Are You Secure Enough to Follow? The Influence of Follower Attachment on Transformational Leadership Perceptions and Thriving at Work

Rahul Goel*[1], Annilee M. Game[2], & Ana Isabel Sanz-Vergel[2]

1 Department of Management, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, S1 1WB

2 Norwich Business School, University of East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ

*Corresponding author information: Rahul Goel, Department of Management, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, United Kingdom, e-mail: r.goel@shu.ac.uk.

Manuscript accepted for publication at Journal of Business and Psychology

Author's personal copy

Abstract

Followers are increasingly acknowledged as influential in shaping leadership relationships and outcomes, yet the contribution of individual differences in followers' relational characteristics to leadership processes is poorly understood. Drawing on attachment theory and the conservation of resources model, we examine the influence of followers' attachment dimensions on their perceptions of transformational leadership (TFL) and thriving at work. In a three-wave longitudinal study of 587 employees in 112 project teams, multilevel mediation analysis showed that secure attachment was positively associated with thriving at work, while overdependent and counterdependent attachment were negatively associated. These relationships were fully mediated by followers' perceptions of TFL. The findings suggest that follower attachment security fosters workplace thriving by enhancing perceptions of TFL. The value of incorporating follower attachment in future follower-centered leadership research and practice is discussed.

Keywords: attachment theory, transformational leadership, thriving at work, conservation of resources theory, multilevel mediation

Are You Secure Enough to Follow? The Influence of Follower Attachment on Transformational Leadership Perceptions and Thriving at Work

Attachment theory, developed by Bowlby (1969), suggests that significant early-life relationships drive the formation of distinctive interpersonal orientations—secure, overdependent, or counterdependent attachment (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Attachment comprises cognitive frameworks that differentially influence how individuals perceive, feel about, and behave in relationships throughout life (Bowlby, 1973; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007a). Individuals with higher attachment security perceive relationships as reliable sources of support (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2015), while higher attachment insecurity (i.e., higher overdependence or counterdependence) is associated with more ambivalent or self-reliant relational approaches (Leiter et al., 2015; Mikulincer & Florian, 1995; Miller, 2007).

Attachment primarily influences how individuals perceive and navigate personal relationships, and this also extends into workplace dynamics, shaping perceptions of colleagues, leaders, and organizational environments (Nelson et al., 1991; Popper & Amit, 2009). Employees with higher attachment security are more open to building positive relationships and view organizational resources as supportive (Harms, 2011; Little et al., 2011). In contrast, employees with higher attachment insecurity may struggle with trust or avoid seeking support (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005). These attachment-driven differences suggest that individual relational traits influence workplace behaviors, perceptions, and outcomes.

Followers' perceptions of transformational leadership (TFL) have been shown to be influenced by individual differences, including personality traits such as extraversion and agreeableness (Felfe & Schyns, 2006, 2010; Schyns & Felfe, 2006; Schyns & Sanders, 2007). Beyond personality traits, however, individuals also differ in how they internally organize beliefs and expectations around social interactions (Bowlby, 1973). Attachment theory

provides an established framework for understanding how such deeply ingrained individual differences in relational beliefs and expectations affect relationships in various contexts.

Given that TFL, a leadership style focused on inspiring and motivating followers (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978) is inherently relational, it offers an ideal context to examine the role of attachment in the workplace. Research links TFL to positive follower outcomes such as proactive behavior, task performance, and motivation (Deinert et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2010; Ng, 2017; Schmitt et al., 2016). More recently, TFL has been associated with thriving at work (Hildenbrand et al., 2018; Lin et al., 2020), which is characterized as the experience of vitality and learning (Spreitzer et al., 2005). Vitality refers to feeling alive and energized, whereas learning involves acquiring and applying new knowledge and skills (Porath et al., 2012). Thriving is a valuable psychological outcome linked to well-being, job satisfaction, and personal growth (Spreitzer et al., 2012).

While leadership behaviors such as TFL can foster workplace thriving, followers' individual characteristics play a significant role in shaping how they perceive and respond to leadership (Dvir & Shamir, 2003; Howell & Shamir, 2005). We propose that individuals with higher attachment security are more likely to perceive leaders as transformational, thereby enhancing their sense of vitality and learning. In contrast, higher overdependence or counterdependence may perceive their leaders as less transformational, potentially hindering their ability to thrive.

As Felfe and Schyns (2010) point out, leadership behaviors are typically assessed through follower ratings, which—unlike objective measures (e.g., independent evaluations or performance metrics)—can be influenced by follower characteristics. Research supports this, showing that follower perceptions significantly impact leadership ratings (Lord et al., 1999). For example, Hetland et al. (2008) found followers reporting higher neuroticism (associated with a generally negative outlook) were more likely to perceive leaders unfavorably. This

underscores how follower characteristics may shape perceptions of leadership, rather than leaders' actual behavior.

Despite growing recognition of the importance of follower characteristics, leadership research has yet to fully explore the role of attachment in shaping followers' perceptions of TFL and their subsequent thriving at work. Traditional leadership studies have largely prioritized leader behaviors as determinants of outcomes, but a follower-centered approach emphasizes that individual differences significantly influence leader-follower interactions (Grant et al., 2011; Kark et al., 2003; Shamir, 2007; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). From this perspective, attachment theory provides a deeper understanding of how individual differences shape relational dynamics in leadership contexts (Berson et al., 2006; Yip et al., 2018).

