: Research paper

Identity leadership, social identity continuity and well-being at work during COVID-19

Since late January 2020, the world has been in the grip of the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) and the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the World Health Organization as of 20 September 2020, over 30 million people worldwide have been infected, while 950,000 have died as a result of the disease (WHO, 2020). The lives of people around the world have been greatly impacted by the pandemic — not only by the risk of infection but also by changes to the way governments, communities and organizations operate. In particular, countries around the world have put in place a range of regulations to control the spread of the virus, including strict physical distancing measures and travel bans. The new regulations also brought about significant changes to people's working lives: while health professionals have been working intensively on the frontline in hospitals, communities and care homes, people in many other professions have been ordered to work from home in order to curb the spread of the virus.

According to the statistics portal *statista*, in March 2020, 75.4% of German employees described themselves as working from home (Statista, 2020). Initial evidence suggests that by making it more difficult for people to connect and communicate with others in the workplace, these changes have posed a significant threat to people's well-being (e.g., Qualtrics, 2020). However, little focused empirical work has examined either (a) the effects that changes in people's working lives have had on their health and well-being or (b) the role that workplace leaders play in buffering any potential detrimental health effects.

In the present work, we examine these two key issues. First, how changes in working conditions have impacted on employees' well-being. Second, whether any negative impacts can be counteracted by *identity leadership* behavior that focuses on creating and sustaining a sense of 'us-ness' among workgroup members (Haslam *et al.*, 2020). By this means we expand the growing literature informed by the social identity approach to leadership to

examine the importance of identity leadership under remote working conditions. At the same time, this work explores points of contact between the social identity approach to leadership (which stresses the importance of cultivating a sense of ‘we’ and ‘us’ for effective leadership; Haslam *et al.*, 2020; Steffens *et al.*, 2014) and the ‘social cure’ literature associated with the social identity approach to health (which highlights the importance of developing and maintaining groups memberships for health; Haslam *et al.*, 2018; Jetten *et al.* 2012; Wakefield *et al.*, 2019). More specifically, we seek to do this by examining the degree to which identity leadership supports team members’ well-being by contributing to their sense of social identity continuity under remote working conditions. On this basis, we also look to provide organizations and employees with practical advice informed by social psychological theorizing to help them adapt to challenges imposed by physical distancing and reduced opportunities for face-to-face contact in the workplace.

Social Identity Continuity

The *social identity approach*, comprising *social identity theory* (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) and *self-categorization theory* (Turner *et al.*, 1987), proposes that the self-concept of individuals not only rests on their *personal identity* (“I” or “me”) but also on their *social identity* (“we” or “us”) that is derived from memberships in social groups (Haslam, 2004). Research informed by the social identity approach indicates that when people see themselves as part of a group and identify with it (e.g., so that they see themselves as a member of a family, a work team or a community), they derive a range of important psychological resources from that group membership (Haslam *et al.*, 2018). This is because it is through social identity that people experience psychological connection to fellow group members (Haslam *et al.*, 2021), that provide for social support (Haslam *et al.*, 2005; Levine *et al.*, 2002), a sense of meaning and purpose (van Dick and Wagner, 2002; Wegge *et al.*, 2006), and a sense of control (Greenaway *et al.*, 2015; see also Greenaway *et al.*, 2016). In light of these benefits, people’s sense of belongingness to, and identification with, social groups has

been shown to have important benefits for health and well-being more generally (Cruwys *et al.*, 2014; Haslam *et al.*, 2018; Postmes *et al.*, 2019; Tewari, *et al.*, 2012; Wakefield *et al.*, 2019). This is true for groups in society at large but also for groups in the workplace (e.g., work unit, teams, departments or whole organizations; Avanzi, *et al.*, 2015; Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2015; Steffens *et al.*, 2017).

Moreover, research suggests that identifying with *multiple* social groups further increases well-being because this generally provides people access to more social identity-based psychological resources. It also means that if one group membership is lost (e.g., as a result of organizational change or a life transition such as retirement; Haslam *et al.*, 2019; Steffens *et al.*, 2016b), a person will have other groups to fall back on and buffer them against the psychological fallout from that change (Haslam *et al.*, 2021; Jetten *et al.*, 2015).

There are reasons for supposing, however, that COVID-19 threatens people's access to these group-related resources (see van Bavel *et al.*, 2020; Jetten *et al.*, 2020, for reviews). In particular, this is because, as noted above, during lockdown many people have been required to work from home and thus have not been able to come together with their various work-related groups as they did to prior to the pandemic. Others are still able to go to their physical place of work but are nevertheless affected by new regulations which require them to engage in social distancing. As a result of these regulations, many employees will also not be able to partake in activities that had been inherent to their membership of a particular workplace group (e.g., team meetings, conferences, social gatherings), while for others face-to-face interactions have shifted completely 'online'.

Overall, then, the changes wrought by COVID-19 would be expected to impact negatively on a sense of *social identity continuity* associated with ongoing membership of a particular organizational unit (Haslam *et al.*, 2021; Sani, 2008). In particular, it seems likely that the changes to working practice brought about by the pandemic will have disrupted the range of activities, rituals, and practices which help to keep teams functioning *as teams*

(Haslam, 2004). Research on the social identity approach to health thus leads us to expect that this will tend to compromise health and well-being. More formally, we hypothesize:

H1: The more social identity continuity employees experience in their work-related group memberships, the better their work-related well-being will be in terms of (a) higher job satisfaction, (b) lower loneliness at work, and (c) lower burnout.

Identity Entrepreneurship and Identity Impresarioship

Yet while research on social identity and health leads us to expect that the pandemic compromised health and well-being by undermining people's ability to maintain valued group memberships at work, work on social identity and leadership also points to the role that leaders and other group members can play in promoting health in the workplace (Haslam *et al.*, 2020; Steffens *et al.*, 2014; van Dick *et al.*, 2018). This, then, provides insights into ways that groups may be able to offset the potentially negative health effects of the current crisis. More specifically, research suggests that leaders (both formal and informal; D'Innocenzo *et al.*, 2016) can do this by engaging in *identity leadership* that helps to (re)build a sense of social identity in the workplace (e.g., with a team, unit, or the organization as a whole; Haslam *et al.*, 2020; Steffens *et al.*, 2014).

In the context of disruptions caused by COVID-19, two dimensions of identity leadership that seem especially likely to be important are leaders' identity entrepreneurship and identity impresarioship. *Identity entrepreneurship* refers to behaviors that aim to increase group cohesion as well as group members' understanding of what a group is about and what it stands for (e.g., its norms and values) in ways that help to 'craft a sense of us' (Reicher *et al.*, 2005; Reicher and Hopkins, 2001; Steffens *et al.*, 2014). Previous longitudinal research has shown that such behavior has the capacity not only to increase group members' engagement in group activities but also to improve their health and well-being — notably by reducing burnout (e.g., Fransen *et al.*, 2020; Steffens *et al.*, 2018). However, identity entrepreneurship would seem to be important in the context of the disruption to working life brought about by

COVID-19 since, as noted above, it seems likely that changes to working arrangements have compromised workplace social identity by compromising established patterns of group communication and connection. On this basis, then, we hypothesize that:

H2: Identity entrepreneurship (on the part of the leader and other team members) will be positively related (a) higher job satisfaction, (b) lower burnout, and (c) lower loneliness at work because it will help to create a sense of social identity continuity in work-related group memberships.

Yet in addition to leaders' efforts to create or maintain a sense of 'us' in the way that they engage with groups, their efforts to put in place structures, events, and activities that *embed* a sense of shared identity should be important, too. For these acts of *identity impresarioship* allow the 'idea of us' to be translated in material reality (Haslam *et al.*, 2020). During COVID-19, then, this might comprise a range of initiatives that create opportunities and environments for employees to come together as a group and live out their shared group membership (e.g., through regular meetings and events, even if these are only virtual). Again, there is evidence in other contexts that this is important both for engagement and for health and well-being, again because it helps group members to (re)gain a sense of identity continuity (Stevens *et al.*, 2018, 2020; van Dick *et al.*, 2018). On this basis, then, we hypothesize that:

H3: Identity impresarioship (on the part of the leader and other team members) will be positively related (a) higher job satisfaction, (b) lower burnout, and (c) lower loneliness at work because it will help to create a sense of social identity continuity in work-related group memberships.

The full conceptual model is represented schematically in Figure 1.

— Insert Figure 1 about here —

Methods

Sample and Data Collection

Data was collected between April 11th and May 2nd 2020. Participants were recruited using snowball sampling via social media and mailing lists. The local ethics committee of the first author's university granted ethical approval and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Three-hundred-and-sixty-seven employees completed the questionnaire, all of whom reported being currently employed and as having colleagues as well as a formal leader at work. Data from four participants were excluded due to a completion time that suggested careless responding (< 5 minutes total). Thus, the final sample consisted of $N = 363$ employees. Participants' age ranged from 19 to 63 ($M = 36.31$, $SD = 11.01$) and 68% were female. Participants' average organizational tenure was 7.90 years ($SD = 8.20$) and 62.8% worked full-time. Detailed information on the direct impact of COVID-19 experienced by the participants is provided in Table I.

— Insert Table I about here —

Measures

Identity Leadership. Identity entrepreneurship and impresarioship were measured with four items using adapted items from the German version of the Identity Leadership Inventory (Steffens *et al.*, 2014; van Dick *et al.*, 2018). Responses were made on a scale from 1 (= *totally disagree*) to 7 (= *totally agree*). Participants were asked to rate both their leader and their fellow team members on these items. A sample item for identity entrepreneurship was “This leader makes/members of my team make people feel as if they are part of the same group in times of the coronavirus.” Cronbach's α for this subscale was .96 for the leader-related items and .95 for the team-related items. A sample item for identity impresarioship was “This leader devises/members of my team devise virtual activities that bring the team together in times of the coronavirus.” Cronbach's α for this subscale was .89 for the leader-related items and .94 for the team-related items. Compared to the original items for

impresarioship (van Dick *et al.*, 2018; Steffens *et al.*, 2014), our items referred to *virtual* activities/events/structures created by the leader to account for the changed, more remote work environment during the pandemic.

Perceived Social Identity Continuity at Work. This was measured using a German adaptation of the four-item social identity continuity measure from Haslam *et al.*'s (2008) Exeter Identity Transition Scales (EXITS) Responses were made on a scale from 1 (= *totally disagree*) to 7 (= *totally agree*). A sample item was “Since the outbreak of the coronavirus, I still belong to the same groups at work I was a member of before the outbreak” ($\alpha = .76$).

Job Satisfaction. This was assessed with a single five-grade Kunin-item (Baillod and Semmer, 1994; “All in all, how satisfied are you with your job?”).

Burnout. This was measured with six items from the German version of the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI; Kristensen *et al.*, 2005; Nübling *et al.*, 2005; sample item: “How often do you feel tired?”). Responses were made on a scale from 1 (= *almost never/never*) to 5 (= *always*; $\alpha = .87$).

Loneliness at Work. To measure loneliness at work, a German adaptation of four items from Ozelik and Barsade's (2018) Workplace Loneliness Scale (sample item: “In this organization, I can find companionship when I want it”). Responses were made on a scale from 1 (= *totally disagree*) to 7 (= *totally agree*; $\alpha = .78$).

Results

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations are presented in Table II.

Hypotheses were assessed with structural equation modelling (SEM) using Amos (Arbuckle, 2014).

Before testing our hypotheses, we ran a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to evaluate the measurement model (cf. Huang *et al.*, 2017). The CFA of a 7-factor model that included latent factors of identity entrepreneurship (leader/team), identity impresarioship (leader/team),

social identity continuity, loneliness, and burnout indicated that the model had a sufficient fit to the data, $\chi^2 = 965.459$, $df = 357$, TLI = .91, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .07.

— Insert Table II about here —

Structural Models

We compared the fit of our hypothesized structural equation model (as presented in Figure 1) against two alternative models: One was a ‘*no directs*’ model with *no direct effects* of identity leadership on health and well-being variables; the other was an ‘*only directs*’ model with *only direct effects* of identity leadership on health and well-being variables, where the mediator (social identity continuity) was included in the model with no paths stemming from or leading to it (cf. Mathieu and Taylor, 2006). The model comparisons are summarized in Table III. The alternative models yielded a significantly worse fit than the baseline model. Accordingly, we proceeded to test the hypotheses specified in our proposed structural equation model. The standardized effects of the proposed indirect effects are displayed in Figure 2 while the standardized effects of the direct effects from the antecedents to the outcome variables are reported in Table IV. The bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals for the hypothesized indirect effects are reported in Table V.

— Insert Table III about here —

— Insert Figure 2 about here —

— Insert Table IV about here —

— Insert Table V about here —

Tests of H1

We hypothesized that employees who experienced more social identity continuity in their work-related group memberships during COVID-19, would report higher work-related well-being. As shown in Figure 2, we found partial support for this hypothesis. More specifically, social identity continuity was significantly associated with employees’ (a) greater job satisfaction and (c) lower loneliness but not with (b) reduced burnout.

Tests of H2

We hypothesized that identity entrepreneurship on the part of the leader and other team members would be associated with (a) higher job satisfaction, (b) lower burnout, and (c) lower loneliness at work, mediated by employees' experience of social identity continuity in their work-related group memberships. Results revealed two significant indirect effects as displayed in Table V. In partial support of H2, identity entrepreneurship on the part of by team members (but not leaders) was associated with a stronger sense of social identity continuity among respondents and, through this, with (a) greater job satisfaction and (c) lower loneliness.

Tests of H3

We hypothesized that identity impresarioship on the part of the leader and other team members would be associated with (a) higher job satisfaction, (b) lower burnout, and (c) lower loneliness at work mediated by employees' experience of social identity continuity in their work-related group memberships. There was no evidence that identity impresarioship (on the part of either team members or leaders) was associated with a stronger sense of social identity continuity among respondents. Accordingly, there was no support for H3.

Discussion

In the present research, we drew on the social identity perspective to explore predictors of the work-related well-being of employees in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, this study was designed to examine the role of people's sense of social identity continuity in work-related group membership in supporting well-being during the pandemic. In support of H1a and H1c, results indicated that work-related social identity continuity was related to increased job satisfaction and reduced loneliness among employees (while there was no relationship with burnout; H1b). Moreover, we examined whether identity entrepreneurship (e.g., Haslam *et al.*, 2020; Reicher and Hopkins, 2001; Reicher *et al.*, 2005) and identity impresarioship (Haslam *et al.*, 2020; Steffens *et al.*, 2014) as shown by

the formal leader and other team members might play a role in fostering this sense of identity continuity. Results provided evidence of an indirect effect of identity entrepreneurship shown by team members (but not by the leader) on job satisfaction and loneliness (thereby providing partial support of H2a and H2c). All other indirect effects were non-significant and, in particular, they provided no support for H3 (i.e., of identity impresarioship as a predictor of identity continuity, and, through this, of job satisfaction, burnout, and loneliness at work).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The present research has several implications for theory as well as practice. First, our results underline the importance of people's sense of social identity continuity (e.g., Herrera *et al.*, 2011; Sani *et al.*, 2008) for employees' well-being in times of crisis and disruption. In this regard, our research also expands upon previous research that has highlighted the importance of social identity continuity for well-being during major life changes such as transitioning to university life (Iyer *et al.*, 2009), recovering from collective trauma (Muldoon *et al.*, 2017), becoming a mother (Seymour-Smith *et al.*, 2017), retiring from work (Steffens *et al.*, 2016b), moving overseas (Cruwys *et al.*, 2020), and recovering from illness (Haslam *et al.*, 2008; for a review, see Haslam *et al.*, 2021). Like many of these transitions, the disruptive changes brought about by COVID-19 have meant this has been a life-changing 'once-in-a-lifetime' event and in this context, too, it appears that the maintenance of workgroup memberships has had a significant role to play in reducing people's loneliness and helping to sustain their life satisfaction.

The results of our research have important implications for leaders in organizations as well. In particular, by pointing to the importance of social identity continuity for well-being at work in times of change, it provides organizations with a guiding framework for understanding how to maintain their employees' health and engagement during the current (and possibly other) crises. Here our results show that if employees are able to stay connected

with their work-related groups, this can support their well-being in the face of the range of challenges brought about by this crisis.

In this context, just as our research contributes to work on social identity and health, so too in advances a growing body of work on social identity approach to leadership (Haslam *et al.*, 2020; Steffens *et al.*, 2014; van Dick *et al.*, 2018). While previous research has demonstrated the positive impact of leaders' engagement in identity leadership on group members' engagement and burnout (Steffens *et al.*, 2018) and health (Fransen *et al.*, 2020), the present research indicates that identity leadership can also help to minimize employees' feeling of alienation and loneliness at work (see also Seppala and King, 2017). Here our findings also align with emerging evidence that identity leadership that is *shared* has unique benefits for teams. For instance, Fransen and colleagues (2020) found that sport team members' health was impacted as much by the leadership of the formal leader as it was by the leadership of informal leaders. Extending this body of work, the present work found that it was perceptions of identity entrepreneurship on the part of fellow team members that was associated with members' perceived continuity of work groups and greater satisfaction with work and lower loneliness. Accordingly, it seems that in times of crisis such as the present pandemic, well-functioning teams will be those in which *all* team members help to create a sense of togetherness that contributes to employees' sense of identity continuity and well-being at work. These findings thus suggest that organizations should not rely only on formal leaders to maintain a shared sense of 'us' in times of crisis, but should also encourage other members of the organization to do the same. Indeed the strong association between the identity leadership of leaders and that of team members suggests that this may be an important (and hitherto unstudied) aspect of identity leadership.

In the case of identity impresarioship, however, we did not find any significant support for our hypotheses. It is noteworthy, too, that while impresarioship was associated with greater job satisfaction and lower loneliness (see Table II), these correlations were weaker

than those for entrepreneurship, suggesting that entrepreneurship may be more important than impresarioship for employees' health and well-being. Moreover, the modelling results revealed a significant, *positive* relationship between leaders' identity impresarioship and increased loneliness of employees (cf. Table IV). This suggests that there may be circumstances under which leaders' efforts to create structures, activities, and events may *add to* employees' stress and alienation during a crisis — possibly because these are a source of (additional) demand rather than a resource (which is seen to control rather than support). These findings do not necessarily suggest that structures and activities around the group are bad for the health of team members, but they do suggest that leaders may not always have a good sense of what sorts of activities support team functioning and health under the present conditions. Going forward, then, it is going to be important to provide greater insight into ways that these material actions can be structured so as to lock in the benefits of the shared identity rather than to scuttle them.

Limitations and Future Research

Of course, our research is not without limitations. Most obviously, our results are based on cross-sectional field data, which makes causal inferences impossible. However, given the novelty of the current circumstances and the novelty of the theoretical model that we proposed and examined, it seems justified to seek to provide initial insight into the issues we were addressing by means of cross-sectional investigation. Nevertheless, future research should employ longitudinal and intervention designs to further assess the impact of the present relationships in related contexts — especially since many of the changes brought about by COVID-19 (e.g., an increase of digital vs. face-to-face communication and home office arrangements) seem likely to endure beyond the pandemic.

The measure of identity impresarioship that we used in the present research may also have been suboptimal. Here we adapted previously validated items from the Identity Leadership Inventory (Steffens *et al.*, 2014; van Dick *et al.*, 2018) in order to fit the COVID

context, with a view to capturing identity impresarioship in a virtual environment. However, this adaptation may have meant that we measured a somewhat different construct here.

Suggestive of this, the correlations between the impresarioship and entrepreneurship were markedly lower than in previous studies (Steffens *et al.*, 2014; van Dick *et al.*, 2018). Future research is needed to clarify this issue, and this might also usefully compare how different aspects of identity leadership play out in different contexts (e.g., face-to-face vs. virtual) with a view to establishing when they are more (or less) likely to have beneficial consequences for team members' health.

Conclusion

The present research shed light on ways in which COVID-19 has impacted on employees' health and well-being by compromising their sense of social identity continuity in the workplace. It also speaks to the capacity for identity leadership — especially on the part of other team members — to buffer employees from the impact of identity discontinuity by cultivating a sense of shared social identity in the workplace. In this, the findings speak to claims that social identity is critical not only for leadership but also for health. Indeed, precisely because identity leadership centres around the creation of shared sense of 'we' and 'us', it can also be an important way of staving off the health-threatening effects of social disconnection and isolation (e.g., in the form of loneliness; Haslam *et al.*, 2019; Holt-Lunstad *et al.*, 2010). In the context of a pandemic, whose effects have been felt as much through increased physical distancing as through the spread of the virus itself, this capacity to build social connection and solidarity would seem to be particularly important. Moreover, because the need to build and maintain social identity is so great (Jetten *et al.*, 2020), it is important to recognize that this is a task that should not be left to leaders to perform on their own. After all, if it is the case that "we are all in this together", then we all need to be in the business of making this call to solidarity ring true.

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Table I*Work-related changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic experienced by participants.*

Changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic	Number of participants (percentage)
Working Hours	
More	62 (17.1%)
Less	116 (32.0%)
Same	185 (51.0%)
Home Office	
Not at all	101 (27.8 %)
A little	47 (12.9 %)
Mostly	64 (17.6%)
Completely	151 (41.6%)
Short-time Work	48 (13.2%)
Childcare at Home	67 (18.5%)

Table II*Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients.*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Identity Entrepreneurship–Leader	4.69	1.61	-						
2. Identity Impresarioship–Leader	3.85	1.78	.57**	-					
3. Identity Entrepreneurship–Team	4.98	1.31	.48**	.35**	-				
4. Identity Impresarioship–Team	4.12	1.74	.31**	.49**	.57**	-			
5. Social Identity Continuity	5.20	1.16	.30**	.27**	.38**	.28**	-		
6. Job Satisfaction	3.82	0.81	.43**	.24**	.28**	.18**	.26**	-	
7. Burnout	2.57	0.71	-.15**	-.06	-.06	-.04	-.08	-.34**	-
8. Loneliness at Work	2.85	1.09	-.29**	-.18**	-.51**	-.32**	-.29**	-.33**	.12*

Note. $N = 361-363$. ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed). * $p < .05$ (two-tailed).

Table III*Summary of structural equation model comparisons.*

Models	Fit indices				
	DF	χ^2	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Baseline	353	885.955	.92	.93	.07
No directs	365	1000.372***	.91	.92	.07
Only directs	360	973.438***	.91	.92	.07

Note. ***significant worse model fit than baseline model at $p < .001$

Table IV

Standardized direct effects of identity entrepreneurship and impresarioship (leader/team) on outcomes from structural equation model.

	β	p
Job satisfaction		
Identity Entrepreneurship Leader	.41 (.07)	<.001
Identity Impresarioship Leader	-.08 (.08)	.286
Identity Entrepreneurship Team	.02 (.08)	.819
Identity Impresarioship Team	.03 (.08)	.656
Burnout		
Identity Entrepreneurship Leader	-.23 (.09)	.006
Identity Impresarioship Leader	.14 (.10)	.133
Identity Entrepreneurship Team	.06 (.09)	.444
Identity Impresarioship Team	-.03 (.09)	.682
Loneliness at work		
Identity Entrepreneurship Leader	-.17 (.09)	.025
Identity Impresarioship Leader	.17 (.09)	.042
Identity Entrepreneurship Team	-.42 (.08)	<.001
Identity Impresarioship Team	-.11 (.08)	.162

Note. $N = 361$. Standardized regression weights reported with standard errors in parentheses.

Table V

Standardized indirect effects of identity entrepreneurship and impresarioship (leader/team) on outcomes at work via social identity continuity.

	BCaCI
Outcome: Job satisfaction	
IL-E Leader → GMC → JS	[-.01, .07]
IL-I Leader → GMC → JS	[-.01, .07]
IL-E Team → GMC → JS	[.01, .14]
IL-I Team → GMC → JS	[-.01, .05]
Outcome: Burnout	
IL-E Leader → GMC → BO	[-.06, .01]
IL-I Leader → GMC → BO	[-.06, .01]
IL-E Team → GMC → BO	[-.12, .02]
IL-I Team → GMC → BO	[-.05, .01]
Outcome: Loneliness at work	
IL-E Leader → GMC → LO	[-.07, .01]
IL-I Leader → GMC → LO	[-.07, .00]
IL-E Team → GMC → LO	[-.15, -.01]
IL-I Team → GMC → LO	[-.06, .01]

Note. $N = 361$. BCaCI = 95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence intervals. Confidence intervals based on 10,000 bootstrap samples. IL-E Leader = identity entrepreneurship shown by leader. IL-E Team = identity entrepreneurship shown by team. IL-I Leader = identity impresarioship shown by leader. IL-I Team = identity impresarioship shown by team. GMC = group membership continuity. JS = job satisfaction. BO = burnout. LO = loneliness at work.

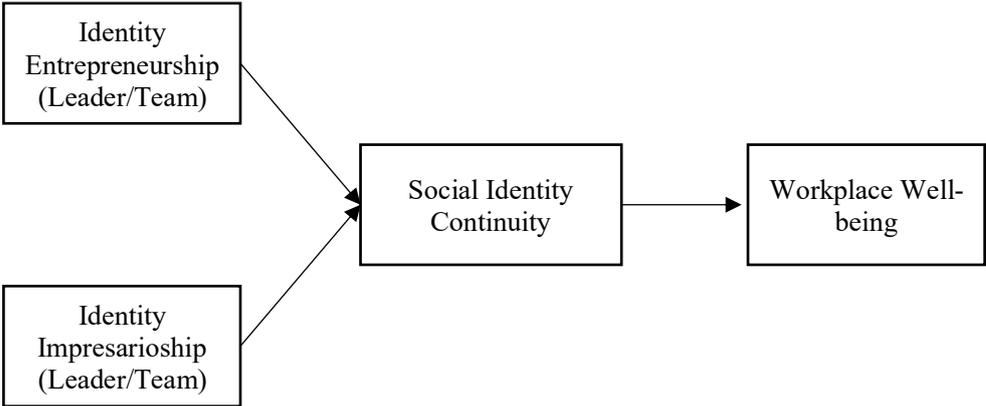


Figure 1. Conceptual model: The effect of identity leadership by the leader and the team on employees’ well-being mediated by social identity continuity.

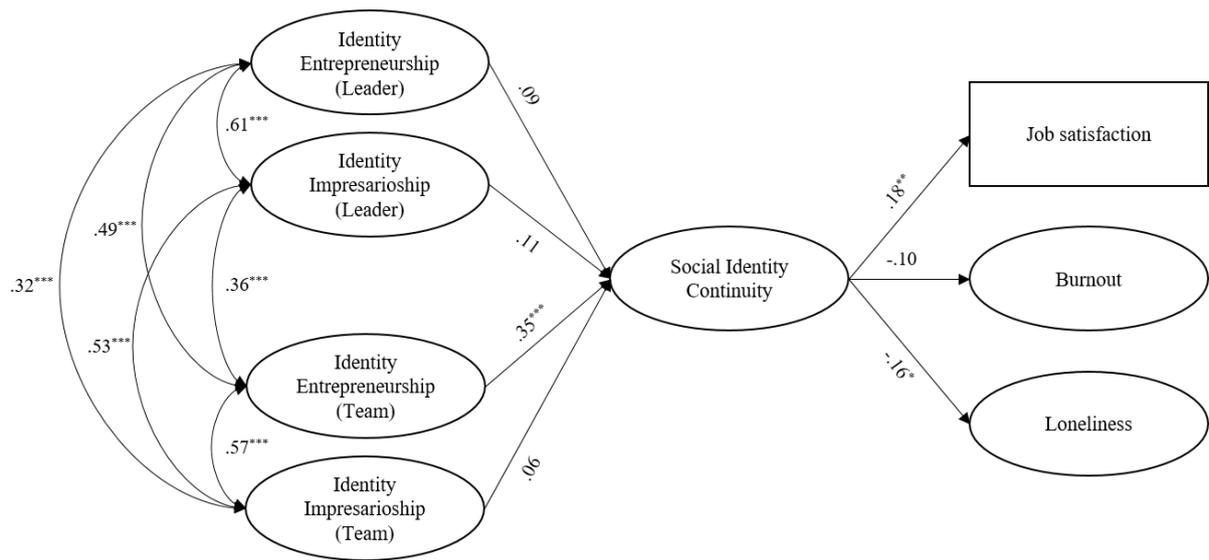


Figure 2. Standardized effects and correlations from the structural equation model. $N = 361$.

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$. Direct effects of IVs are not displayed for the sake of clarity. See Table IV for direct effects.

Appendix C: Manuscript 3

**Doing it for the Club: Soccer Coaches' Identity Leadership Predicts Players' Effort,
Turnover Intentions, and Performance**

Authors: Henning Krug, S. Alexander Haslam, Kathleen Otto, Niklas K. Steffens

Status: Submitted to *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*

Running head: COACHES' IDENTITY LEADERSHIP AND TEAM FUNCTIONING

Doing it for the Club: Soccer Coaches' Identity Leadership Predicts Players' Effort, Turnover
Intentions, and Performance

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Abstract

Objectives: The present research investigates how coaches' identity leadership predicts team functioning in soccer. Specifically, we tested hypotheses that coaches' identity leadership would be associated with players' perceptions of (a) higher team effort, (b) lower turnover intentions, (c) better individual performance, and (d) better team performance. In addition, we aimed to examine the relationship between coaches' identity leadership and increased team identification of players and the degree to which the associations of identity leadership with these various outcomes were mediated by players' strength of team identification.

Design: We conducted a cross-sectional study of male soccer players in Germany.

Method: The final sample consisted of 247 male soccer players nested in 24 teams that completed measures of their coaches' identity leadership, team identification, team effort, turnover intentions, and individual/team performance.

Results: Analysis revealed a positive relationship between coaches' identity leadership and team effort, as well as individual and team performance. Moreover, coaches' identity leadership was associated with lower turnover intentions. There was also evidence that the relationship between identity leadership and team effort and performance was mediated by team identification.

Conclusions: These findings support claims that coaches' identity leadership is associated with better team functioning because it helps to build a sense of 'we' and 'us' in the team they lead.

Keywords: social identity, identity leadership, team identification, team effort, turnover intentions, performance

Highlights

- Coaches' identity leadership was associated with higher team functioning in soccer.
- Coaches' identity leadership predicted better individual and team performance.
- Players' increased team identification was identified as the underlying mechanism.

Doing it for the Club: Soccer Coaches' Identity Leadership Predicts Players' Effort, Turnover Intentions, and Performance

"I try everything to be as successful as possible. I live 100 per cent for the boys, with the boys, what we do for the club. I think that's leadership in the first case."

Jürgen Klopp, manager of Liverpool FC (cited in Shaw, 2019)

Jürgen Klopp has been a remarkably successful professional soccer coach for many years. His recent successes with Liverpool include winning the Champions League in 2019 and the Premier League in 2020. Klopp not only has an impressive track record, but is also admired and loved by fans, the media and his players. But what underpins his success? The above quote points to one potentially important factor: the fact that Klopp defines leadership in a way that puts the team ("the boys" and "the club") first. In other words, he does not focus on his personal gain but on the success of his team and the club as a whole.

In the present work, we look to provide a formal analysis of the way in which this privileging of "we" over "I" contributes to team functioning by drawing on principles spelled out within the social identity approach to leadership. In this regard, Klopp's quote resonates with the key propositions of this approach — namely that leaders' ability to motivate members to contribute to group goals is predicated on their ability to create and promote a sense of 'we' and 'us' among group members (Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018). This 'we-ness' is then argued to serve as the basis for goal-directed collective behavior (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987).

In line with these claims, there is a growing body of work in the domain of sport which indicates that leaders' identity leadership is associated with a range of important attitudes and behaviors (for reviews, see Rees, Haslam, Coffee, & Lavalley, 2015; Slater, Coffee, Barker, & Evans, 2014; Steffens, Fransen, & Haslam, 2020; Stevens et al., 2017). In

particular, previous work has shown that identity leadership is a basis for individual's motivation (e.g., Slater et al., 2014). However, some key questions remain unanswered. Most notably, as we outline in more detail below, we know little about whether (and how) identity leadership is associated with greater team-oriented behavior including players' *team effort* and *turnover intentions*, both of which are important indicators of sport team functioning (Slater, Thomas, & Evans, 2020). The mechanism through which identity leadership might be associated with these outcomes has also not yet been examined, which is why we aim to investigate team identification as a mediating variable. And finally, with the exception of research by Fransen, McEwan, and Sarkar (2020) there has been limited investigation of identity leadership with team-level data from the field. The present research seeks to address these lacunae by investigating the relationship between coaches' identity leadership and players' effort and desire to continue playing for their team in a field context with a sample of German soccer teams.

The Social Identity Approach to Leadership

The social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011) is based on the twin-theories of *social identity theory* (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and *self-categorization theory* (SCT; Turner et al., 1987). Central to both theories is the idea that people do not only define themselves and others as individuals (i.e., as "I" and "me"; in terms of personal identity; Turner, 1982) but also as members of groups (as "we" and "us"; in terms of social identity; Tajfel, 1972). In sports contexts this means that individuals derive a sense of self and thus part of their self-worth from their belongingness to particular groups (Slater et al., 2014). Indeed, even if players take part in sports on their own (e.g., in long-distance running), they often define themselves not only as individuals but also athletes or as members of a particular team or club (Haslam, Fransen, Boen, & Reicher, 2020). The prevalence of social identities in sports contexts also has implications for sports leadership since social identities provide the foundation for *social influence* (Rees et al., 2015; Turner, 1991). More specifically, SCT

argues that self-definition in terms of shared social identity (e.g., as players of the same team) motivates people to align their perceptions and action (Haslam, 2004) and to engage in collective behavior that promotes the group's interest (Rees et al., 2015; Slater et al., 2014).