This study addresses the gap in leadership research by examining how attachment influences followers' perceptions of TFL and their experiences of thriving at work. In response to calls for greater exploration of follower characteristics (Carsten et al., 2010; Oc & Bashshur, 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), we position attachment as a critical aspect of follower diversity. By exploring how attachment dimensions (i.e., secure, overdependent, or counterdependent) either facilitate or hinder thriving through perceptions of TFL, we extend attachment theory to the workplace as a key psychological driver of well-being and performance (Kleine et al., 2019; Pfeffer, 2010). This extension highlights practical implications for organizations, such as designing interventions and workplace practices that foster relational security and supportive interpersonal dynamics, thereby enhancing leadership effectiveness and promoting a thriving workforce. Furthermore, drawing on the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 2002) and resource-based perspectives (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012), we frame secure attachment as a personal resource that enables followers to perceive TFL positively and leverage it for thriving. This perspective offers valuable insights into how organizations can promote effective leader-follower

relationships and support employee thriving by fostering workplace environments that encourage relational security and trust, even among individuals with low attachment security.

The contributions of this study are three-fold. First, we contribute to followership research (Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019; Benson et al., 2016; Carsten et al., 2018; Ford & Harding, 2018) by examining attachment, an underexplored aspect of followership (Lee et al., 2024). Effective leaders are often viewed as attachment figures—sensitive, responsive, and supportive of followers' growth (Davidovitz et al., 2007; Lee et al., 2024; Popper & Mayseless, 2003). Attachment theory provides a vital framework for understanding deep-seated relational dynamics in follower-leader relationships, shaping trust, dependency, and responsiveness beyond personality traits (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Harms et al., 2016). This perspective helps identify ineffective dynamics and design targeted interventions. For instance, attachment insecurity may distort followers' perceptions of TFL, emphasizing the need for tailored interventions. Understanding how attachment shapes perceptions of TFL and thriving supports a relational view of followership as a co-constructed process influenced by both follower characteristics and leader behaviors (e.g., Carsten et al., 2010; Oc & Bashshur, 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

Second, related to our previous contribution, we add to the attachment literature by exploring the direct and indirect effects of attachment on thriving, a novel work outcome. Since thriving can facilitate other positive work outcomes, such as performance and well-being (Kleine et al., 2019; Pfeffer, 2010), it is important to identify the key predictors that promote or hinder thriving at work. While a link between TFL and workplace thriving has been demonstrated in previous studies (Hildenbrand et al., 2018; Lin et al., 2020), no research to date has considered the role of attachment as a potential trigger for this sequence. Identifying which attachment dimensions promote thriving can help organizations foster healthier relationships and supportive work environments, regardless of employees'

underlying attachment patterns. Some of these steps could include training employees on how to engage in meaningful interactions at work, as well as training leaders on how to effectively coach their team members in relational aspects.

Third, we contribute to COR theory (Hobfoll, 2002) by illustrating how a gain spiral of resources functions within the followership context and by extending Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker's (2012) resource taxonomy to include attachment security as a structural personal resource. According to COR theory, gain spirals occur when an initial resource triggers further resource accumulation, leading to sustained resource gains (Hobfoll, 1998, 2001). We posit that higher attachment security—a relatively stable, trait-like relational characteristic (Baldwin et al., 1996)—enhances perceptions of TFL, potentially laying the foundation for continued resource development and individual thriving. By incorporating attachment security as a core structural resource, we highlight its critical role in shaping leader-follower dynamics and enabling followers to perceive TFL more positively. This approach addresses Goh et al.'s (2022) call to identify resources that contribute to positive resource spirals and enhance within-individual thriving.

Theoretical Background and Hypothesis Development

Attachment and Thriving at Work

According to attachment theory, individuals are predisposed to seek comfort and safety from an attachment figure (Bowlby, 1969). Individuals perceive, react, and cope with stress from interpersonal relationships in different ways (Mikulincer & Florian, 1995). Those who experience consistent and supportive care from an attachment figure in their early lives tend to develop higher attachment security, whereas those who experience inconsistent availability or consistent unavailability may develop higher overdependence (anxious attachment) or higher counterdependence (avoidant attachment), respectively (Hazan & Shaver, 1990). Individuals with higher attachment security exhibit greater levels of optimism, positive views

of the self and others, and emotional stability (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2015). Higher overdependence is associated with a negative view of the self and a compulsive need to be close to others (Mikulincer & Florian, 1995; Miller, 2007). Conversely, individuals with higher counterdependence view others negatively and are compulsively self-reliant due to their lack of trust (Leiter et al., 2015; Miller, 2007).

Attachment is commonly measured using two orthogonal dimensions—overdependence and counterdependence—to represent insecurity, with security theoretically indicated by low scores on both (Fraley & Waller, 1998). However, research suggests this two-dimensional model does not fully capture security-related variance in attachment-outcome links (Byrne et al., 2017; Dahling & Librizzi, 2015; Geller & Bamberger, 2009). Gillath et al. (2009) found that low scores on insecurity dimensions do not necessarily equate to high attachment security, supporting a three-dimensional orthogonal model (i.e., secure, overdependent, and counterdependent). Our study adopts this approach (see Duan et al., 2022; Frazier et al., 2015; Little et al., 2011) to provide a more comprehensive view of attachment patterns. This model directly assesses security, highlighting positive traits like comfort with intimacy and autonomy. Notably, individuals score on all three dimensions rather than fitting into singular categories. Therefore, reference to security, overdependence, or counterdependence, indicates higher scores on that dimension rather than a singular attachment 'style'.

We use the resource taxonomy proposed by Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) to focus on how each of the three attachment dimensions may differentially impact thriving. According to this taxonomy, key resources (such as personality traits) constitute a subtype of personal structural resources that facilitate the selection and implementation of other resources (Hobfoll, 2002; Thoits, 1994). Attachment security is conceptualized as a personal resource because it enables individuals to cope with stressful situations both positively and constructively (Mikulincer & Florian, 1998). Specifically, it is viewed as a *structural*

personal resource because structural resources can be used more than once to deal with stressful circumstances (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Individuals' attachment (e.g., higher attachment security) develops in childhood, extends into adulthood, and remains relatively stable across different contexts (Baldwin et al., 1996; Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Previous research has shown that individuals with higher scores in attachment security report higher levels of emotional energy, cognitive liveliness, and physical strength (Little et al., 2011). Individuals who experience a sense of vitality, possess mental energy and vigor, whereas those who lack vitality experience exhaustion (Ryan & Frederick, 1997). Since individuals who score higher on the security dimension tend to have positive views of themselves and others, they are less likely to impose strict regulatory control on their emotions (Feeney, 1999). They also perceive themselves as having adequate resources to pursue their goals, which enhances their sense of vigor (Carver & Scheier, 1990). This sense of energy is a key element of thriving at work (i.e., vitality).