The social identity approach to leadership argues that leadership is a process that centers on a leader's capacity to build and advance a sense of shared social identity (a sense of 'we-ness') between leaders and would-be followers. In this regard, it has been argued that effective leaders engage in *identity leadership* (Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018) by: (a) defining what the group is about and clarifying what it stands for (*identity entrepreneurship*; Reicher, Haslam, & Hopkins, 2005), (b) embodying the central qualities and attributes of the group (*identity prototypicality*; Steffens, Munt, van Knippenberg, Platow, & Haslam, in press), (c) advancing and standing up for the group's goals and interests (*identity advancement*; Haslam et al., 2001), and (d) implementing activities, structures, and events that enable members of the group to live out their collective identity (*identity impresarioship*; Haslam et al., 2011). Supporting these ideas, organizational research indicates that leaders' engagement in identity leadership is associated with a range of beneficial individual and team outcomes including group members' trust in their leaders, job satisfaction, helping (citizenship) behavior, and well-being in the form of reduced burnout (van Dick et al., 2018).

Identity Leadership in Sport and Exercise Contexts

While a wealth of evidence points to unique benefits of identity leadership for organizational effectiveness (e.g., Steffens, Yang, Jetten, Haslam, & Lipponen, 2018; van Dick et al., 2018), growing evidence also speaks to the relevance of identity leadership in sports contexts. For example, previous research across both exercise and sports contexts has identified positive relationships between identity leadership and key sporting outcomes — including attendance and performance (for reviews, see Rees et al., 2015; Slater et al., 2014; Steffens et al., 2020; Stevens et al., 2017).

In exercise contexts, cross-sectional research by Stevens et al. (2018) found that the identity leadership of sports team leaders and exercise instructors was associated with greater attendance. Moreover, the researchers also found that leaders who engaged in identity leadership encouraged attendance because they enhanced group members' identification with the group (i.e., such that athletes and exercisers saw themselves as group members rather than as individuals). These patterns have been replicated and extended in a subsequent prospective study (Steffens, Slade, Stevens, Haslam, & Rees, 2019) which found (a) that exercise instructors' identity leadership was associated with both exercisers' class attendance individual effort and (b) that this was mediated by group identification. Similarly, a longitudinal study confirmed that the perceived identity leadership of leaders of exercise groups had a positive impact on subsequent attendance because it served to increase the group identification of exercise group members (Stevens et al., 2020). In this way, studies of identity leadership in exercise contexts have consistently identified group identification as a mechanism that can explain the positive relationship between identity leadership's and outcomes such as attendance.

In addition to this research from exercise contexts, a growing body of research indicates that identity leadership has an important role to play in sport team contexts as well. One of the first studies to explore these issues in such contexts was a cross-sectional study of athletes in various team sports (Steffens et al., 2014). This found that captains' identity leadership was positively related to various team and leadership outcomes among players including their team identification, task cohesion, team confidence, the captain's perceived influence. Similar conclusions have also been derived from experimental and intervention studies in team contexts. In one of the first of these, Fransen et al. (2015) experimentally manipulated athlete leaders' expressed confidence in their (basketball) team and explored the impact of this on team members' confidence and performance. Results indicated that the manipulation increased team members' confidence in the team as well as their sense of

collective efficacy and, critically, their performance on a basketball shooting task. These patterns were then replicated in an experiment where the manipulation of (soccer) team leaders' confidence again increased team members' own confidence (i.e., through an identity-based contagion effect) and both individual and team performance (Fransen et al., 2016). Moreover, the authors showed that these effects were mediated by the (male) leader's perceived identity leadership and team identification. So the more confident the leader was, the more identity leadership he was seen as displaying and this in turn increased players' identification with the team and, through that, their performance on a dribbling and shooting task. In a more recent experimental study with cyclists, Stevens et al. (2019) also found that identity entrepreneurship had a positive effect on followers' effort (i.e., increased heart rate) and performance (i.e., power output). Accordingly, existing studies of identity leadership in team sports settings corroborate findings from the exercise context by again identifying team identification as a variable that is a mediator of the positive associations between identity leadership and outcomes like such as confidence and performance.

In sum, existing evidence from both exercise and sport team contexts suggests that identity leadership is associated with a range of positive outcomes for athletes while group or team identification seems to be a central mechanism underpinning this relationship. However, studies to date have not engaged in an in-depth examination of the association between identity leadership and central team functioning outcomes (i.e., team effort and turnover intentions).

The Present Research

In the present research, we examine the link between coaches' identity leadership and team effort, turnover intentions, and performance. We also explore the role of team identification as a mediator of this relationship. In this way, we aim to contribute to a growing body of work that has examined identity leadership as a predictor of individual and team

functioning (e.g. Fransen et al., 2016; Steffens et al., 2019). More particularly, we advance this literature in four key ways.

First, while some studies have examined individual effort (Steffens et al., 2019; Stevens et al., 2019), we know little about the degree to which identity leadership also contributes to a key ingredient of team functioning in the form of *team* effort. This is an important question to address given that team effort has been found to play a crucial role in building trust within a team and enhancing performance in an organizational setting (De Jong & Elfring, 2010), and given that identity leadership has been argued to foster team members' motivation to contribute to not only individual but also *shared* goals.

Second, an additional unexplored question is how identity leadership is associated with players' willingness to stay in a team when an opportunity to leave arises. Meta-analytic results from the organizational domain indicate that people's intentions to remain part of (vs. leave) the organization are not only a critical aspect of well-functioning organizations but also have important (negative) consequences for organizational performance (Park & Shaw, 2013). In the sporting context too, there is evidence that players' willingness to remain (vs. leave) underpins team functioning. Indeed, research by Montanari, Silvestri, and Gallo (2008) found greater turnover in soccer teams in the Italian 'Serie A' to be associated with lower team performance. In the present work, we advance the social identity approach to leadership in sports by exploring whether greater identity leadership displayed by soccer coaches is associated with their ability to hold the team together by reducing players' turnover intentions.

Third, to explore external validity and reliability of previous findings, we also aim to investigate team identification as a mediator of *coaches'* identity leadership. For while the above variables have been examined in a range of contexts (e.g., Steffens et al., 2019), whether coaches' identity leadership predicts team effort and turnover intentions, and whether

it does so by building team identification, is unclear. These, then, are key questions that we sought to address in the present work.

Finally, fourth, previous work has examined identity leadership in sport and exercise contexts primarily in single teams (Slater & Barker, 2019) or those constructed for experimental purposes (Fransen et al., 2016; Fransen et al., 2015; Slater, Coffee, Barker, Haslam, & Steffens, 2019; Stevens et al., 2019). There is also some research that has examined the effects of identity leadership on team players in a natural field context (Steffens et al., 2014; Stevens et al., 2020; Fransen et al., 2019). Nevertheless, previous studies have sampled players across teams, rather than from the same team, and as a result we cannot draw any inferences about whether and how identity leadership affects the players in an entire team. The only exception is the recent work by Fransen et al. (2020), which used a sample of 30 handball teams to study the effects of coaches', team captains' and informal leaders' identity leadership. Nevertheless, more work is needed to corroborate these patterns in other team sports.

Based on the social identity theorizing and research discussed above, we sought to test the following hypotheses:

H1: Coaches' perceived identity leadership will be associated with (a) greater team effort, (b) lower turnover intentions, (c) higher individual performance, and (d) higher team performance on the part of players.

H2: Coaches' perceived identity leadership will be associated with greater team identification among players.

H3: Team identification will mediate the relationship predicted by H1.

Method

Sample and Data Collection

Data was collected in the second quarter of 2020. The local ethics committee of the first author's university granted ethical approval for the study. Informed consent was obtained

from all participants. Coaches of amateur soccer teams were approached by the fourth author and asked for their consent to contact their players to see if they would be willing to participate in the study. Two-hundred-and-eighty-five German amateur soccer players participated in an online survey. Data was screened for missing cases on essential variables and careless responders, which led to the exclusion of 38 cases. The final sample consisted of 247 male players nested in 24 teams with an average number of 10.29 participants per team. Players' age ranged from 16 to 48 years ($M = 23.74$, $SD = 6.41$), and they were in teams that were competing in teams between the fifth and ninth league; 43 players (17.4%) were in the fifth league, 38 (15.4%) in sixth league, 35 (14.2%) in the seventh league, 61 (24.7%) in the eighth league, and 70 (28.3%) in the ninth league.

Measures

Identity leadership was measured using the German version (van Dick et al., 2018) of the four items from the Identity Leadership Inventory Short Form (ILI-SF; Steffens et al., 2014; e.g., "This coach is a model member of the team"). As with all other items (unless otherwise noted below), responses were made on seven-point scales (where 1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree). However, the scale's reliability was unsatisfactory ($\alpha = .65$) when all four items were included. Inspection indicated that this was largely due to the influence of one item ("This coach acts as a champion for the team"). Excluding this from the scale led to the remaining three items having satisfactory reliability ($\alpha = .80$) and so this reduced scale was used for all subsequent analysis.

Players' *team identification* was measured using a German translation of the single-item social identification (SISI) measure ("I identify with my team."; Postmes, Haslam, & Jans, 2013).

Individual and team performance were each rated using three items. These were adapted from Decius and Erdmann (2017) and asked players to rate (a) their success in the current season, (b) their satisfaction with the current season, and (c) the extent to which they

believed they had reached their potential in the current season as a player and as a team (e.g., “Looking back, how do you rate your success in the current season as an individual player/as a team?”; where 1 = not at all successful, 7 = very successful). Both scales had good reliability (both α s = .89).

Team effort was assessed with a German translation of the five items from the measure devised by De Jong and Elfring (2010; e.g., “The members of my team work as hard as they can to achieve the team’s objectives.”; α = .85).

Turnover intentions were measured using three items adapted from Steffens et al., (2018) (e.g., “I often think about quitting my team.”; α = .85).

Data Analysis

To account for the team-level structure of the data, hypotheses were tested using multilevel path modeling with Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2017). Since all variables of interest were measured at Level-1 (players), a 1-1-1 mediation model was used (cf. Zhang, Zyphur, & Preacher, 2009). Since the number of Level-2 units (teams) was small ($N = 24$), the mediation was modeled only on the within-level.

Results

To establish whether multilevel modeling was appropriate for our data, we first calculated intraclass correlations (ICC) for all dependent variables. The ICC(1)-values in our study ranged between .06 and .50: team identification = .10, team effort = .22, turnover intentions = .09, individual performance = .06, team performance = .50. According to LeBreton and Senter (2008), ICC(1)-values of .05 or more suggest that group membership influences the results and thus we decided to account for the multilevel structure in the present study.

Means, standard deviations, and correlations are presented in Table 1.

— Insert Table 1 about here —

Tests of H1 and H2

Table 2 presents the results of regression analysis designed to explore the relationship between coaches' identity leadership and team effort, turnover intentions, self-rated individual and team performance (H1) as well as team identification (H2). In line with H1 coaches' identity leadership predicted (a) higher team effort ($b = 0.38, p < .001$), (b) lower turnover intentions ($b = -0.41, p < .001$), (c) higher individual performance ($b = 0.25, p = .006$), and (d) higher team performance ($b = 0.30, p < .001$) on the individual level. Supporting H2, coaches' identity leadership was also predictive of higher team identification on the individual level ($b = 0.40, p < .001$).

— Insert Table 2 about here —

Tests of H3

Table 2 presents the results of regression analysis designed to explore the role of team identification in mediating the relationship between coaches' identity leadership and team effort, turnover intentions, individual and team performance. In line with H3, results revealed significant indirect effects of identity leadership, via team identification, on (a) team effort ($b = 0.04, p = .037$), (c) individual performance ($b = 0.06, p = .027$), and (d) team performance ($b = 0.06, p = .002$) on the individual level. However, the indirect effect of identity leadership, via team identification, on (b) turnover intentions was only marginally significant ($b = -0.10, p = .051$).

Discussion

The present research examined how soccer coaches' perceived identity leadership predicted players' and team functioning. Supporting our hypotheses, results indicated that the extent to which coaches were perceived to engage in identity leadership was associated with players' perceived greater individual (H1c) and team performance (H1d; see also Fransen et al., 2016; Fransen et al., 2015; Stevens et al., 2019). In addition, there was evidence that coaches' identity leadership was predictive of enhanced team effort (H1a) and lower turnover

intentions (H1b). Furthermore, as hypothesised, coaches' identity leadership was associated with stronger team identification among players (H2). Finally, results provided evidence that players' team identification mediated these relationships (H3) — consistent with suggestions that it is by building team identification, that coaches' identity leadership predicts greater team effort and (individual and team) performance (although the indirect effect via team identification on turnover intentions only reached marginal significance).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The results of the present research add to a growing body of work drawing on the social identity approach to leadership in sports contexts (e.g., Fransen et al., 2015; 2020; Mertens et al., 2020; Miller, Slater, & Turner, 2020; Slater et al., 2019; Steffens et al., 2019; Stevens et al., 2018; 2020) by providing evidence of associations between coaches' identity leadership and greater team effort, lower turnover intentions and increased performance among players. A key contribution of the present work lies in uncovering links between identity leadership and team outcomes in the form of team effort and turnover intentions.

In particular, establishing a positive association between identity leadership and team effort is a much-needed extension to existing literature as this speaks to a core feature of the social identity approach to sports — namely that that centers on *collective* concerns (Rees et al., 2015; Haslam et al., 2020). In this regard, it appears that identity leadership has an important role to play in enhancing group members' inclination to contribute to a collective (e.g., a sports team) in ways that help its members realize shared goals (e.g., winning a game).

In the case of turnover intentions, our results supported the proposed negative association of identity leadership and turnover intentions. Thus, coaches who were perceived to show greater identity leadership appear to be better able to keep players on their team and to discourage them from quitting. This resonates with central ideas from social identity theorizing — namely that by enacting identity leadership and fostering identification with the team, coaches can reduce the perceived permeability of group boundaries (i.e., so that players

cannot imagine leaving the team; cf. Haslam et al., 2020; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In this way, investment in the development of identity leaders (both on the sidelines and on the field), may provide clubs and sport teams with a powerful tool for building lasting and successful squads. Initial studies of the development of identity leaders in the sports context provide insights in how this might be done (Mertens et al., 2020; Slater & Barker, 2019; see also Haslam et al., 2017).

Team identification was also identified as a central mechanism through which coaches' identity leadership impacts team functioning. In this, the present research accords with previous findings that have established group identification as a mediating variable in other sports contexts (e.g., Fransen et al., 2020; Steffens et al., 2019; Stevens et al., 2020). With the present research we were able to extend these findings and identify team identification as a crucial factor that fosters collective effort and holds the team together in sustainable ways. Moreover, by using data from a large number of soccer teams, our research provides the first team-level analysis of identity leadership in this sport and additional evidence of the broad utility of identity leadership in the field (e.g., Fransen et al., 2020). This supports claims that identity leadership is relevant to, and important for, performance in a wide variety of sports.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite its implications, the present research has a number of limitations. First, the study's cross-sectional design means we cannot make any causal inferences about the relationships we have observed. In future work, there would therefore be value in expanding on the relationships uncovered here by employing experimental designs that can shed light on causality as well as longitudinal designs that explore how these relationships unfold over time (e.g., over the course of a season).

In addition to the previous point, the present data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic, which had (and continues to have) a significant impact on sports teams, since

training sessions, games or even whole seasons have been cancelled or suspended. Thus, more research under different circumstances is therefore needed to render the present results generalizable to other contexts.

While we were able to account for the team-level structure of the data using multilevel mediation analyses, the relatively small number of teams ($N = 24$) also meant that we were not able to examine the relationships at the collective team-level. Given that identity leadership centers around a sense of ‘we-ness’ among followers (Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens et al., 2014), it would thus be worthwhile examining the extent to which sharedness in these experiences among team members can explain additional variance. Future research should therefore further engage in multilevel investigation of identity leadership with larger samples that allow for between-level tests of hypotheses (cf. Zhang et al., 2009).

As for the use of the short form of the Identity Leadership Inventory, the four items scale showed low reliability in the present sample, while a reduced three-item measure (excluding the prototypicality item) reduced the scale’s reliability in the present sample. In light of other work from the context of soccer that found the scale to be reliable (Fransen et al., 2016), we can only speculate about reasons for these findings (e.g., the coach might have been seen as above and different from typical players in the teams examined here) and so it might be worth exploring in future work whether there is any important (hitherto unobserved) contextual variation in of the form that identity leadership takes.

While the positive association of identity leadership and team identification seems to be generalizable across different sports contexts, further research is also needed to explain *why* increased identification leads to positive outcomes. A first step in this direction has been taken by Fransen, et al. (2020), who recently established psychological safety as an underlying mechanism of why team identification relates to team functioning and well-being outcomes.

Conclusion

The present research investigated the capacity for coaches' identity leadership to predict team functioning in the context of amateur soccer. Results support claims that this has an important role to play in encouraging team effort and performance and that it does so by increasing players' identification with the team. Reflecting back on our opening quotation, we would therefore suggest that identity leadership is a key component of the success of coaches like Klopp. For by focusing their energies on creating and promoting a sense of 'us' within their teams they help to create an essential platform for that team's functioning. As Pepijn Lijnders, Klopp's assistant manager at Liverpool observed, "Jürgen creates a family. We always say: 30 per cent tactics, 70 per cent team building" (Herbert, 2017).

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Table 1*Descriptive statistics and inter-correlations of variables in Study 1*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Identity leadership	5.85	1.01	-					
2. Team identification	5.96	1.21	.34**	-				
3. Team effort	5.16	1.05	.31**	.28**	-			
4. Turnover intentions	2.24	1.39	-.31**	-.60**	-.28**	-		
5. Individual performance	4.20	1.43	.12	.20**	.00	-.18**	-	
6. Team performance	4.53	1.41	.21**	.25**	.32**	-.31**	.24**	-

Note. $N = 245-247$. ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed)

Table 2

Results of multilevel analyses predicting team identification, team effort, individual/team performance, and turnover intentions.

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>p</i>
Outcome: Team identification			
Identity leadership	0.40	0.09	<.001
Outcome: Team effort			
IV			
Identity Leadership	0.38	0.10	<.001
IVs			
Identity leadership (a)	0.36	0.06	<.001
Team identification (b)	0.12	0.06	.035
Indirect effect (a*b)	0.04	0.02	.037
Outcome: Turnover intentions			
IV			
Identity leadership	-0.41	0.09	<.001
IVs			
Identity leadership (a)	0.14	0.07	.051
Team identification (b)	-0.73	0.12	<.001
Indirect effect (a*b)	-0.10	0.05	.051
Outcome: Individual performance			
IV			
Identity leadership	0.25	0.09	.006
IVs			
Identity leadership (a)	0.31	0.07	<.001
Team identification (b)	0.20	0.11	.056
Indirect effect (a*b)	0.06	0.03	.027

Outcome: Team performance			
IV			
Identity leadership	0.30	0.07	<.001
IVs			
Identity leadership (a)	0.31	0.05	<.001
Team identification (b)	0.19	0.07	.004
Indirect effect (a*b)	0.06	0.02	.002

Note. Level 1 (players): $N = 245$ - 246 . Level 2 (teams): $N = 24$. All effects are modeled on the within-level.

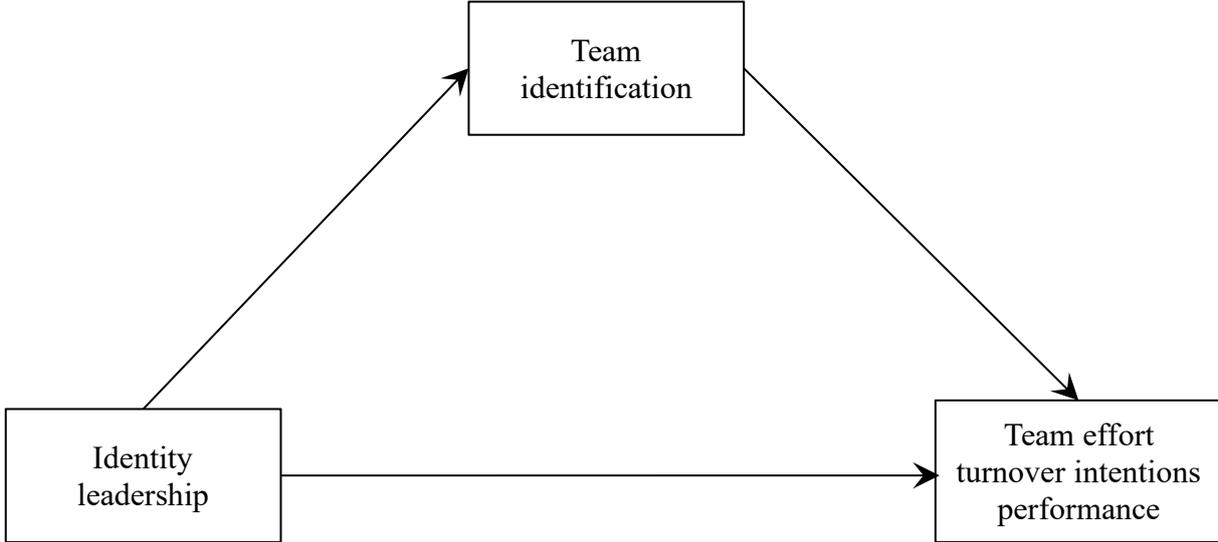


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

Appendix D: Manuscript 4

**How to Capture Leader's Vision Articulation? Development and Validation of the
Vision Articulation Questionnaire (VAQ)**

Authors: Henning Krug*, Steffen E. Schummer*, Kathleen Otto (*authors contributed equally)

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How to capture leader's vision articulation? Development and validation of the Vision Articulation Questionnaire (VAQ)

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Abstract

Leader's vision articulation is recognized as a vital part of successful leadership. Despite that the sound measurement of vision articulation has been widely neglected by scholars so far. Therefore, we developed and validated a 22-item instrument to comprehensively measure leader's vision articulation in two studies (overall $N = 496$). Theoretically derived dimensions are: Comprehensibility, Empowerment, Self-worth, Salience and Continuity of Collective Values, Relation to and Change of Intermediate Goals, Promotion and Prevention Focus, and Personalization. CFA supported a revised seven-factor model with a combined Values- and Goals-factor and no Prevention Focus-factor across the two studies. Correlations with leadership styles (i.e., transformational and identity leadership) suggest construct validity. Correlations and partial correlations with employee outcomes (i.e., affective commitment, occupational self-efficacy, innovative work behavior, job satisfaction, satisfaction with the leader, and team identification) suggest criterion validity. Regression analyses including transformational leadership and the vision articulation subscales further provide evidence for incremental criterion validity.

KEYWORDS

collective self, leadership, vision articulation

1 | INTRODUCTION

Communicating an inspiring vision is considered an important part of effective leader behavior (e.g., van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). Especially charismatic and transformational leadership are known as leadership styles that define articulating an inspiring vision as one essential element of successful leadership (e.g., Judge & Piccolo, 2004; van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). You may even find the term "visionary leadership" as a synonym for charismatic or transformational leadership (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Even though vision articulation has been a well-known part of the leadership research landscape, structured research concerning visionary leadership is rare and suffering

from methodological concerns (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). One reason for this might be that the adequate quantitative measurement of vision articulation has been widely neglected so far. Van Knippenberg and Stam (2014) conclude that "we in fact know far less about visionary leadership and its effectiveness than the field likes to believe" (p. 255). In order to close this research gap, we developed a sound measurement of vision articulation in order to provide leadership researchers with a useful tool in the study of effective visions.

While there are many definitions of visions, they are usually defined as "future images of the collective" (Stam, Lord, van Knippenberg, & Wisse, 2014, p. 1173), for example, the organization or the team (Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Shamir et al., 1993). As

Henning Krug and Steffen E. Schummer contributed equally to this study.

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reasoned by Conger and Kanungo (1987), an effective vision articulates discrepancies between the status quo and an idealized future for the group, and thus motivates followers to pursue actions in order to achieve that attractive future image. Because visions are also defined as expressions of a future state differing from the current state, they are closely related to change (Venus, Stam, & van Knippenberg, 2019). In the context of change, visions can have an uncertainty-reducing effect and provide guidance for the future (Kearney, Shemla, van Knippenberg, & Scholz, 2019).

In the present research, we define vision as “what is conceived and communicated by the leader in terms of an image of a future for a collective” (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014, p. 243). Expanding on that definition, we further understand vision as a “[...] symbol of future possibilities, which creates shared meaning and a common identity, as well as energizes and provides a challenge while linking the present with the future [...]” (Baur et al., 2016, p. 157). Visions are related to the collective identity of followers, providing them with a sense of who they *might become* as a collective in the future (Stam et al., 2014). However, a successful vision that advocates change also has to establish links between the present and the future identity of the collective in order to provide followers with a sense of self-continuity (Stam et al., 2014). We understand vision communication as a part of visionary leadership, defined by van Knippenberg and Stam (2014) as “the verbal communication of an image of a future for a collective with the intention to persuade others to contribute to the realization of that future” (p. 243). Along with Stam et al. (2014) we define vision articulation as “successful” when it is able to motivate followers to contribute to the realization of that vision.

To shed further light on that motivational process, it is important to look at the self-concept since some authors argue that visions are closely related to the self-concept of followers (e.g., Shamir et al., 1993). The self-concept has been defined as “the knowledge a person has about him or her self” (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004, p. 827). Leaders engaging in effective vision communication are able to relate to the values and identities of their followers, and thus connect the vision to the self-definition of the follower (Shamir et al., 1993). Van Knippenberg and Stam (2014) reasoned that elements like idealization of the future, values and identity, etc. are not necessary to define a future image as a vision but are rather to be seen as elements determining the effectiveness of a vision. This relates to research about vision strength conducted by Berson, Shamir, Avolio, and Popper (2001). The authors derived 12 content themes from the literature on visionary and transformational leadership that are associated with vision strength (e.g., optimistic picture of the future). These themes were also used by other scholars to examine the mechanisms behind effective visions (Fiset & Boies, 2019; Sosik & Dinger, 2007). The seminal research by Berson and colleagues makes an important contribution to the investigation of effective elements in vision content. However, while these themes certainly constitute elements that are associated with vision strength, they were not derived from theoretical reasoning but from their appearance in the transformational leadership literature. This bears the risk of missing out on important

elements of vision that could be identified by adopting a more theory-guided approach. Thus, we think it is important to extend the previous research and thoroughly derive dimensions of effective vision articulation from a theoretical standpoint that provides a framework of *why* certain elements are associated with strong or effective visions.

Since the essence of vision is concerned with communicating collective outcomes and the intent to move the collective toward the achievement of these outcomes (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014), it is further related to other leadership constructs like goal setting (Locke & Latham, 2002). While visions could also be considered goals as they also refer to desired outcomes (Stam et al., 2014), there are, however, important differences between both constructs (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). The main difference between the constructs lies in their level of abstraction: goals are concrete, while visions are abstract (Vanderstucken, Schreurs, Germeys, Van den Broeck, & Proost, 2019). According to goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2002), goals are most effective when they are specific and high (i.e., hard) rather than vague or easy. This implies a focus of effective goals on the nearer future with clearly defined outcomes (Locke & Latham, 1990 cited by van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). Visions, moreover, are more distant in time and more abstract, which is why they are more suitable for more uncertain and open-ended processes like organizational change or innovation (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). Visions also do not need to be achievable, unlike goals (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). Berson, Halevy, Shamir, and Erez (2015) point out that visions and goals can be distinguished on the dimensions of temporal distance (visions being more temporally distant than goals) and hypotheticality (visions being more hypothetical). They propose that the psychological distance in a situation decides whether vision articulation or goal setting proves more effective: When psychological distance between leader and targeted audience is high (e.g., CEO communicating to stakeholders) vision (as the more distant construct) should be more effective while in daily interactions of lower level leaders with their followers goals should be more effective since the “fit” is higher (low distance between leader and audience—goals as the more proximal construct). However, it is important to note that these features are, indeed, *dimensional*. This means that some goals (e.g., long-term goals) are closer to visions than others and while the two concepts might theoretically be distinct, the line between them might not always be crystal clear in practice.

Researchers have further distinguished vision content from vision communication or vision delivery (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999; Stam et al., 2014). Vision communication refers to expressing and “selling” the image of the collective future (e.g., through dynamic gestures or eye contact, Awamleh & Gardner, 1999), while content refers to the actual information about that future that is implemented in the vision (Stam et al., 2014). Obviously, there is no communication without content and these two elements of vision, therefore, go hand in hand. Hartog and Verburg (1997) even distinguished four elements of rhetoric based on their review of the literature on charismatic leadership: actual content, composition/structure

(e.g., use of rhetorical devices), communicator style (e.g., friendly), and delivery (e.g., non-verbal aspects like gestures). While the first two aspects focus on the message itself, the latter two aspects refer to the person communicating the message. According to Stam, van Knippenberg, and Wisse (2010b), most research so far has focused on vision communication instead of vision content. However, their results showed that research on the content of visions can increase knowledge about how to increase follower performance by gaining insights in what should be communicated in visions in terms of content. Thus, in our research we will take the content of the vision into account. Speaking in the terminology of Hartog and Verburg (1997), we are focusing on the aspects referring to the message itself: content and composition. In our paper, we will refer to the combination of those aspects as “vision articulation.”

Questionnaires that capture vision articulation often suffer from methodological problems (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014), for example, they are often not clearly just measuring vision articulation but also refer to goal setting (e.g., “has a clear understanding of where we are going”; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990) or are confounded with the measurement of the outcomes of vision articulation (e.g., “is able to get others committed to his/her dream”; Podsakoff et al., 1990). This deficiency in the sound measurement of vision articulation so far goes along with a lack of understanding the underlying processes of *how* vision articulation is impacting followers (Stam, van Knippenberg, & Wisse, 2010a; Stam et al., 2014).

This is problematic because, as pointed out by van Knippenberg and Stam (2014), we will not come close to understanding the mechanisms behind effective vision articulation if we continue to measure vision articulation broadly and unidimensionally without taking into account the content of the vision. Rather vision articulation has to be operationalized as a multidimensional construct in order to being able to compare visions of different leaders to figure out the “active ingredients” in visions (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014, p. 245). If scholars continue to ignore that issue, the systematic study of differences in visions and their effectiveness is impossible (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). First steps in measurement development have been taken by Venus et al. (2019), exploring the role of continuity in visions and developing specific items to measure this continuity. Van Balen, Tarakci, and Sood (2019) also followed the call to engage in research on vision content and developed items to measure “disruptive visions” (i.e., visions that propose a drastic change in the status quo). These studies provide a great start for the quantitative measurement of vision communication and content, but there is still work to do since no measurement capturing vision articulation comprehensively exists so far to our knowledge.

To overcome this gap in research on vision articulation, we developed a questionnaire to soundly measure vision articulation. In doing that we aim at providing leadership researchers with a tool to measure certain aspects of vision articulation. Thus, scholars will be able to more thoroughly integrate vision articulation in their studies on effective leader behavior.

The contribution of our study to the visionary leadership literature lies primarily in the development of a measurement instrument

of effective vision articulation based on the theoretical mechanisms posed by Stam et al. (2014). To our knowledge, so far only broad and indifferent measures of positive vision articulation exist (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 1990) or measures that focus solely on single aspects of positive vision articulation (e.g., vision continuity, Venus et al., 2019). Moreover, by examining the validity of our vision articulation measure we extend our understanding of effective vision articulation. Furthermore, by conceptualizing vision articulation as a phenomenon that plays an important role in daily leadership communication on all organizational levels, we acknowledge the importance of team leaders' vision articulation and avoid the limitation of just focusing on C-suite visionary leadership (Ateş, Tarakci, Porck, van Knippenberg, & Groenen, 2018).

With our developed measure for vision articulation, we want to provide researchers with a diagnostic tool that enables them to further study the effectiveness of certain aspects of visions under different circumstances and taking into account the content of the delivered message. In doing that we follow the conclusion of van Knippenberg and Stam (2014) that there is not a single effective way to communicate a vision, but that the context of the vision has to be taken into account to assess its effectiveness (e.g., characteristics of followers or leaders).

1.1 | Dimensions of effective vision articulation

We based our thoughts on dimensions of effective vision articulation on theoretical work by Stam et al. (2014). The authors came up with a model on how vision articulation may stimulate followers to engage in *vision pursuit*, that is, behaviors directed toward the realization of the vision. The basic idea of the model is that leaders engaging in effective vision articulation are communicating an image of how the collective (e.g., the team) might be in the future, which then motivates followers to take actions to realize that future image of the collective. The strength of the work by Stam et al. (2014) lies in its strong theoretical framework and its comprehensiveness and was, therefore, chosen as a basis for the present research. Other attempts to define dimensions of effective vision articulation can be subsumed under the theoretical work by Stam. For example, Carton and Lucas (2018) have identified imagery (i.e., picture-like statements), specificity (i.e., clear and exact statements), achievability (i.e., statements referring to actually achievable end-states), and values (i.e., meaningful and important statements in accordance with one's values) as desirable features of vision articulation using semantic cluster analysis. These facets are also reflected in the dimensions derived in the present research based on Stam's and colleagues' (2014) work.