Moreover, the belief that social support is available—that there is a 'secure base' to return to in times of need—generates the confidence to explore the social environment and learning (Green & Campbell, 2000; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007a). Consistent with this, research has linked higher attachment security to the cognitive facet, which comprises active information search, openness to new information, and flexibility of cognitive structures (Mikulincer, 1997). Individuals who score higher on security are perceived as curious, which leads them to search for information and opportunities for growth (Mikulincer, 1997). Having secure attachment as a structural personal resource should allow individuals who score higher on this dimension to explore the social environment and engage in meaningful interactions with others, resulting in the acquisition and application of new knowledge (i.e., the "learning" element of thriving).

In contrast, research has shown that individuals high in overdependent and/or counterdependent attachment report fewer physical, emotional, and cognitive resources (Little et al., 2011). Those with higher levels of overdependent attachment tend to be more emotionally 'needy' and cling to others to create a sense of security in relationships, whereas individuals high in counterdependent attachment often refuse to seek support from others due to a lack of trust (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007a). Higher levels of overdependence are often associated with increased distress and a tendency to engage in rumination, whereas individuals high in counterdependence tend to repress information (as additional information may cause distress) and suppress negative emotions (Collins & Read, 1994; Mikulincer & Florian, 1998; Mikulincer & Sheffi, 2000).

Both the hyperactivation of negative emotions in overdependent attachment, and the repression and suppression of negative thoughts in counterdependent attachment deplete resources, leading to reduced physical strength, emotional energy, and cognitive liveliness (Little et al., 2011; Mikulincer & Sheffi, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2008). Therefore, individuals with higher overdependence or counterdependence are less likely to feel energetic and alive (i.e., the "vitality" component of thriving). Moreover, according to Mikulincer (1997), individuals with higher overdependence tend to withdraw from information search, as their curiosity could jeopardize relationships, whereas individuals with higher counterdependence dismiss the importance of new information, avoid information search, and repress curiosity due to the potential threat of ambiguity. This may restrict the propensity of individuals higher in overdependence or counterdependence to explore the social environment, further hindering their ability to acquire and apply new knowledge (i.e., the "learning" element of thriving).

Based on the above arguments, we propose the following direct effects of attachment on thriving at work:

Hypothesis 1. Followers' secure attachment (T1) is positively associated with their thriving at work (T3)

Hypothesis 2. Followers' overdependence (T1) is negatively associated with their thriving at work (T3)

Hypothesis 3. Followers' counterdependence (T1) is negatively associated with their thriving at work (T3)

The Mediating Role of Perceived Transformational Leadership

According to the resource taxonomy of Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012), contextual resources are located outside the self and can be found in the social context of the individual. As leaders are part of the followers' social context at work, TFL can be conceptualized as a contextual *structural* resource that can positively impact outcomes, such as thriving at work (Hildenbrand et al., 2018; Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). TFL is characterized by four dimensions: *Idealized influence*, i.e., gaining followers' admiration, trust, and respect; *Inspirational motivation*, i.e., creating an appealing, optimistic, meaningful, and enthusiastic vision of the future; *Intellectual stimulation*, i.e., challenging followers and empowering creativity; and *Individualized consideration*, i.e., attending to followers' needs through personalized coaching, mentoring, and communication (Bass, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1993). TFL can stimulate followers' intrinsic motivation, enthusiasm for work, recognition, and acceptance of organizational goals (Bass, 1985; Lin et al., 2020). According to the COR theory, individuals strive to maintain and enhance their resources (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 2002) that are broadly defined as objects (e.g., housing), personal characteristics (e.g., self-esteem), conditions (e.g., social support) and energy (e.g., knowledge) to prevent potential suffering (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll, 2002). As Hobfoll (1998, 2001) explained, those who lack resources are more vulnerable to resource loss, but the initial loss also begets future loss, leading to a loss spiral. On the other hand, those who possess

resources are more capable of gaining, and the initial resource gain begets future gain, thus generating a gain spiral. We develop our indirect hypotheses, based on loss and gain spirals.

Secure attachment, as a personal resource, manifests as the ability to work alone as well as with others by forming supportive relationships with a variety of people (Little et al., 2011). According to Popper and Mayseless (2003), followers may form attachment relationships with leaders to fulfill the function of attachment during times of physical or psychological threat (Bowlby, 1969). Research has also demonstrated that followers exhibiting secure attachment were more likely to trust their leaders and view their intentions as benevolent (Frazier et al., 2015). Securely attached individuals, comfortable with trust and closeness, are more receptive to TFL behaviors such as charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation, which facilitate resource-building. These individuals are more likely to trust the leader, turn to the leader for support when needed, and allow the leader to mentor them (Popper et al., 2000). Consistent with this, we argue that followers with higher attachment security are more likely to perceive TFL behaviors.