A fundamental part of their model of vision articulation is the concept of possible selves. Possible selves in general are considered “future-oriented parts of the self” (Stam et al., 2014, p. 1175). Markus and Nurius (1986) introduced the concept of possible selves as “individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming, and

thus provide a conceptual link between cognition and motivation" (p. 954). As such they serve as "incentives for future behavior," according to the authors (p. 954). They can refer to the individual level but can also refer to a group or collective level (van Knippenberg et al., 2004). The latter, *collective possible selves*, are defined as "a set of internalized images, thoughts, and ideas about a future of a collective that an individual or a group of individuals holds—internalized self-images concerning the collective's future" (Stam et al., 2014, p. 1176). As described above, visions usually refer to a collective, which is why collective possible selves are especially relevant when it comes to vision (Stam et al., 2014). A vision can serve as a trigger for followers to develop a mental image of how the collective can be in the future, that is, a collective possible self (Stam et al., 2014). Stam et al. (2010a) were able to demonstrate that a vision can lead to the development of a specific possible self (i.e., a follower-focused vision that addressed followers personally led to the development of an ideal possible self). Stam et al. (2014) argue that the collective possible selves based on vision articulation will lead to behavior of followers directed toward the realization of the mental image. The reason for that, according to the authors, is that possible selves serve as self-relevant standards that are to be approached (see also Higgins, 1987; Markus & Nurius, 1986). In sum, vision articulation leads to followers internalizing a certain future collective self which then stimulates followers to pursue the vision in order to make that future image of the collective reality (i.e., specific actions related to the realization of the vision). Or as Shamir et al. (1993) put it: "We 'do' things because of what we 'are', because by doing them we establish and affirm an identity for ourselves." (p. 580). In that sense, vision pursuit of followers can be seen as a self-expression of the future identity (i.e., the possible self) articulated in the vision. The theoretical model of vision articulation is depicted in Figure 1 (cf. Stam et al., 2014; van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014).

Of course, not all visions equally lead to corresponding goal-directed behavior. Certain characteristics of a vision support its effectiveness in fostering vision pursuit. Stam et al. (2014) propose that

vision-based collective possible selves should be desirable and feasible (cf. Valence-Instrumentality-Expectancy theory, Vroom, 1964), central, complex, and related to ought or ideal selves (cf. self-discrepancy theory, Higgins, 1987). One can easily imagine that a vision that seems desirable more likely leads to vision pursuit since it is just more motivating to realize an attractive future image (Stam et al., 2014). A possible self that seems more feasible is more closely related to vision pursuit since followers perceive that their goal-directed behavior is going to be successful (Stam et al., 2014). In an experimental study, desirability, and feasibility of possible selves have been shown to be related to corresponding behavior (i.e., better performance) of followers (Stam et al., 2010a). Furthermore, collective possible selves should be central to the follower, that is, important for the self-definition, to foster vision pursuit (Stam et al., 2014). Possible selves that are more central to the individual should lead to more vision pursuit since they attract more attention and the individual is motivated to engage in actions that are congruent with the self-definition (Stam et al., 2014). Also the collective possible selves should be complex, that is, more suitable to different context and more associable with lower level goals, since then there are more possibilities for vision pursuit followers can relate to (Stam et al., 2014). Lastly, the regulation focus (cf. self-discrepancy theory, Higgins, 1987, 1996) transported in the vision is important for vision pursuit (Stam et al., 2014). Both, possible selves related to an *ideal self* (e.g., connected to hopes and aspirations) or an *ought self* (e.g., related to duties and obligations) can be effective in creating vision pursuit (Higgins, 1987; Stam et al., 2014). They just imply self-regulation in a different way (Higgins, 1996). A promotion focus regulates behavior toward an ideal self and thus will induce corresponding behavior (e.g., creative behavior) while a prevention focus relates to an ought self and will, thus, induce different behaviors (e.g., task-oriented persistence) (Stam et al., 2014). In the following, as we go through the various dimensions of effective vision articulation we will come back to these characteristics and explain how they are reflected in the different dimensions. As pointed out above, there is

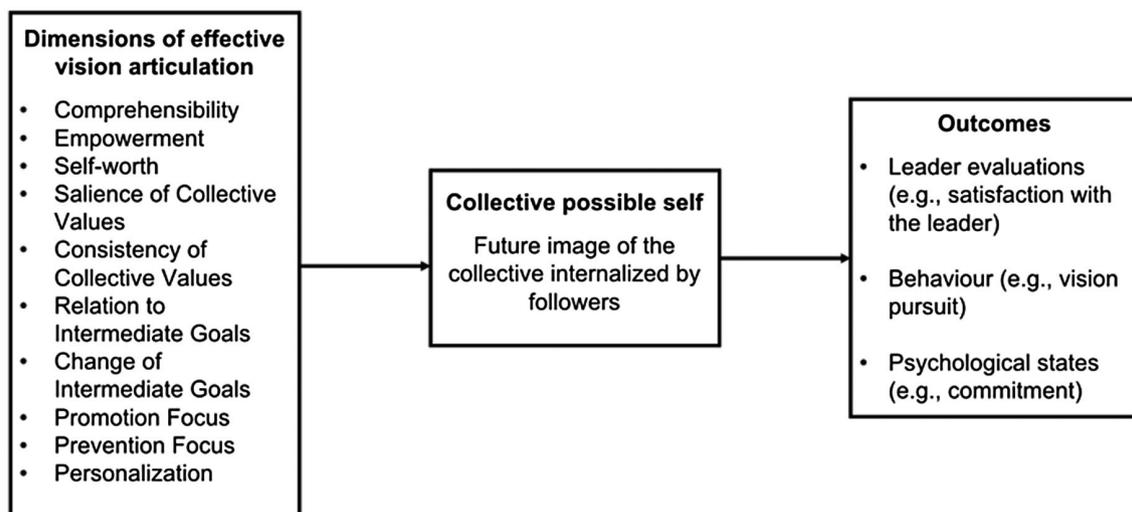


FIGURE 1 Proposed model of vision articulation (cf. Stam et al., 2014; van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014)

more than one way to perfectly articulate an effective vision and the context has to be considered. But all the dimensions identified below should contribute to the effectiveness of a communicated vision. The extent to which each dimension does, though, might vary between different contexts and situations.

1.1.1 | Comprehensibility

Stam et al. (2014) pointed out the importance of a certain rhetoric in vision articulation. The easier the rhetoric of a leader engaging in vision articulation is to process, the more likely the follower will be able to properly elaborate the contained information (i.e., elaboration ability, Stam et al., 2014), which in turn makes vision pursuit more likely. In other words, if you do not understand and internalize what your leader is talking about in the vision, you will not be able to change your behavior toward the realization of some collective possible self. Certain rhetorical devices or characteristics are facilitating or enhancing proper processing of the conveyed message (e.g., sound-related rhetorical devices like repetition or imagery-based language and metaphors, Hartog & Verburg, 1997; Stam et al., 2014; tailoring used words to the targeted audience and its level of comprehension, Eagly, 1974; Stam et al., 2014). Thus, we included *Comprehensibility* as one dimension in our measurement (e.g., “My leader expresses him-/herself clearly when he/she talks about the vision.”). This dimension also reflects the features of imagery and specificity identified by Carton and Lucas (2018) as desirable in a vision.

1.1.2 | Empowerment and self-worth

In their review, van Knippenberg et al. (2004) concluded that leader behavior is able to influence followers' self-evaluations (i.e., self-efficacy and self-esteem). While it is not exactly clear which leader behavior in particular fosters self-evaluations of followers, it is likely that behaviors included in transformational leadership like articulating confidence in the followers positively impact followers' self-evaluations (van Knippenberg et al., 2004; Stam et al., 2014).

Also self-evaluations of individuals are important for goal-directed behavior, since not only the motivation to perform a certain behavior but also the perceived ability to perform that behavior influences its likelihood (Stam et al., 2014). Accordingly, leaders can enhance vision pursuit by expressing their trust in the team's ability to reach the vision and by emphasizing the team's worth (Stam et al., 2014). First, because this will increase the team's collective self-efficacy, and thus the collective possible self seems more feasible and the vision, therefore, more attainable (Stam et al., 2014). Second, because the future collective itself is evaluated positively, and thus becomes more attractive (Stam et al., 2014). Therefore, we included the dimensions *Empowerment* (e.g., “My leader highlights that we as a team can reach the vision on our own.”) and *Self-worth* (e.g., “My leader values our team when he/she talks about the

vision.”) in our measurement of vision articulation. These dimensions, especially the empowerment component, refer to the achievability attribute identified by Carton and Lucas (2018).

1.1.3 | Salience and continuity of collective values

According to Stam et al. (2014), leaders can get followers to pursue the vision by emphasizing collective (i.e., team) values. Collective values have been recognized as an important part of visions by scholars in the field (Berson et al., 2001; Shamir et al., 1993; Stam et al., 2014). Leaders might be able to activate values in the vision that are self-relevant to followers (i.e., values that are part of the self-concept, Stam et al., 2014), which then leads to followers making a connection between the collective possible self (i.e., the future collective self of the team described in the vision) and their own self-concept. Thus, the collective possible self will be more central due to the relation to self-relevant values and also more complex, since values function in a variety of contexts (and for different people) due to their high level of abstraction (Schwartz, 1999; Stam et al., 2014). Because values are so central to the self-concept, it is further important that leaders emphasize their consistency in the vision (Stam et al., 2014). Thus, a continuity of present and future is established and individuals are motivated to keep their self-stable (i.e., establish self-consistency) through working toward the possible self-transported by the vision (Stam et al., 2014; van Knippenberg et al., 2004). This also increases the centrality of the vision-based collective possible self because the collective possible self becomes a “driver for self-consistency” (Stam et al., 2014, p. 21). In their study on visions of continuity and change, Venus et al. (2019) argued that providing a sense of continuity in visions fosters the acceptance of change among employees due to the uncertainty-reducing effect of such visions. The authors' findings supported that idea. Moreover, since previous research was able to demonstrate that inspiring visions can also be (mis)used by leaders to buffer the negative effects of their abusive supervision on followers (Fiset, Robinson, & Saffie-Robertson, 2019), values can also function as a means to establish not only effective but “ethical” visions. Thus, the *Salience of Collective Values* (e.g., “In the vision, my leader names the existing values in our team.”) and their *Consistency in the future* (e.g., “In the vision, my leader expresses that existing values of our team will continue to be relevant.”) are two dimensions of our questionnaire. The value-based dimensions of our questionnaire further resemble the value component identified by Carton and Lucas (2018).

1.1.4 | Relation to intermediate goals and change of intermediate goals

In a similar vein, leaders can increase vision pursuit by explaining the relation of the vision (i.e., the collective possible self) to intermediate collective goals (Stam et al., 2014). Goals function as a “translator” of the motivation derived from the collective possible selves

into concrete actions leading ultimately to vision pursuit (Stam et al., 2014). Stam et al. (2014) point out that information about goals related to the collective possible self (i.e., self-relevant goals) have a processing advantage since active goals facilitate access to related information (Johnson, Chang, & Lord, 2006), and important goals are protected from distraction (Shah, Friedman, & Kruglanski, 2002). This leads to the collective possible self to appear more feasible. As more goals become related to the collective possible self, its complexity also increases (Stam et al., 2014). Thus, the *Relation to Intermediate Goals* is one of our dimensions of vision articulation (e.g., “My leader articulates team goals in relation to the vision.”). According to Stam et al. (2014) yet not only the mere mentioning of vision-related intermediate goals is important to increase vision pursuit but also that leaders identify differences between current goals and goals related to the collective future self-described in the vision. Stam et al. (2014) argue with self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987), which states that people experience negative affect when they perceive that what they want to be (i.e., ideal self) or what they think they have to be (i.e., ought self) deviates from what they currently are (i.e., actual self). To resolve this negative affect they might engage in specific actions (i.e., vision pursuit) in order to eliminate the discrepancies (Stam et al., 2014; cf. Markus & Nurius, 1986). Thus, these discrepancies motivate self-enhancement—the collective possible self becomes more desirable (Stam et al., 2014). Thus, we also included the *Change of Intermediate Goals* (e.g., “My leader emphasizes the change of team goals according to the vision.”) as one dimension. The goal dimensions reflect the achievability dimension identified by Carton and Lucas (2018): By articulating specific goals, a leader can convey a sense of how the vision can be achieved.

1.1.5 | Promotion and prevention focus

While a deep dive into Higgins' self-discrepancy theory (cf. Higgins, 1987) and the related concept of regulatory focus (see e.g., Brockner & Higgins, 2001; Higgins, 1996; Higgins, Shah, & Friedman, 1997) is beyond the scope of this paper, according to Stam et al. (2014) the regulatory focus displayed in the vision (promotion vs. prevention, cf. Higgins, 1996) plays an important role in vision articulation. First, because leaders may be able to activate a certain regulatory focus in their followers with their vision, and thus influence the development of a corresponding possible self of the followers (Stam et al., 2014). Through conveying a promotion or a prevention focus in the vision, the leader might induce a certain regulatory focus in the collective, and thus motivate the team to engage in vision pursuit either to attain a certain “ideal possible self” (focus on possible gains, i.e., promotion focus) or a certain “ought possible self” (focus on avoiding possible losses, i.e., prevention focus) (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007; Stam et al., 2014). Leaders can also do that by displaying corresponding emotions (Stam et al., 2014), thus priming the followers with a certain regulatory focus. As reflected by the research of (Stam et al., 2010b) both visions revolving around positive (promotion-focused) or negative

(prevention-focused) future images can be effective depending on the fit with followers' regulatory focus. Thus, we included both *Promotion* (e.g., “In the vision, my leader emphasizes the opportunity for us to achieve success as a team.”) and *Prevention Focus* (e.g., “My leader points out that we protect our team by realizing the vision.”) as dimensions in our vision articulation measurement. In our items, we leaned on the trisection of the Work Regulatory Focus Scale (Neubert, Kacmar, Carlson, Chonko, & Roberts, 2008) and tried to reflect all of its subdimensions. The authors divided promotion focus into gains, achievement and ideals and prevention focus into security, oughts, and losses.

1.1.6 | Personalization

It can be assumed that personalization of the vision (i.e., making the vision personally matter for followers) increases psychological engagement, and thus the motivation to adequately process information about the vision (Stam et al., 2010a, 2014). Empirically, personalized visions have shown interaction effects with regulatory focus on performance (positive interaction with promotion and negative interaction with prevention focus, Stam et al. 2010a). So we decided to include *Personalization* as our final dimension (e.g., “My leader explains what effects the achievement of the vision has on me personally.”).

2 | THE PRESENT RESEARCH

In the present research, we developed and validated the Vision Articulation Questionnaire (VAQ). First, we developed items for the above mentioned dimensions of vision articulation using a deductive approach and assessed their content validity (Hinkin, 1998). We then collected data to assess factor structure as well as convergent, discriminant and criterion validity in two studies (cf. Hinkin, 1998). In Study 1 we used exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses as well as modification indices for factor retention and item reduction. Moreover, we established construct validity by examining the assumed factor structure and the relation of the VAQ subscales to other relevant leadership styles and behaviors. We also established criterion validity of the VAQ for relevant outcomes. Finally, in Study 2 we aimed to replicate and extend the results of Study 1 by again conducting confirmatory factor analysis and assessing criterion validity with a broader range of outcomes.

2.1 | Item generation and content validation

We used a deductive approach in item development (Hinkin, 1998). Based on the theoretical work by Stam et al. (2014) and in consideration of the definition of vision and visionary leadership by van Knippenberg and Stam (2014) and established scales measuring aspects of vision articulation (Podsakoff et al., 1990; Rafferty & Griffin, 2004; Venus et al., 2019) we developed 45 items for

the following dimensions of effective vision articulation: Rhetoric, Optimism, Empowerment, Values, Regulatory Focus, Relation to Intermediate Goals, and Personalization. Specifically, for items related to regulatory focus we further considered and drew from the Work Regulatory Focus Scale (Neubert et al., 2008) and the work of Baas, De Dreu, and Nijstad (2008), Higgins, (1997, 2006), Idson, Liberman, and Higgins (2000), Stam et al. (2010a, 2010b), as well as Stam, van Knippenberg, Wisse, and Pieterse (2016). These initial 45 items were discussed with an expert panel consisting of the authors and six other researchers in the field of IO psychology. Based on this discussion, the dimensional structure was slightly revised. Overall, 25 items were deleted, 20 items were revised or kept in their original form, and 17 items newly developed, resulting in 37 items for the above mentioned dimensions: Comprehensibility, Self-worth, Empowerment, Salience of Collective Values, Continuity of Collective Values, Relation to Intermediate Goals, Change of Intermediate Goals, Promotion Focus, Prevention Focus, Personalization. These 37 items were presented to $N = 20$ graduate students of psychology with a major in Work and Organizational psychology in order to assess content validity (Hinkin, 1998). They were asked to sort the randomly ordered items into the 10 dimensions or a non-specified "other"-category. Of the 37 items, 22 were put in the wrong category by 20% or more of the students (cf. Podsakoff et al., 1990) and were reassessed: six items were kept in their original form, seven items were revised, and nine items were deleted. One item that was not put in the wrong category by at least 20% of participants was also revised to avoid redundancy. Moreover, eight items were newly developed. Accordingly, the revised set of items consisted of 36 items: Comprehensibility (4), Self-worth (3), Empowerment (3), Salience of Collective Values (3), Continuity of Collective Values (3), Relation to Intermediate Goals (3), Change of Intermediate Goals (4), Promotion Focus (5), Prevention Focus (5), Personalization (3).