As a contextual resource, TFL influences the pool of resources that followers have available (Halbesleben, 2006). TFL conveys a purposeful vision and motivates followers to think outside the box (Bass, 1985), offering resources, such as intellectual stimulation and vision that enable followers to demonstrate explorative behaviors (Hildenbrand et al., 2018). Additionally, by communicating an inspiring vision, acting as a role model, and using meaning and optimism (Bass, 1985), TFL evokes feelings of being alive and energized among followers (Hildenbrand et al., 2018). Individuals with higher attachment security may also enhance their learning through their perception of TFL behaviors, as these perceptions foster trust and openness to their leader's encouragement of exploration and knowledge-sharing, creating a proactive learning environment that promotes growth (Dust et al., 2014; Han et al., 2016; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). By gaining new resources, such as intellectual

stimulation, vision, energy, and a sense of being alive, followers high in secure attachment may be more likely to thrive at work, resulting in a gain spiral. Based on the COR theory, we expect that secure attachment, as a personal resource, positively shapes followers' perception of TFL behaviors. Through the positive perceptions of their leader, followers may, in turn, be more likely to thrive at work. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4. Perceived TFL (T2) will mediate the positive relationship between followers' secure attachment (T1) and their thriving at work (T3)

Individuals with low personal resources (i.e., overdependent and/or counterdependent attachment) have difficulty investing in new resources. Those high in overdependence tend to worry excessively about their relationships and report elevated levels of stress, whereas those high in counterdependence tend to suppress negative emotions that might signal weakness or require acknowledgment of distress (Consedine & Magai, 2003; Gillath et al., 2005). Additionally, individuals with higher overdependent attachment are less likely to use emotion-based coping strategies during stress and tend to seek constant reassurance in their interactions, whereas counterdependent attachment is associated with fewer support-seeking behaviors and more efforts to distance themselves (Mikulincer & Florian, 1995; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005; Richards & Schat, 2011).

Followers with high overdependence are hypersensitive to feedback and overly reliant on affirmation (Wu et al., 2014), which may lead to attention-seeking behaviors that are counterproductive to work outcomes (Yip et al., 2018). The intense need for support among followers with high overdependence can result in feelings of frustration or unmet expectations if they do not receive constant attention, even when the leader's behavior remains consistent (Hansbrough, 2012; Little et al., 2011). Their chronic need for approval may distort perceptions of TFL—especially individualized consideration—leading to unrealistic expectations for validation and reducing its effectiveness in building resources. By

contrast, followers scoring high in counterdependence are likely to distance themselves from the leader due to habitual distrust and negative views of others (Collins & Read, 1990; Harms et al., 2016). Their tendency to suppress vulnerability and resist emotional closeness (Richards & Schat, 2011) may limit their ability to view relational aspects of TFL—especially idealized influence and individualized consideration—as genuine, reducing their receptiveness to its resource-building potential. Moreover, doubts about a leader's good intentions among followers high in overdependence and/or counterdependence (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003) may make them less inclined to perceive TFL behaviors. TFL also fosters active learning by encouraging innovation, self-challenge, and the adoption of new mental models (Dust et al., 2014; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). However, individuals with higher overdependence or counterdependence may be less likely to perceive TFL behaviors due to constrained relational resources, which may limit their openness to feedback and knowledge-sharing, ultimately hindering essential learning and growth.

When followers do not perceive their leader as transformational, they may be less likely to feel inspired by the leader and benefit from their influence. As a result, it may become more difficult for them to feel motivated to thrive at work. Followers high in overdependence or counterdependence may be more susceptible to entering a loss spiral of resources, wherein a lack of personal resources could diminish their perception of TFL behaviors and, in turn, limit opportunities to thrive. In line with COR theory's loss spiral corollary, we propose that overdependent or counterdependent attachment may reduce followers' capacity to perceive TFL, thereby potentially hindering their ability to thrive at work. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 5. Perceived TFL (T2) will mediate the negative relationship between followers' overdependence (T1) and their thriving at work (T3)

Hypothesis 6. Perceived TFL (T2) will mediate the negative relationship between followers' counterdependence (T1) and their thriving at work (T3)

Figure 1 illustrates the research model.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

Method

Participants and Procedure

Data were collected from project teams in multinational organizations in the information technology (IT) sector in Bangalore, India. Bangalore is referred to as "India's Silicon Valley," with 80% of the global IT giants in the city (Sharma, 2023). We targeted IT project teams, as evidence suggests that TFL is crucial for a team's effective performance in the IT sector (Jaroliya & Gyanchandani, 2022). Therefore, the organizational context is suitable for examining the relationships between attachment dimensions, perceptions of TFL, and their effect on thriving at work. Project teams are formed to execute defined, specialized, and time-limited tasks that require input from members with diverse areas of expertise (Chen et al., 2004; Colquitt et al., 2009). Our discussions with company representatives indicated that project teams were well-defined, and relatively stable in membership (Mathieu et al., 2008), and directed by a formal supervisor (i.e., project team leader).

Fourteen organizations were contacted directly, and eight of them provided their consent and support for our study, as they were interested in understanding the conditions under which project team members can thrive at work. These participating organizations operate in areas such as delivering consulting services, workplace transformation, outsourcing, cloud migration, Internet-related products, and software applications and services in the private sector. Human resource (HR) representatives in each organization were asked to select project teams to participate in the study based on the following inclusion criteria provided by the research team: first, team members had to be part of a team working

on a specific project led by a supervisor; second, full-time employees working under the supervision of the same leader were considered a team by the organization; and third, projects had to be long term, with a minimum duration of six months or more.

After identification, the Vice President of Human Resources (or equivalent) sent two separate emails, provided by the research team, to each project team leader. The first email invitation was accompanied by a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research, confirming anonymity, voluntary participation, and outlining the overall survey process, along with ethical approval for the study from the first author's academic institution. The email also included a short survey for project team leaders to share project details. The second email contained a link to the survey and a request that it should be forwarded to five or more team members with whom the project leaders worked and interacted closely. This method of contacting team members was modeled on past published research (e.g., Chen, 2005; Cole et al., 2011). Furthermore, to minimize selection bias, project team leaders were provided with general information about the study's purpose (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). The study's objectives, potential benefits, data collection approach and timeline were included in the information provided to the project team leaders.