3 | STUDY 1: FACTOR STRUCTURE, ITEM REDUCTION, AND ESTABLISHING CONSTRUCT AND CRITERION VALIDITY

In Study 1, we were interested in reducing our initial item set and establishing construct and criterion validity via examining the assumed factor structure and the relation of the VAQ subscales to other relevant leadership styles and behaviors. More precisely, since formulating a vision is one dimension of transformational leadership we examined the relations of the VAQ subscales with dimensions of transformational leadership. In general, all dimensions of transformational leadership should be positively related to the VAQ subscales. However, we assume that the VAQ subscales should correlate highest with the vision dimension (convergent validity) of transformational leadership. Furthermore, with regard to convergent validity, we expect subdimensions of transformational leadership that concern the collective identity of the team or describe leader behaviors that are relevant for the team as a whole (i.e., Providing an Appropriate Model, Fostering the Acceptance of Group

Goals) to correlate high with the VAQ. As for discriminant validity, correlations should be lowest for subscales of transformational leadership focusing on the individual or the performance (i.e., High Performance Expectations, Individualized Support, and Intellectual Stimulation). Moreover, we examined the relations to the dimensions of identity leadership. Identity leadership is a leadership style that uses social identity processes to motivate the individual to strive for collective goals and to facilitate the influence of the leader (Steffens et al., 2014). Leaders use vision articulation to establish a specific collective possible self to motivate followers to pursue defined organizational outcomes. Hence, vision articulation is one way to use social identity processes to influence followers and should, therefore, highly relate to identity leadership (convergent validity).

For criterion validity, we were interested in covering all the outcome categories of vision articulation proposed by van Knippenberg and Stam (2014) (i.e., leadership evaluations, psychological states and behavior). We, therefore, chose satisfaction with the leader (leadership evaluation), team identification, and affective commitment (psychological states), since these outcomes were also previously related to transformational (Banks, McCauley, Gardner, & Guler, 2016; Delegach, Kark, Katz-Navon, & Van Dijk, 2017) and identity leadership (van Dick et al., 2018), both of which are leadership styles that consider vision articulation a crucial leader behavior. As for the outcome category of behavior, we were interested in the relations of the VAQ subscales with vision pursuit as the central outcome of vision articulation (Stam et al., 2014). Thus, we created a short scale for vision pursuit based on the work of Stam et al. (2014). Stam and colleagues assumed that vision articulation influences two aspects of vision pursuit, persistence in vision pursuit, that is, "putting in more effort and/or putting in effort for a longer period of time to realize the vision" (Stam et al., 2014, p. 1174) and flexibility in vision pursuit, that is, "being creative in reaching the vision" (Stam et al., 2014, p. 1174).

3.1 | Method

3.1.1 | Procedure and sample

To this end, we collected data in four organizations based in Germany (two marketing companies, one consumer goods manufacturer, and one university) via an online-questionnaire. After excluding 24 participants because they reported that their leader did not communicate a vision at all, our final sample consisted of $N = 191$ participants. Mean age was 34.49 years ($SD = 12.01$) with 71.2% female participants and an average organizational tenure of 5.50 years ($SD = 4.02$).

3.1.2 | Description of used measures

Participants were asked to respond to our 36 VAQ items on a scale from 1 = never to 5 = regularly/almost always.

Identity leadership was assessed with the four items of the German version of the Identity Leadership Inventory-Short Form (ILI-SF, van Dick et al., 2018) on a scale from 1 = disagree completely to 7 = agree completely (e.g., "My immediate supervisor is a model member of the team.").

Transformational leadership was assessed with the German adaption (Heinitz & Rowold, 2007) of the Transformational Leadership Inventory (TLI) by (Podsakoff et al., 1990). Response format was 1 = never to 5 = always. Subscales were Articulating a Vision (e.g., "Has a clear understanding of where we are going."), Providing an Appropriate Model (e.g., "Leads by example."), Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals (e.g., "Fosters collaboration among work groups."), High Performance Expectations (e.g., "Will not settle for second best."), Individualized Support (e.g., "Shows respect for my personal feelings."), Intellectual Stimulation (e.g., "Asks questions that prompt me to think."), Contingent Reward (e.g., "Always gives me positive feedback when I perform well.").

To assess vision pursuit, we developed a scale for each of the two proposed aspects. The persistence subscale (four items, e.g., "I am ready to actively contribute to the achievement of the vision for a longer period of time.") and the flexibility subscale (three items, e.g., "I develop new ideas on how I can contribute to the achievement of the vision.") were rated on a scale from 1 = never to 5 = regularly/almost always. Affective commitment (e.g., "I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.") was assessed with the subscale Affective Commitment from the Commitment Scale (Allen & Meyer, 1990) in the German version from Schmidt, Hollmann, and Sodenkamp (1998). Response format was 1 = never to 5 = always. Satisfaction with the leader was assessed with a single Kunin-item ("All in all, how satisfied are you with your leader?"; Neuberger & Allerbeck, 1978). Identification with the own team was measured with a single item on a scale from 1 = completely disagree to 5 = completely agree ("I identify with my team.;" Postmes, Haslam, & Jans, 2013; own translation).

3.1.3 | Analytical procedure

We ran confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) with Mplus (Version 7.31) and examined modification indices in line with Sexton, King-Kallimanis, Morgan, and McGee (2014) to check if item reduction is necessary. As for factors with a close theoretical relation (i.e., Empowerment/Self-worth, Collective Values, Intermediate Goals, and Promotion/Prevention focus), we further inspected inter-correlations to assess possible factor retention. Moreover, we identified items with poor loadings on their respective factors, substantial cross-loadings and residual variances. We also examined factor loadings again with an exploratory factor analysis (EFA). We then assessed the appropriateness of our proposed model by comparing its model fit with those of alternative models nested within the proposed model based on the final item set. Furthermore, to assess

convergent and discriminant validity, we calculated bivariate correlations with other leadership models.

To establish criterion validity, we examined the relations via zero-order correlations and partial correlations of the subscales of the VAQ with the employee outcomes. As for incremental criterion validity, we performed regression analyses using the VAQ subscales and the TLI (Heinitz & Rowold, 2007; Podsakoff et al., 1990) as an established measure of transformational leadership (i.e., a leadership construct very closely related to vision articulation, e.g., Berson et al., 2001) as predictors for the above mentioned outcomes.¹

3.2 | Results

3.2.1 | Factor retention, item reduction, and factor structure

First, we performed CFAs of our proposed 10-factor model including all items (Model A). The Empowering- and the Self-worth-factor ($r = .86$), the two Values-factors ($r = .95$), as well as the two Goals-factors ($r = .89$), and the Promotion Focus- and Prevention Focus-Factors ($r = .89$) were highly correlated, indicating that they measure nearly the same aspects of vision articulation. Therefore, we decided to merge these factors, except the Empowering- and the Self-worth-factors since their correlation was just above the criterion of $r = .85$ (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) and theoretically their content should not be subsumed under an overall factor. We reduced items based on the resulting seven-factor model by performing a CFA of a seven-factor model on the initial items (Model B). We detected problematic items by examining their modification indices for cross-loadings and residual covariances, loadings on their respective factors, residual variances, and content (Sexton et al., 2014). We stepwise excluded those items with substantial cross-loadings and/or residual covariances ($MI > 10$) that could be deleted from their respective factor without losing important aspects of the theoretical construct of the factor. In total, 14 items were deleted in this step. All items constructed to measure Prevention Focus showed either substantial cross-loadings or small loadings on the merged factor, whereas most of the items constructed to measure Promotion Focus were not problematic. This indicated that the merged factor models on the Promotion Focus items, and therefore measures the respective construct. Second, we deleted one item with a factor loading under the threshold of $.70$ (Kolenikov, 2009). Finally, to address the issues of problematic factor loadings with a more explorative method, we ran an EFA that we set up to extract seven factors on the retained items. We excluded one item due to a substantial cross-loading. The final item set consisted of 22 items: Comprehensibility (2), Self-worth (2), Empowerment (2),

¹We did not include the ILI-SF ($N = 146$) as a predictor, since the scale was not included in the questionnaire for one of the organizations.

Collective Values (6), Intermediate Goals (4), Promotion Focus (3), Personalization (3). We interpreted global model fit based on a constellation of χ^2 , Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square of Error Approximation (RMSEA) and its 90% confidence interval, and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) similar to van Dick et al. (2018). We interpreted the model fit based on the constellation of these indices (Chen, Curran, Bollen, Kirby, & Paxton, 2008). Model A and B poorly fitted the data, whereas Model B' yielded an acceptable fit (see Table 2). Furthermore, we performed a series of CFAs to assess the factor structure of the VAQ. Furthermore, we compared our adapted seven-factor model (B') with alternative models including a single-factor model (C), a two-factor model with a Composition factor comprising the Comprehensibility items and a Content-factor comprising the rest of the items (D), two eight-factor models with either two Goals- or two Values-factors, mapping the respective items to their initially proposed factors (Model E), and a six-factor model with an overall Empowerment/Self-worth-factor comprising all items of the Empowerment- and Self-worth-factors (Model F), based on the mentioned fit indices and χ^2 -difference test (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Overall, fit indices for Models B' and E yielded acceptable to good fit, whereas Model C, D, and F did not (see Table 2). Moreover, for B' and E all items loaded significantly with substantial standardized regression weights, ranging from .76 to .98, on their respective factors. Since Model B' was the most parsimonious of the good fitting models and due to the high correlations of the initially proposed two Values-factors and the two Goals-factors, we decided that Model B' represented our data best. Means, standard deviations, and reliabilities of the final subscales are presented in Table 3.

3.2.2 | Convergent and discriminant validity

We calculated bivariate correlations between the dimensions of the VAQ and the ILI-SF (van Dick et al., 2018) as well as the TLI (Heinitz & Rowold, 2007; Podsakoff et al., 1990) and its subscales. We expected all dimensions of vision articulation to be significantly and positively related to the ILI-SF and the TLI and its subscales. As for the TLI, we expected the vision dimension to have the highest correlations with the VAQ, followed by the more group-related dimensions (i.e., Providing an Appropriate Model, Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals) suggesting convergent validity. Individual- or performance-focused TLI dimensions (i.e., High Performance Expectations, Individualized Support, and Intellectual Stimulation) should have the lowest correlations with the VAQ (discriminant validity). With the exception of Self-worth, the vision subscale of the TLI had the highest correlation with the VAQ subscales compared to the other TLI dimensions, thus mostly supporting our assumptions. As for discriminant validity, results also mostly support our assumptions, with the exception of the Intellectual Stimulation subscale. For a detailed picture of VAQ correlations with identity and transformational leadership see Table 3.

3.2.3 | Criterion validity

Zero-order correlations of the VAQ subscales with the outcomes ranged between $r = .23$ and $r = .70$ (see Table 4), suggesting criterion validity. Surprisingly, there were no substantial differences in the relations with the outcomes between the VAQ subscales. However, we did find overall differences between the outcomes. With respect to vision pursuit, the persistence subscale showed high correlations with the VAQ subscales (between $r = .39$ and $r = .48$), whereas the flexibility subscales showed mediocre correlations (between $r = .28$ and $r = .37$). As for the other outcomes, affective commitment had the smallest correlations with the VAQ subscales (between $r = .23$ and $r = .28$). Team identification had mediocre ($r = .35$ and $r = .44$) and satisfaction with the leader had high (between $r = .59$ and $r = .70$) correlations with the VAQ subscales. Partial correlations controlling for the other VAQ subscales revealed that only some subscales showed unique relations with satisfaction with the leader. In particular, Comprehensibility ($r = .34, p < .001$), Self-worth ($r = .21, p < .01$), and Personalization ($r = .20, p < .01$) were positively related to satisfaction with the leader. None of the other partial correlations were significant.

3.2.4 | Incremental criterion validity

In order to examine incremental validity, we performed regression analyses using the VAQ subscales and the TLI (Heinitz & Rowold, 2007; Podsakoff et al., 1990) as predictors for the outcomes (i.e., Vision Pursuit–Persistence, Vision Pursuit– Flexibility, affective commitment, team identification, satisfaction with the leader) as shown in Table 5. To deal with the problem of multicollinearity of the VAQ subscales, we used ridge regression analyses instead of standard multiple regressions (Hoerl & Kennard, 1970; McDonald, 2010; Walker, 2004). One has to note that in ridge regressions the beta coefficients are smaller than in standard regressions due to the used penalization technique that accounts for more robust results with regard to multicollinearity. Moreover, R^2 has to be interpreted with caution since R^2 in ridge regression decreases as a function of the ridge parameter k that might vary between different regression analyses (for more information see McDonald, 2010). Thus, regarding ridge regressions, it is not adequate to inspect stepwise regressions and to use differences in R^2 to draw conclusions on incremental validity. So we only report the total R^2 of the regression including all predictors (cf. Table 5). Results show that various VAQ subscales show unique relations beyond the TLI for all tested outcomes except affective commitment, thus suggesting incremental criterion validity. Specifically, Comprehensibility ($\beta = .08, p < .01$), Empowerment ($\beta = .09, p < .001$), Intermediate Goals ($\beta = .09, p < .01$), and Promotion Focus ($\beta = .07, p < .05$) showed unique effects on the outcome of Vision Pursuit– Persistence. Intermediate Goals ($\beta = .07, p < .01$) showed unique effects on the outcome of Vision Pursuit– Flexibility. Comprehensibility ($\beta = .07, p < .01$), Empowerment ($\beta = .05, p < .05$), Intermediate Goals ($\beta = .06, p < .05$) and Promotion Focus

($\beta = .06, p < .05$) showed unique effects on the outcome of team identification. Comprehensibility ($\beta = .18, p < .001$), Empowerment ($\beta = .07, p < .05$), Self-worth ($\beta = .09, p < .05$), and Personalization ($\beta = .08, p < .01$) showed unique effects on the outcome of satisfaction with the leader.

3.3 | Discussion

Study 1 tested the factor structure of the VAQ and investigated convergent, discriminant and criterion validity. The originally proposed 10-factor model seemed overly detailed given the very high correlations of the Values, Goals, and Prevention/Promotion Focus subdimensions respectively. It seems that the differentiation between *Salience* and *Continuity* of Collective Values and *Relation to* and *Change of* Intermediate Goals was not possible for employees. As for Prevention Focus, it also seemed impossible for employees to differentiate the items from those measuring Promotion Focus. While, unlike the values- and goal-based dimensions, there is a clear theoretical line between promotion and prevention focus as outlined above, the factors correlated highly. However, after factor retention, the CFA results support the revised seven-factor model with a final set of 22 items for the remaining factors (i.e., Comprehensibility, Self-Worth, Empowerment, Collective Values, Intermediate Goals, Promotion Focus, and Personalization). The fit of the revised seven-factor model was significantly better than competing models. As for convergent and discriminant validity, bivariate correlations with identity leadership and the subdimensions of transformational leadership further support our model. We especially anticipated high correlations with the vision subscale of the TLI as this dimension should be closest to our measure of vision articulation. With one exception this assumption was met by the results. Moreover, we also found high positive correlations for two other subdimensions of transformational leadership as expected (i.e., Providing an Appropriate Model, Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals). In support of our assumptions concerning discriminant validity, correlations were also positive but less high for subdimensions of transformational leadership focusing more exclusively on the individual or the performance (i.e., High Performance Expectations, Individualized Support)—with the exception of some correlations with Intellectual Stimulation.

As for criterion validity, the results suggest that all VAQ subscales show substantial positive relationships with relevant outcomes (i.e., team identification, affective commitment, satisfaction with the leader, and vision pursuit). Since actual vision pursuit can be seen as the most important outcome of successful vision articulation (cf. Stam et al., 2014), the positive correlations with the persistence and flexibility subscales of vision pursuit are the most striking results. As the scale to measure vision pursuit was also newly developed, more research is needed, though, to establish the validity of these results. Furthermore, we could only find some unique relations of the VAQ subscales with relevant outcomes most of which with satisfaction with the leader. This indicates that the VAQ taps concepts of vision articulation that are most relevant for employees' satisfaction with

the leader. We revisited criterion validity in Study 2 to further investigate criterion validity with a larger sample. As for incremental criterion validity, the VAQ proved to be a measure that has unique effects on outcomes beyond the TLI as an established measure of transformational leadership. Especially the subscales of Comprehensibility, Empowerment and Intermediate Goals seemed to be useful showing unique relations with four of our five outcomes. However, the VAQ did not show effects beyond transformational leadership for affective commitment.

4 | STUDY 2: REPLICATING CONSTRUCT VALIDITY AND CRITERION VALIDITY

In Study 2 we aimed to replicate the findings of Study 1 with a larger sample. Similar to Study 1, we examined the factor structure of the VAQ. Moreover, in order to replicate and extend criterion validity, we examined the relations of the subscales of the VAQ with the employee outcomes of Study 1 (vision pursuit, affective commitment, and satisfaction with the leader) and additional employee outcomes (occupational self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and innovative work behavior; cf. van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014, for an overview of vision-related outcomes).

4.1 | Method

4.1.1 | Sample

Three-hundred-fifty white-collar workers were recruited from the German population via an online panel provider and voluntarily took part in an online survey. After excluding 18 participants because they reported that their leader did not communicate a vision at all and 27 participants due to an editing time below 3 minutes, our final sample consisted of $N = 305$ participants. Mean age was 45.29 years ($SD = 11.12$) with 55.1% female participants. All participants were employed (86.6% full-time, 13.4% part-time) in organizations of diverse sectors (16.4% public service, 9.2% industry and engineering, 8.2% health and social service, and 8.2% education and research) with an average size of 8,477.59 employees ($SD = 44,733.19$). Average team size was 18.29 ($SD = 27.30$). Average job tenure was 20.45 years ($SD = 10.44$) and average organizational tenure was 12.64 years ($SD = 9.50$). On average, participants worked 7.02 years under their current leader ($SD = 6.72$).

4.1.2 | Design and description of used measures

Similar to Study 1, participants answered an online survey containing the revised 22 items of the VAQ and items concerning vision pursuit, occupational self-efficacy, innovative work behavior, job satisfaction and satisfaction with the leader. The VAQ was rated on a scale from 1 = never to 5 = regularly/almost always.

Vision pursuit was again measured with the persistence subscale (e.g., "I am ready to actively contribute to the achievement of the vision for a longer period of time.") and the flexibility subscale (e.g., "I develop new ideas on how I can contribute to the achievement of the vision.") of Study 1, rated on a scale from 1 = never to 5 = regularly/almost always. Occupational self-efficacy (e.g., "Whatever comes my way in my job, I can usually handle it.") was measured with a German short version of the occupational self-efficacy scale (Rigotti, Schyns, & Mohr, 2008). Each item was rated on a scale from 1 = not at all true to 6 = totally true. Innovative work behavior (e.g., "How often do you obtain approval for innovative ideas") was measured with a German version of the Innovative Behavior Inventory (IBI; Lukes & Stephan, 2017) translated by van Dick et al. (2018). Each item was rated on a scale from 1 = never to 7 = always. Affective commitment (e.g., "I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.") was assessed with the subscale Affective Commitment from the Commitment Scale (Allen & Meyer, 1990) in the German version from Schmidt et al., (1998). Response format was 1 = never to 5 = always. Job satisfaction was assessed with a single 5-point Kunin-item (e.g., "All in all, how satisfied are you with your work?"; Baillod & Semmer, 1994). Similarly, satisfaction with the leader was assessed with a single 5-point Kunin-item ("All in all, how satisfied are you with your leader?"; Neuberger & Allerbeck, 1978).

4.2 | Results

4.2.1 | Factor structure

We performed the same model comparisons as in Study 1 and assessed the model fit (see Table 6). Corroborating the findings of Study 1, fit indices suggest that models B' and E fit the data well. Moreover, for B' and E all items loaded significantly with substantial standardized regression weights, ranging from .82 to .96, on their respective factors. Thus, the results replicate the findings of Study 1, suggesting that model B' represented our data best. Table 7 contains the means, standard deviations, and reliabilities of the study variables.

4.2.2 | Criterion validity

Zero-order correlations of the VAQ subscales with the outcomes ranged between $r = .33$ and $r = .76$ (see Table 7). Similar to Study 1, the results showed no substantial differences in the relationships with the outcomes between the VAQ subscales. However, we did find substantial overall differences between the outcomes in their relationships with the VAQ subscales as in Study 1. With respect to vision pursuit, we found the same pattern as in Study 1, but with higher correlations (persistence: between $r = .54$ and $r = .62$; flexibility: between $r = .45$ and $r = .57$). As for the other outcomes, affective commitment showed higher correlations as in Study 1 (between $r = .41$ and $r = .56$), and satisfaction with the leader similar correlations as in Study 1 (between $r = .57$ and $r = .76$) with the VAQ subscales.

Occupational self-efficacy (between $r = .35$ and $r = .42$), innovative work behavior (between $r = .33$ and $r = .48$), and job satisfaction (between $r = .43$ and $r = .53$) showed mediocre to high correlations with the VAQ subscales. Partial correlations controlling for the other VAQ subscales revealed that all subscales showed unique relations with the outcomes. Comprehensibility was positively related to Vision Pursuit - Persistence ($r = .13, p < .05$) and satisfaction with the leader ($r = .13, p < .05$). Empowerment was positively related to Vision Pursuit - Flexibility ($r = .14, p < .05$) and innovative work behavior ($r = .13, p < .05$). Self-worth was positively related to satisfaction with the leader ($r = .39, p < .001$). Collective Values were positively related to affective commitment ($r = .14, p < .05$). Intermediate Goals were positively related to Vision Pursuit - Persistence ($r = .16, p < .01$) and flexibility ($r = .14, p < .05$). Promotion Focus was positively related to affective commitment ($r = .20, p < .01$), Vision Pursuit - Flexibility ($r = .15, p < .01$), occupational self-efficacy ($r = .12, p < .05$), and innovative work behavior ($r = .18, p < .01$).

4.3 | Discussion

Study 2 provides further support for the proposed factor structure of the VAQ. The CFA results corroborated Study 1 and supported the revised seven-factor model. Together, Studies 1 and 2 provide solid support for the proposed factor structure of the VAQ.

Furthermore, Study 2 provided further evidence for the criterion validity of the VAQ. The seven dimensions were significantly related to relevant outcomes: Highest correlations were found for satisfaction with the leader (up to $r = .76$), followed by persistence in vision pursuit (up to $r = .62$). Correlations with the other outcomes (i.e., flexibility in vision pursuit, affective commitment, occupational self-efficacy, innovative work behavior, and job satisfaction) were all mediocre to high. The results of Study 2 support the criterion validity of the VAQ beyond Study 1 since we established positive correlations with additional relevant outcomes (i.e., occupational self-efficacy, innovative work behavior, and job satisfaction) and found more unique relations with these outcomes, probably due to the bigger sample size of Study 2. Noticeably, in contrast to Study 1 we found some unique relations to vision pursuit.

In sum, more studies are needed, however, to further explore the predictive validity of the VAQ. Since vision pursuit can be seen as the most relevant outcome of vision articulation (cf. Stam et al., 2014), future research should especially examine the relationship of the VAQ subscales and the vision pursuit subscales with a variety of samples to establish generalization of our results. This is all the more relevant since the scales to measure vision pursuit have also been newly developed by us.

5 | GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present paper comprises findings from two studies (overall $N = 496$) with German samples, in which we validated an

TABLE 1 Vision Articulation Questionnaire—original German items and English translation

Dimension	Original German item	English translation ^a
Comprehensibility	Meine Führungskraft drückt sich verständlich aus, wenn sie über die Vision spricht. (*)	My leader expresses him-/herself clearly when he/she talks about the vision. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft ist gut verständlich, wenn sie über die Vision spricht. (*)	My leader is well understood when he/she talks about the vision. (*)
	<i>Meine Führungskraft spricht auf bildliche Art und Weise über die Vision.</i>	<i>My leader uses image-based language when he/she talks about the vision.</i>
	<i>Meine Führungskraft verwendet rhetorische Stilmittel, wenn sie über die Vision spricht (z.B. Aufzählungen, Wiederholungen, etc.).</i>	<i>My leader uses rhetorical devices when he/she talks about the vision (e.g., numerations, repetitions, etc.).</i>
Self-worth	Meine Führungskraft wertschätzt unser Team, wenn sie über die Vision spricht. (*)	My leader values our team when he/she talks about the vision. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft drückt ihren Respekt für unser Team aus, wenn sie über die Vision spricht. (*)	My leader expresses his/her respect for our team when he/she talks about the vision. (*)
	<i>Meine Führungskraft betont positive Eigenschaften unseres Teams, wenn sie über die Vision spricht.</i>	<i>My leader emphasizes positive traits of our team when he/she talks about the vision.</i>
Empowerment	Meine Führungskraft stellt heraus, dass wir als Team aus eigener Kraft die Vision erreichen können. (*)	My leader highlights that we as a team can reach the vision on our own. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft vermittelt, dass wir als Team fähig sind, die Vision zu erreichen. (*)	My leader conveys that we as a team are able to reach the vision. (*)
	<i>Meine Führungskraft betont, dass wir als Team kompetent genug sind, die Vision zu erreichen.</i>	<i>My leader emphasizes that we as a team are competent enough to reach the vision.</i>
Salience of collective values	Meine Führungskraft benennt in der Vision die bestehenden Werte in unserem Team. (*)	In the vision, my leader names the existing values in our team. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft bezieht sich in der Vision auf die bestehenden Werte in unserem Team. (*)	In the vision, my leader refers to the existing values in our team. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft spricht in der Vision die bestehenden Werte in unserem Team an. (*)	In the vision, my leader addresses the existing values in our team. (*)
Continuity of collective values	Meine Führungskraft sieht die Vision im Einklang mit den bestehenden Werten unseres Teams. (*)	My leader sees the vision in accordance with the existing values in our team. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft drückt in der Vision aus, dass bestehende Werte unseres Teams weiterhin von Bedeutung sein werden. (*)	In the vision, my leader expresses that the existing values of our team will continue to be relevant. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft betont in der Vision eine enge Verbindung zwischen den bestehenden und den zukünftigen Werten unseres Teams. (*)	In the vision, my leader emphasizes a close connection between the existing and future values of our team. (*)
Relation to intermediate goals	Meine Führungskraft vermittelt konkrete Ziele, durch die wir als Team die Vision realisieren können. (*)	My leader conveys concrete goals through which we as a team can realize the vision. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft formuliert Teamziele in Verbindung mit der Vision. (*)	My leader articulates team goals in relation to the vision. (*)
	<i>Meine Führungskraft setzt unserem Team Ziele, durch die wir die Vision erreichen können.</i>	<i>My leader sets goals for our team through which we can reach the vision.</i>
Change of intermediate goals	Meine Führungskraft betont die Veränderung unserer Teamziele im Sinne der Vision. (*)	My leader emphasizes the change of our team goals in line with the vision. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft drückt in der Vision aus, dass sich unsere Teamziele für die Zukunft verändern. (*)	In the vision, my leader expresses that our team goals for the future will change. (*)
	<i>Meine Führungskraft betont, dass wir als Team unsere Prozesse oder Abläufe ändern müssen, um die Vision zu erreichen.</i>	<i>My leader emphasizes that we as a team have to change our processes or procedures to reach the vision.</i>
	<i>Meine Führungskraft stellt in der Vision die Unterschiede zwischen bestehenden und zukünftigen Zielen unseres Teams heraus.</i>	<i>In the vision, my leader points out the difference between existing and future goals of our team.</i>

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Dimension	Original German item	English translation ^a
Promotion focus	Meine Führungskraft stellt heraus, dass wir durch die Umsetzung der Vision unser Team weiterentwickeln. (*)	My leader highlights that our team will evolve through the implementation of the vision. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft zeigt auf, dass die Umsetzung der Vision eine Chance darstellt, unsere Ambitionen als Team zu verwirklichen. (*)	My leader points out that the implementation of the vision is an opportunity for us as a team to attain our aspirations. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft betont in der Vision die Möglichkeit für uns, als Team erfolgreich zu sein. (*)	In the vision, my leader emphasizes the opportunity for us to achieve success as a team. (*)
	<i>Im Folgenden geht es um die Stimmung, die Ihre Führungskraft zeigt, wenn sie über die Vision spricht. Schätzen Sie bitte für diese Situationen ein, wie häufig Ihre Führungskraft die unten genannten Emotionen zeigt.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Enthusiasmus</i> • <i>Niedergeschlagenheit (R)</i> 	<i>The following questions concern the mood your leader conveys when he/she talks about the vision. Please assess how often your leader shows the below mentioned emotions in these situations.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Enthusiasm</i> • <i>Dejection (R)</i>
Prevention focus	Meine Führungskraft stellt heraus, dass wir durch die Umsetzung der Vision unser Team schützen.	My leader highlights that we protect our team by implementing the vision.
	Meine Führungskraft zeigt auf, dass wir durch die Umsetzung der Vision unserer Verantwortung als Team gerecht werden.	My leader points out that we fulfill our duties as a team through the implementation of the vision.
	Meine Führungskraft betont in der Vision das Risiko von Verlusten für unser Team.	In the vision, my leader emphasizes the risk of losses for our team.
	<i>Im Folgenden geht es um die Stimmung, die Ihre Führungskraft zeigt, wenn sie über die Vision spricht. Schätzen Sie bitte für diese Situationen ein, wie häufig Ihre Führungskraft die unten genannten Emotionen zeigt.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Besorgnis</i> • <i>Gelassenheit (R)</i> 	<i>The following questions concern the mood your leader conveys when he/she talks about the vision. Please assess how often your leader shows the below mentioned emotions in these situations.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anxiety</i> • <i>Calmness (R)</i>
Personalization	Meine Führungskraft zeigt auf, welche Bedeutung die Vision für mich persönlich hat. (*)	My leader points out the meaning the vision has for me personally. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft erklärt, welche Auswirkungen das Erreichen der Vision auf mich persönlich hat. (*)	My leader explains what effects the achievement of the vision has on me personally. (*)
	Meine Führungskraft macht deutlich, dass ich persönlich Vorteile dadurch habe, wenn die Vision realisiert wird. (*)	My leader makes it clear that I personally will benefit if the vision is realized. (*)

Note.: Original item set of the Vision Articulation Questionnaire. (*) marks the final 22 items. Italicized items were deleted in the item reduction process described in the methods section.

^aEnglish translation of the items has not been validated so far. Only the German items were part of the data collection.

instrument to thoroughly examine vision articulation and its content—the VAQ. Derived from theory (Stam et al., 2014), we developed items for 10 dimensions of effective vision articulation: Comprehensibility, Empowerment, Self-worth, Salience of Collective Values, Consistency of Collective Values, Relation to Intermediate Goals, Change of Intermediate Goals, Promotion Focus, Prevention Focus, and Personalization. After factor retention, the revised seven-factor structure (i.e., Comprehensibility, Empowerment, Self-worth, Collective Values, Intermediate Goals, Promotion Focus, and Personalization) was supported by CFA across the two studies. The seven-factor model showed good fit to the data and significantly better fit than alternative models. Study 1 further provided support for convergent and discriminant validity by examining bivariate correlations with leadership styles and showing that the VAQ

dimensions are related but distinguishable from identity and transformational leadership. Studies 1 and 2 investigated the criterion validity of the VAQ. Results showed positive relationships of the seven dimensions with relevant outcomes (i.e., Vision Pursuit–Persistence and Flexibility, team identification, affective commitment, occupational self-efficacy, innovative work behavior, satisfaction with the leader, and job satisfaction). Moreover, especially in Study 2, we found unique differential relations of all VAQ subscales with the outcomes. This indicates that these subscales measure aspects of vision articulation that are effective in facilitating vision pursuit and positive attitudes and behaviors within employees. Results of Study 1 further provided evidence for incremental criterion validity of the VAQ, showing unique effects of some subscales (except the dimensions related to values) beyond transformational leadership on the

TABLE 2 Fit indices for the Vision Articulation Questionnaire models

	χ^2	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMSEA CI	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	p
<i>Model A</i>										
Proposed 10-factor model	1,061.72	515	.93	.92	.08	[.07, .08]	.06	-	-	-
<i>Model B</i>										
Seven-factor model	1,286.02	539	.90	.89	.09	[.08, .09]	.06	224.30	24	<.001
<i>Model B'</i>										
Adapted seven-factor model	343.59	188	.97	.96	.07	[.06, .08]	.03	-	-	-
<i>Model C</i>										
Single-factor model	1,491.93	209	.75	.73	.18	[.17, .19]	.07	1,148.34	21	<.001
<i>Model D</i>										
Two-factor model	1,318.08	208	.79	.76	.17	[.16, .18]	.06	974.49	20	<.001
<i>Models E</i>										
Eight-factor model Values	294.08	181	.98	.97	.06	[.05, .07]	.02	49.51	7	<.001
Eight-factor model Goals	315.95	181	.97	.97	.06	[.05, .07]	.03	27.64	7	<.001
<i>Model F</i>										
Six-factor model	477.27	194	.95	.94	.09	[.08, .10]	.03	133.68	6	<.001

Note.: $N = 190$. Model A (proposed model) and Model B applied to the initial items, Model B' to the reduced item set. Models C, D, E, and F are compared to Model B'.

outcomes of persistence in vision pursuit, team identification, and satisfaction with the leader.

The factor of Prevention Focus seems to deserve a special notion: While theory suggests its importance in vision articulation (cf. Stam et al., 2014), the high correlations with Promotion Focus in our research implicate that employees cannot differentiate the two dimensions in the field. Scholars have been able to show the importance of prevention focus experimentally, though (Stam et al., 2010b). This suggests that there might be a gap between what is theoretically sound and what can be actually measured in the field. This assumption is supported by the general perception of visions being "optimistic" (e.g., Berson et al., 2001), and therefore more closely related to promotion rather than prevention focus.