Team leaders and members were tracked during each phase of the questionnaire using a unique, partially self-generated identification code that linked them to their respective teams and organizations. For team leaders, the unique code consisted of the letters 'PL', followed by a number corresponding to the organization (1-8), and a three-digit code generated by the team leader to identify the team. The unique code for team members consisted of a number corresponding to the organization (1-8), followed by a three-digit code generated by their team leader, the first letter of the participant's surname, and the participant's birth month.

Data collection from participants occurred at three points of measurement, separated by six weeks in 2023. An interval of six weeks was chosen to reduce the bias pertaining to single

sources and common methods (Podsakoff et al., 2003). With the assistance of HR departments, we initially contacted 124 project teams comprising 649 project team members to participate in our study. We received responses from 116 supervisors and 606 project team members at phase one (Time 1), as eight teams did not respond to the invitation. At phase two (Time 2), we received responses from 112 project teams and 587 project team members, as four teams were eliminated due to incomplete questionnaires. All remaining teams responded to questionnaires at phase three (Time 3), resulting in a total of 112 project teams in the study sample and a participation rate of 90.3%. The final sample consisted of 587 project team members supervised by 112 project team leaders.

At Time 1, project team leaders generated a three-digit code and reported their team's size and tenure. In the short survey, team leaders were asked to notify project team members of the three-digit code. After data were collected from the project team leaders, team members created unique identification codes, reported their age, gender, education, and work experience, and completed a questionnaire on their attachment. During the remaining phases, the HR departments of the organizations sent emails with survey links to project team leaders, who were requested to forward them to their respective team members. Team members were reminded to generate the same code as at Time 1. At Time 2, project team members rated their supervisor's TFL behavior. Finally, at Time 3, project team members reported the extent to which they thrived at work.

Among the respondents, 57% were male. The average age of team members was 36.76 years (SD = 0.66), with 30% of the sample aged between 35 and 40 years. Most respondents had a bachelor's (59.4%) or master's (31.7%) degree. The mean work experience of the team members was 5.45 years (SD = 0.72). Team sizes ranged from five to eight members, excluding the leader (with an average of seven members per team), while the average team tenure was 1.3 years (SD = 1.26). On average, five team members (SD = 1.6) completed the

survey. Given that the average team size was seven, the within-team response rate was estimated at approximately 71%.

Measures

The surveys were administered in English, a language widely spoken and understood in Bangalore, particularly within corporate and business settings. The participant information sheet included the first author's contact details for any clarifications or further inquiries regarding the survey.

Attachment

Employees' workplace attachment was measured with a modified Self Reliance Inventory (SRI; Joplin et al., 1999). The SRI was initially developed to measure individuals' general attachment (Joplin et al., 1999; Quick et al., 1992), but was then modified by Frazier et al. (2007) to represent individuals' attachment in the workplace, which has been further validated by Little et al. (2011; see the Appendix for the full scale). It includes a 7-item subscale for attachment security ($\alpha = 0.85$, e.g., "I can usually take care of my own work but I don't mind getting help if I need it"), a 7-item subscale for counterdependence ($\alpha = 0.88$, e.g., "Needing someone at work is a sign of weakness") and a five-item subscale of overdependence ($\alpha = 0.86$, e.g., "I often worry that my co-workers do not really like me") measured at Time 1. Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they agreed with various items on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Perceived TFL

Perceived TFL was measured using the Global Transformational Leadership scale (GTL; Carless et al., 2000). Based on Podsakoff et al.'s (1990) categorization, Carless et al. (2000) suggested an expanded list of behaviors in the TFL concept and developed a seven-item GTL scale to assess a broader range of transformational leader behaviors. The GTL scale was preferred in the present study because of its brevity compared to the Multifactor

Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Leadership Practices Inventory (Carless et al., 2000). Moreover, the subscales of the MLQ are highly correlated (Lowe et al., 1996). A sample item is, "My leader communicates a clear and positive vision of the future." Respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (barely applies) to 5 (applies fully). Cronbach's alpha for the overall perceived TFL, measured at Time 2, was 0.91.

Thriving at Work

A 10-item scale developed by Porath et al. (2012) was used to measure employees' thriving at work with five items each capturing vitality (e.g., "I feel alive and vital") and learning (e.g., "I continue to learn more and more as time goes by"). This scale has been used in previous studies (e.g., Hildenbrand et al., 2018; Paterson et al., 2014). Participants were asked to respond on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always). Cronbach's alpha for thriving at work, measured at Time 3, was 0.90.

Control Variables

To rule out the possibility of other factors influencing followers' thriving at work, we included control variables at Level 1: followers' age (in years), gender (0 = male, 1 = female), education level (1 = diploma or below, 2 = bachelor's degree, 3 = master's degree, 4 = doctoral degree); and team tenure at Level 2, as these are typically included in the thriving literature (Jiang, 2017; Niessen et al., 2012; Paterson et al., 2014).

We also controlled for the team-level mean of TFL at Time 2 as a proxy for actual TFL behaviors. By including the team-level mean of TFL as a control, we were able to differentiate the unique effects of attachment dimensions on individual perceptions of TFL, beyond any "objective" team-level perceptions. To justify aggregation, we examined intraclass correlations (ICC(1) = 0.18; ICC(2) = 0.76; Bliese et al., 2000) and found strong within-group agreement (r_{wg} = 0.88; James et al., 1984). These indices, along with a high

group-level internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.87$), support the reliability of aggregating responses to the team level.

Analytical Strategy

Our data represented 587 project team members at Level 1, nested within 112 project teams at Level 2, and involved latent variables. Following established practices (e.g., Lin et al., 2017; Parke et al., 2018), we calculated ICC(1) to partition the variance of our outcome variable. The results reveal that thriving at work has 65% Level 1 variance and 35% Level 2 variance (ICC(1) = 0.35). Therefore, the use of multilevel modeling is warranted.

Since the main study variables (i.e., attachment dimensions, perceived TFL, and thriving at work) are individual-level variables rated by followers, this model qualifies as a 1-1-1 model. While hierarchical or multilevel linear modeling (HLM or MLM) is suitable for analyzing hierarchical data, multilevel structural equation modeling (MSEM) offers distinct advantages for estimating mediation effects at the individual level, especially for 1-1 linkages between mediators and outcomes (Preacher et al., 2010). With a sample size of 112 teams, MSEM was preferred, as it enables simultaneous estimation of the entire mediation model and allows for accurate parameter estimation in a single analytical step (McNeish, 2017; Zigler & Ye, 2019). Moreover, MSEM was used to account for the nested data structure (i.e., individuals nested within teams). In fact, one of our control variables was calculated at the team level, namely team-level TFL.

The analysis was performed in Mplus 7.4 package, and the model parameters were estimated using maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2015). We used full information maximum likelihood (FIML), which enabled us to estimate parameters using all observations in the dataset without the need for data imputation (Enders & Peugh, 2004).

Results

Discriminant Validity of the Constructs

To examine the distinctiveness of the variables, we conducted a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis using Mplus version 7.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2015). As shown in Table 1, the proposed five-factor model fit the data well ($\chi^2(473) = 868.17$, CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.03), and provided a significant improvement in chi-square over alternative models (see Table 1 for SRMR values and additional fit indices). Therefore, our hypothesized model supports the discriminant validity of the key constructs in the study.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Descriptive Statistics

The means, standard deviations, and correlations between the variables are presented in Table 2. To identify the control variables, we first computed zero-order correlations between the socio-demographic variables and the dependent variable. Thriving at work was significantly related to age ($r = –0.12$, $p < 0.01$) and team tenure ($r = –0.14$, $p < 0.05$). These variables were then entered as control variables in hypotheses testing. Following Becker's (2005) recommendations, we excluded variables that were not significantly related from subsequent analyses (such as gender and education), since the inclusion of unnecessary controls may yield biased estimates and reduce power.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses 1–3 examined the direct effects of followers' attachment (T1) on their thriving at work (T3). In line with these hypotheses, secure attachment was positively associated with thriving ($\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI = [0.16, 0.55]), while overdependence ($\beta = –0.24$, $p < 0.05$, 95% CI = [–0.44, –0.23]), and counterdependence ($\beta = –0.31$, $p < 0.01$,

95% CI = [–0.68, –0.18]), were negatively associated. These results support Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3, indicating that followers' attachment is directly related to their thriving at work.

Hypotheses 4–6 proposed that perceived TFL (T2) mediates the relationships between attachment dimensions (T1) and thriving at work (T3). Following Preacher et al. (2010), we tested these mediation hypotheses by estimating indirect effects using a bootstrapping approach. Specifically, we computed 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals (CIs) for the indirect effects based on 10,000 bootstrap samples, as recommended by Shrout and Bolger (2002). According to this approach, an indirect effect is statistically significant if its CI does not contain zero.

The results confirmed that perceived TFL significantly mediated the relationships between attachment dimensions and thriving. The 95% CIs for the indirect effects excluded zero for each attachment dimension: secure attachment and thriving ($\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI = [0.27, 1.92]), overdependence and thriving ($\beta = –0.28$, $p < 0.01$, 95% CI = [–1.53, –0.11]), and counterdependence and thriving ($\beta = –0.31$, $p < 0.05$, 95% CI = [–1.21, – 0.17]). Model comparisons using hierarchical regression (see Table A in the Appendix) revealed that the direct effects of attachment dimensions on thriving became non-significant when perceived TFL was introduced as a mediator. This indicates that perceived TFL fully mediates the relationship between attachment and thriving at work, supporting Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6.

Figure 2 presents the path diagram with estimates.

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

Sensitivity Analyses

To further strengthen our findings, we conducted sensitivity analyses that systematically varied the variables to assess how these changes impacted the results. The baseline (research) model included individual perceived TFL as a mediator, controlling for

team-level TFL (Time 2) and demographic factors such as age and team tenure (Time 1). Alternative models tested: mediation without team-level TFL; replacing it with team size; direct effects with controls; mediation without demographics; and a reverse causality model in which attachment predicted TFL perceptions via thriving. This analysis helped determine whether the key relationships remain consistent across different model specifications or assumptions, thereby testing the robustness of the mediation effect of followers' attachment on thriving at work through individual perceptions of TFL. Table 3 presents the mediation (indirect) and direct effects across the baseline and alternative models.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

Across these models, the core mediation effect of attachment on thriving at work through individual perceptions of TFL remained statistically significant and consistently stronger than in the alternative models. This consistency across multiple model specifications supports the robustness of our findings and reinforces the role of individually perceived TFL as a mediator in the relationship between attachment and thriving at work.

Discussion

In this study, we investigated the role of follower attachment in shaping perceptions of TFL and, in turn, influencing thriving at work. Drawing on attachment theory as well as the COR theory and subsequent developments, we found support for the hypothesized model depicted in Figure 1. Specifically, higher levels of secure attachment were positively associated with followers' thriving at work, whereas higher levels of overdependence and counterdependence were negatively associated. Furthermore, individual perceptions of TFL fully mediated the relationships between all three attachment dimensions (i.e., secure, overdependent, and counterdependent) and the outcome variable (i.e., thriving at work), even after accounting for the (proxy) objective team-level TFL perceptions. The findings suggest that key structural personal resources, such as secure attachment (but not overdependent or

counterdependent attachment), enhance perceptions of TFL, which in turn enable followers to thrive at work. Below, we discuss the study's implications for theory and practice, identify its limitations, and propose directions for future research.