5.1 | Theoretical and practical implications

Our present research advances the understanding of visionary leadership in important ways. First and foremost, by developing an instrument to soundly and comprehensively measure vision articulation and its content we close a striking gap in the literature on visionary leadership (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). Thus far, measures have either been confounded with distinct constructs like goal setting or outcomes (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 1990), are too general and content-free (Venus, Johnson, Zhang, Wang, & Lanaj, 2018), or just focusing on very specific aspects of vision content (Ateş et al., 2018; Venus et al., 2019). Comprehensive, content-related, and unconfounded measures of

vision articulation have not existed so far to our knowledge. The VAQ, thus, provides researchers with a tool that enables them to engage in the promising and uprising study of vision articulation and content overcoming the limitations of previous instruments. Thus, we set the cornerstone for further exploring whether the theoretically derived dimensions of effective vision articulation (cf. Stam et al., 2014) are in fact related to relevant outcomes.

The importance of such an instrument is all the more striking considering how prominent vision articulation is in leadership research (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). Communicating a vision is, for example, a vital part of transformational leadership—one of the most dominant leadership constructs in the last decades (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Moreover, considering the proximity of visions and the self-concept of followers (through collective possible selves; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Stam et al., 2014), vision articulation is also of importance for novel leadership concepts like identity leadership (Steffens et al., 2014) that consider a collective identity as the core goal of leadership behavior. The mediocre to high correlations of the VAQ subscales with the measures of transformational and identity leadership indicate that we capture a construct that has a high conceptual overlap with the mentioned leadership styles but is still empirically distinct.

As for relevant outcomes, we further contributed to the visionary leadership literature by developing the first instrument to directly measure vision pursuit to our knowledge. This is an important advancement to the study of visionary leadership, since vision pursuit is the intended outcome of effective vision articulation (Stam et al., 2014). Since the primary focus of the present research was to

TABLE 3 Descriptive statistics and inter-correlations of the VAQ Subscales with leadership styles (Study 1)

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
1. ILI-SF	4.37	1.78	.93																
2. TLI	3.32	.74	.88**	.95															
3. TLI-AV	3.10	.97	.82**	.91**	.92														
4. TLI-PAM	3.21	.95	.77**	.84**	.71**	.84													
5. TLI-FAG	3.39	.98	.87**	.91**	.81**	.77**	.90												
6. TLI-HPE	3.39	.85	.25**	.38**	.48**	.18*	.28**	.75											
7. TLI-IS	3.55	.95	.61**	.71**	.46**	.62**	.64**	-.14	.88										
8. TLI-ISR	3.03	.93	.64**	.77**	.77**	.62**	.62**	.37**	.39**	.86									
9. TLI-CR	3.52	1.00	.61**	.77**	.57**	.57**	.64**	.10	.66**	.43**	.89								
10. VA-CO	3.29	1.08	.71**	.75**	.72**	.70**	.68**	.29**	.52**	.58**	.49**	.95							
11. VA-EMP	3.36	1.14	.71**	.73**	.74**	.59**	.69**	.35**	.42**	.58**	.49**	.69**	.94						
12. VA-SW	3.64	1.08	.72**	.77**	.68**	.67**	.73**	.23**	.59**	.54**	.61**	.71**	.75**	.93					
13. VA-VA	3.09	1.05	.66**	.72**	.70**	.57**	.69**	.27**	.46**	.56**	.52**	.67**	.81**	.73**	.97				
14. VA-GO	2.93	1.02	.70**	.75**	.79**	.59**	.70**	.39**	.36**	.65**	.49**	.69**	.76**	.61**	.77**	.92			
15. VA-PRO	3.17	1.14	.69**	.74**	.78**	.56**	.70**	.42**	.39**	.61**	.48**	.69**	.77**	.64**	.80**	.76**	.94		
16. VA-PER	2.55	1.15	.59**	.72**	.71**	.53**	.61**	.30**	.43**	.65**	.54**	.56**	.65**	.54**	.70**	.77**	.74**	.94	

Note: N = 126–191. ILI-SF = Identity Leadership Inventory-Short Form; TLI = Transformational Leadership Inventory; TLI-AV = Articulating a Vision; TLI-PAM = Providing an Appropriate Model; TLI-FAG = Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals; TLI-HPE = High Performance Expectations; TLI-ISR = Individualized Support; TLI-ISR = Intellectual Stimulation; TLI-CR = Contingent Reward; VA-CO = Comprehensibility; VA-EMP = Empowerment; VA-SW = Self-worth; VA-VA = Collective Values; VA-GO = Intermediate Goals; VA-PRO = Promotion Focus; VA-PER = Personalization.

**p < .01, two-tailed tests.

*p < .05, two-tailed tests. The diagonal contains Cronbach's alpha of the scales.

TABLE 4 Descriptive statistics and inter-correlations of VAQ-subcales with outcomes (Study 1)

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. VA-CO	3.29	1.08	.95											
2. VA-EMP	3.36	1.14	.69**	.94										
3. VA-SW	3.64	1.08	.71**	.75**	.93									
4. VA-VA	3.09	1.05	.67**	.81**	.73**	.97								
5. VA-GO	2.93	1.02	.69**	.76**	.61**	.77**	.92							
6. VA-PRO	3.17	1.14	.69**	.77**	.64**	.80**	.79**	.94						
7. VA-PER	2.55	1.15	.56**	.65**	.54**	.70**	.76**	.74**	.94					
8. VP-PC	3.65	.83	.47**	.48**	.41**	.44**	.48**	.46**	.39**	.89				
9. VP-FX	3.43	.99	.31**	.33**	.28**	.35**	.37**	.34**	.32**	.73**	.91			
10. AC	4.37	1.01	.27**	.23**	.26**	.24**	.25**	.26**	.28**	.44**	.35**	.79		
11. TI	3.93	1.01	.42**	.40**	.35**	.36**	.41**	.44**	.38**	.50**	.42**	.43**	-	
12. SL	3.69	1.17	.70**	.64**	.66**	.61**	.63**	.60**	.59**	.37**	.24**	.23**	.37**	-

Note.: N = 188–191. VA-CO = Comprehensibility; VA-EMP = Empowerment; VA-SW = Self-worth; VA-VA = Collective Values; VA-GO = Intermediate Goals; VA-PRO = Promotion Focus; VA-PER = Personalization; VP-PC = Vision Pursuit Persistence; VP-FX = Vision Pursuit Flexibility; AC = Affective commitment; TI = Team identification; SL = Satisfaction with the leader.

**p < .01, two-tailed tests. The diagonal contains Cronbach’s alpha of the scales.

TABLE 5 Incremental validity (ridge regression analyses with transformational leadership and VAQ-subcales as predictors)

	Vision Pursuit-Persistence		Vision Pursuit-Flexibility		Affective commitment		Team identification		Satisfaction with the leader	
	β	SE(β)	β	SE(β)	β	SE(β)	β	SE(β)	β	SE(β)
TLI	.08**	.03	.07*	.03	.06*	.03	.14***	.02	.34***	.04
Comprehensibility	.08**	.03	.05	.03	.03	.03	.07**	.03	.18***	.04
Empowerment	.09***	.02	.05	.03	.02	.03	.05*	.03	.07*	.03
Self-worth	.03	.03	.01	.03	.03	.03	.01	.03	.09*	.04
Collective values	.04	.03	.02	.03	.01	.02	.01	.03	.02	.03
Intermediate goals	.09**	.03	.07**	.03	.01	.03	.06*	.03	.06	.03
Promotion focus	.07*	.03	.06	.03	.05	.03	.06*	.03	.01	.03
Personalization	.03	.03	.05	.03	.04	.03	.05	.03	.08**	.03
R ²	.25***		.14**		.07		.24***		.69***	

Note.: N = 190. Beta weights and standard errors based on 5,000 bootstrap samples.

***p < .001, two-tailed tests.

**p < .01, two-tailed tests.

*p < .05, two-tailed tests.

validate the VAQ itself, further research is of course needed to examine the validity of our short measure of vision pursuit. The items developed for the two dimensions of vision pursuit (i.e., persistence and flexibility) should provide a solid basis for further research on the direct measurement of vision pursuit.

Third, the VAQ could prove itself useful in practitioners’ hands as well. It could be used for the assessment of leaders’ visions to analyse their effectiveness. This could be especially relevant for the field of change management, since visions are a useful tool for ensuring change support (Venus et al., 2019). Consultants or in-house organizational developers would be able to assess or even predict the effectiveness of a certain vision in fostering the change. Moreover, they could also advise organizations on how to create compelling

and motivating visions. In leader development programs, leaders could be trained on how to effectively communicate visions on a daily basis. In order to do that, though, future research would first need to establish the validity of the VAQ as a self-rating instrument as well, since our studies so far have only looked at the perception of vision articulation by followers.

5.2 | Strengths, limitations and future research

The results of the two studies presented in this paper provide evidence for factor structure, convergent and discriminant as well as criterion validity of the VAQ. One strength of the present research is that we

TABLE 6 Fit indices for the Vision Articulation Questionnaire models in Study 2

	χ^2	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMSEA CI	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	p
<i>Model B'</i>										
Adapted seven-factor model	365.33	188	.98	.97	.06	[.05, .06]	.02	-	-	-
<i>Model C</i>										
Single-factor model	1,732.52	209	.80	.78	.16	[.15, .16]	.06	1,367.19	21	<.001
<i>Model D</i>										
Two-factor model	1,507.08	208	.83	.81	.14	[.14, .15]	.05	1,141.75	20	<.001
<i>Models E</i>										
Eight-factor model Values	312.30	181	.98	.98	.05	[.04, .06]	.02	53.03	7	<.001
Eight-factor model Goals	317.64	181	.98	.98	.05	[.04, .06]	.02	47.69	7	<.001
<i>Model F</i>										
Six-factor model	437.27	194	.97	.96	.06	[.06, .07]	.03	71.94	6	<.001

Note.: N = 305. Model A (proposed model) and Model B applied to the initial items, Model B' to the reduced item set. Models C, D, E, and F are compared to Model B'.

TABLE 7 Descriptive statistics and inter-correlations of variables in Study 2

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. VA-CO	3.73	1.00	.93													
2. VA-EMP	3.74	.92	.68**	.86												
3. VA-SW	3.77	.96	.68**	.77**	.90											
4. VC-VA	3.54	1.02	.72**	.80**	.75**	.96										
5. VC-GO	3.51	.98	.68**	.73**	.65**	.76**	.90									
6. VC-PRO	3.51	1.08	.62**	.73**	.71**	.77**	.77**	.93								
7. VC-PER	3.10	1.19	.57**	.63**	.64**	.72**	.73**	.76**	.94							
8. VP-PC	3.51	1.08	.57**	.59**	.56**	.60**	.62**	.58**	.54**	.89						
9. VP-FX	3.43	1.10	.45**	.55**	.47**	.54**	.57**	.53**	.54**	.75**	.90					
10. AC	4.60	1.15	.41**	.51**	.50**	.55**	.45**	.56**	.48**	.48**	.45**	.82				
11. OSE	4.93	.79	.36**	.38**	.39**	.42**	.35**	.38**	.39**	.49**	.50**	.32**	.89			
12. IWB	5.01	1.15	.33**	.45**	.37**	.46**	.45**	.46**	.48**	.55**	.71**	.38**	.56**	.94		
13. JS	3.96	.86	.46**	.50**	.51**	.53**	.47**	.50**	.43**	.52**	.45**	.64**	.43**	.45**	-	
14. SL	3.72	1.10	.61**	.65**	.76**	.68**	.57**	.65**	.59**	.48**	.41**	.54**	.33**	.30**	.58**	-

Note.: N = 305. VA-CO = Comprehensibility; VA-EMP = Empowerment; VA-SW = Self-worth; VA-VA = Collective Values; VA-GO = Intermediate Goals; VA-PRO = Promotion Focus; VA-PER = Personalization; VP-PC = Vision Pursuit Persistence; VP-FX = Vision Pursuit Flexibility; AC = Affective commitment; OSE = Occupational self-efficacy; IWB = Innovative work behavior; JS = Job satisfaction; SL = Satisfaction with the leader.

** $p < .01$, two-tailed tests. The diagonal contains Cronbach's alpha of the scales.

examined the validity of the VAQ with different samples, which increases generalization of the results. Participants in Study 2 were, for example, on average approximately 10 years older than participants in Study 1. Thus, the instrument seems to be valid in different age groups. Also, we tested our instrument in various sectors, which also speaks for the generalization of the results. Moreover, we investigated construct validity with leadership styles that are closely related to vision articulation and established criterion validity with outcomes that are not only theoretically determined by vision articulation but

are also relevant for organizational objectives. However, still more research is needed to further test the instrument and to establish it as a valid measure of vision articulation. Future research could for example further investigate incremental criterion validity of the VAQ by including more leadership constructs than just transformational leadership (cf. van Dick et al., 2018). The most striking limitations of the current studies are the reliance on self-report data only which implies common method bias and the exclusive use of cross-sectional designs which makes causal interpretation impossible. Thus, future

research should, for example, engage in the investigation of behavioral outcomes like OCB assessed by leaders (cf. van Dick et al., 2018). In doing that one would overcome the common method bias of the current study by including multiple sources. Also, longitudinal designs would be beneficial to assess causal relationships (and thus predictive validity) between VAQ dimensions and outcomes.

Adding to the previous limitation, we have not examined the validity of the VAQ with multilevel data. This is a much-needed extension of the present research, since visions per definition refer to the collective (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014), and thus require multilevel (e.g., team) data in order to paint the full picture. Unfortunately, we could not account for the multilevel nature of the data in Study 1 due to the lack of information about team structure. Thus, we were also not able to control if the same leader might have been rated by more than one employee. The sample in Study 2 had no multilevel structure at all. Thus, future research should validate the VAQ in larger samples within different organizations to explore the generalizability of our results and account for the multilevel nature of the concept.

The limitation of single level data is also given for the outcome of vision pursuit. So far, we only investigated the relationship of our measurement with individual vision pursuit. However, as Stam et al. (2014) pointed out, *collective* vision pursuit that happens when collective possible selves are shared among individuals is also of particular importance (for a detailed explanation of how individual vision pursuit leads to collective vision pursuit see Stam et al., 2014). To investigate collective vision pursuit data have to be aggregated to the group level, which we have been unable to do so far due to the nature of our data. Scholars are encouraged to test our VAQ with multilevel data to further investigate the relationship with collective vision pursuit. Moreover, future research should explore the relations of the VAQ with more distal team outcomes, for example, team effectiveness that are relevant for organizational objectives. Nevertheless, even investigating the effect of vision articulation on vision pursuit can be seen as a strength of the present research given the importance of vision pursuit as an outcome (Stam et al., 2014) and the lack of research on this matter.

Furthermore, we only validated the German item set of the VAQ. However, we already provided English translations of the items (see Table 1). Thus, researchers have a solid basis to start investigating the validity of the English version of the VAQ in further studies using international samples. These validation efforts should include studies on measure invariance (Byrne, 2006).

We claimed that our conceptualization of vision articulation is not only valid on upper management levels but that also lower and middle level managers are important transmitters of visionary messages. However, we have not distinguished between different levels of management in our studies. Thus, we encourage future research that investigates the differential effects of vision articulation as operationalized by the VAQ on different management levels. Ateş et al. (2018) have pointed out the need for further research on visionary leadership on lower and middle management levels. Scholars could, for example, investigate the prevalence of certain dimensions of the VAQ on different management levels.

6 | CONCLUSION

Thus far, vision has been a construct well known to leadership researchers (e.g., Bass, 1990) but research has failed to develop sound quantitative measures of the construct (van Knippenberg & Stam, 2014). With the VAQ, we developed and validated an instrument that allows researchers to measure vision articulation thoroughly and comprehensively with a strong theoretical foundation (i.e., Stam et al., 2014) providing a response to the call for “measures that more explicitly and unambiguously uniquely capture visionary leadership” by van Knippenberg and Stam (2014, p. 244). Scholars are encouraged to use the VAQ to further engage in the promising study of effective vision articulation.

7 | ETHICS

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this manuscript will be made available by the authors upon request.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest for this work.

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Appendix E: Lebenslauf inkl. Publikationsliste

Der Lebenslauf ist nicht Teil der Veröffentlichung.

Appendix F: Eidesstattliche Erklärung des Verfassers

Ich versichere hiermit, dass ich meine Dissertation „Taking One for the Team: The Role of Social Identity-Focused Leadership in Enhancing Well-Being and Performance of Followers“ selbstständig, ohne unerlaubte Hilfe angefertigt, und mich keiner anderen als der von mir ausdrücklich bezeichneten Quellen und Hilfsmittel bedient habe. Alle vollständig oder sinngemäß übernommenen Zitate sind als solche gekennzeichnet. Die Dissertation wurde in der jetzigen oder ähnlichen Form noch bei keiner anderen Hochschule eingereicht und hat noch keinen sonstigen Prüfungszwecken gedient.

Marburg, September 2020

Henning Krug