Theoretical Contributions

The present study has important theoretical implications. First, we contribute to the literature on followership. Attachment theory is a prominent theory in relationship science that has witnessed growing application to the leadership domain, including leader-follower relationships (Davidovitz et al., 2007; Hansbrough, 2012; Hinojosa et al., 2014; Popper et al., 2000). We examined followers' characteristics from a relational perspective by integrating attachment theory and the role-based followership approach, moving beyond traditional followership typologies and styles (Chaleff, 2008; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 1988; Zaleznik, 1965). This insight fills an important gap in the followership literature by demonstrating that high attachment security positively shapes followers' perceptions of TFL, which fosters thriving at work. In contrast, followers high in overdependence or counterdependence may struggle to thrive at work due to lower perceptions of TFL, resulting from their insecure relational models. Coyle et al. (2023) developed a typology of follower characteristics using a role-based approach that identified relationship-directed follower types—politically strategic, proactive, conforming, devoted, or submissive. Our study further extends this body of work by investigating how relationship-focused characteristics—specifically, followers high in the secure, overdependent, or counterdependent dimensions of attachment—may shape perceptions of leaders, for better or worse (Carsten et al., 2010; Howell & Shamir, 2005; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

Second, this study is the first to demonstrate a direct link between attachment and workplace thriving. Several researchers have suggested that relational resources, such as heedful relations, supportive co-worker behavior, and feeling part of a team, impact

employees' thriving (Kleine et al., 2019; Niessen et al., 2012; Paterson et al., 2014; Spreitzer et al., 2005; Wallace et al., 2016). However, there is a paucity of research on how employees' attachment influences their thriving in the workplace. To narrow this gap, the present study explored the relationship between attachment dimensions and thriving at work in the context of project teams. Based on attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969), we demonstrated that secure attachment is positively associated with thriving at work. This may be due to the positive self-views and curiosity for information search associated with secure attachment (Little et al., 2011; Mikulincer, 1997), which result in greater vitality and learning. However, both overdependent and counterdependent attachment are negatively associated with workplace thriving. This suggests that the hyperactivation of negative emotions in overdependent attachment and suppression of negative thoughts in counterdependent attachment (Collins & Read, 1994; Little et al., 2011; Mikulincer & Sheffi, 2000) lead to reduced work vitality. Additionally, the withdrawal of information search in overdependent attachment, and the dismissal of new information in counterdependent attachment (Mikulincer, 1997) results in reduced learning. Thus, attachment is an important antecedent for thriving at work.

Third, we add to the COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001) and its extension by Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) by revealing that both secure attachment and TFL constitute resources that facilitate thriving at work. Conversely, high levels of overdependence and counterdependence are negatively associated with workplace thriving due to lower perceptions of TFL; followers with these attachment dimensions are unable to reap the benefits of TFL because they possess fewer relational resources. Previous research found that overdependent attachment is positively related to the perception of TFL (Hansbrough, 2012), likely due to individuals' need for emotional validation. However, our study contradicts this finding, showing that higher levels of overdependent attachment were associated with more negative perceptions of TFL. This discrepancy may stem from contextual and methodological

differences: Hansbrough's laboratory-based study (conducted among undergraduate students) contrasts with our real-world, three-wave longitudinal study, where interpersonal dynamics are more complex. Supporting this, field studies using measures such as supervisor support and leader-member exchange have also reported negative associations with overdependent attachment (Davidovitz et al., 2007; Richards & Hackett, 2012). Moreover, our study examined not only overdependent, but also secure and counterdependent attachment dimensions, offering a more comprehensive view of how attachment influences perceptions of TFL and thriving at work. Secure attachment fosters more positive TFL perceptions, whereas overdependent and counterdependent tendencies may hinder these perceptions due to relational limitations.

Embedded in the COR (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001), our study makes an important theoretical contribution by considering the interplay of various resources on thriving at work. We demonstrate that secure attachment, as a personal resource, initiates a gain spiral, whereas overdependent and counterdependent attachment initiates a loss spiral. Notably, both resources (i.e., secure attachment and perceptions of TFL) are aligned in their focus on employee flourishing, growth, and learning, which makes our model parsimonious and emphasizes its relevance to thriving. Furthermore, we demonstrate that perceived TFL, while not constituting a demand/stressor, constitutes a strong resource for followers with high secure attachment, which positively affects their thriving. Hence, we contribute to a follower-focused approach to leadership (see Dvir & Shamir, 2003; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Howell & Shamir, 2005; Oc & Bashshur, 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), supporting the view that followers' perceptions of leadership are shaped by their own characteristics, specifically their relational attachment propensities.

Practical Implications

Our findings have key practical implications. Followers' attachment may shape their perceptions of TFL and workplace thriving. Supervisors can help revise negative internal working models linked to insecure attachment (i.e., higher levels of overdependence or counterdependence) by fostering emotional security through open communication and feedback (Littman-Ovadia et al., 2013). Organizations may also provide counseling to support employees with insecure attachment (Hardy & Barkham, 1994; Lopez, 2003). Security-enhancing interactions improve mental health, intergroup relations, and prosocial behavior (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007b). Training managers to use security priming techniques—such as positive affirmations ("you are valued") and role modeling success stories—can boost employee vitality and learning. Organizations should train supervisors to recognize subordinates' attachment traits and promote secure behaviors, including independent work and help-seeking. Supervisors should practice active listening, validate employees' feelings, and show empathy—especially toward those with lower attachment security—to enhance relational security and boost productivity.

Our findings highlight that while TFL positively influences workplace thriving, employees' attachment shapes their perceptions of TFL. Therefore, leadership training should not only focus on enhancing TFL behaviors (Dvir et al., 2002), but also on helping leaders understand how different attachment dimensions influence followers' views of leaders' efforts. Specifically, training in individualized consideration can help leaders recognize and respond to the different attachment-related needs of team members, as opposed to a "one-size-fits-all" approach (Boatwright et al., 2010). Additionally, incorporating 360-degree feedback (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006) can provide leaders with valuable insights into how attachment affects their leadership perceptions, enabling more tailored and effective leadership development.

Limitations and Future Research

Our study has limitations that highlight fruitful avenues for future research. First, ratings for attachment dimensions, perceived TFL, and thriving at work were derived from the same source (i.e., project team members), creating the potential for common source bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). We reduced common source bias by using a three-wave longitudinal design, collecting data at three separate time points. Nevertheless, it would be beneficial to measure thriving at work from diverse sources, such as supervisors and co-workers, to increase the validity of the measures.

Second, the study was conducted with a sample consisting of multinational IT organizations in India. Some may question the applicability of the TFL theory, which was created based on Western cultures, to India, a Global South nation characterized by a more collectivist and high-power-distance culture (Hofstede, 1980). However, a growing body of TFL research has reported consistent results across cultures (Wang et al., 2005). To broaden the applicability of our findings, future research could replicate this study in other (i.e., Western) cultures.

Third, we assessed followers' perceptions using a short measure of the TFL scale (Carless et al., 2000). The TFL paradigm provides a useful, but inexhaustive account of leadership style, and the facets of TFL were not explored here (e.g., idealized influence, intellectual stimulation; Bass, 1985). Single-scale measures of TFL are recommended for research purposes as the subcomponents are highly intercorrelated (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Our results may be limited in terms of implications, as the short measure meant we were unable to examine whether certain dimensions of TFL drove the relationships. However, the short measure resulted in high response rates within organizations. Future research may consider using lengthy questionnaires, such as the MLQ, to measure TFL.

Fourth, while our study focuses on how attachment dimensions shape perceptions of TFL, we acknowledge that attachment may also affect followers' initial attraction to specific leadership styles. For instance, individuals with higher attachment security have been found to prefer socialized charismatic leaders, while those higher in counterdependence may gravitate toward personalized charismatic leaders (Shalit et al., 2010). Future research could employ experimental designs—such as vignettes or choice-based studies—to examine whether attachment security predicts attraction to transformational leaders and how this initial preference interacts with perceptions over time to shape leader-follower relationships.

Finally, while our model is grounded in theory and supported by time-lagged data, we did not measure or control for individual differences, such as positive affect, which may influence both leadership perceptions and thriving. Future research should include such affective traits (or other relevant individual differences) to better isolate the effects of attachment on perceived TFL and thriving (e.g., Richards & Schat, 2011). Although our analyses provide weak support for a reverse pathway (i.e., thriving at Time 2 influencing perceived TFL at Time 3), the three-wave design limits the ability to draw strong conclusions about temporal direction. Future experimental or cross-lagged panel designs would provide a more rigorous test of these dynamics.

Conclusion

Leadership is incomplete without understanding the role of followers (Dvir & Shamir, 2003; Oc & Bashshur, 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). In our study, we sharpen the focus on followers by examining how follower characteristics (i.e., attachment dimensions) influence thriving at work through their perceptions of TFL. Our findings contribute to the literature on thriving and attachment by demonstrating that individuals with higher attachment security are more likely to thrive at work, whereas insecure attachment (i.e., elevated levels of overdependence or counterdependence) may hinder thriving. We also contribute to

followership literature by showing that higher levels of secure attachment (but not overdependence or counterdependence) may trigger positive perceptions of TFL, resulting in a resource gain spiral that supports the ability to thrive at work. Generally, our results can enable organizations to better understand how followership contributes to core relational leadership processes and employee well-being.

References

Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation*. Erlbaum.

Baldwin, M. W., Keelan, J. P. R., Fehr, B., Enns, V., & Koh-Rangarajoo, E. (1996). Social-cognitive conceptualization of attachment working models: Availability and accessibility effects. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *71*(1), 94–109. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.71.1.94

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. Academic Press.

Bass, B. M. (1999). Two decades of research and development in transformational leadership. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *8*(1), 9–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/135943299398410

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1993). Transformational leadership: A response to critiques. In M. M. Chemers & R. Ayman (Eds.), *Leadership theory and research: Perspectives and directions* (pp. 49–80). Academic Press.

Bastardoz, N., & Van Vugt, M. (2019). The nature of followership: Evolutionary analysis and review. *The Leadership Quarterly, 30*(1), 81–95. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2018.09.004

Becker, T. E. (2005). Potential problems in the statistical control of variables in organizational research: A qualitative analysis with recommendations. *Organizational Research Methods*, *8*(3), 274–289. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428105278021

Benson A., Hardy, J. & Eys, M. (2016). Contextualizing leaders' interpretations of proactive followership. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *37*(7), 949–966. https://doi/org/10.1002/job.2077

Berson, Y., Dan, O., & Yammarino, F. J. (2006). Attachment style and individual differences in leadership perceptions and emergence. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *146*(2), 165–182. https://doi.org/10.3200/SOCP.146.2.165-182

Bliese, P. D., Klein, K. J., & Kozlowski, S. W. J. (2000). Within-group agreement, non-independence, and reliability: Implications for data aggregation and analysis. In K. J. Klein, & S. W. J. Kozlowski (Eds.), *Multilevel theory, research, and methods in organizations: Foundations, extensions, and new directions* (pp. 349–381). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Boatwright, K. J., Lopez, F. G., Sauer, E. M., VanDerWege, A., & Huber, D. M. (2010). The influence of adult attachment styles on workers' preferences for relational leadership behaviors. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal, 13*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/10887150903316271

Bowlby, J. (1969). Attachment and loss, *1*. *Attachment*. Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1973). Attachment and loss, *2*. *Separation: Anxiety and anger*. Basic Books.

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. Harper & Row.

Byrne, Z., Albert, L., Manning, S., & Desir, R. (2017). Relational models and engagement: An attachment theory perspective. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *32*(1), 30–44. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-01-2016-0006

Carless, S. A., Wearing, A. J., & Mann, L. (2000). A short measure of transformational leadership. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *14*(3), 389–405. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1022991115523

Carsten, M. K., Uhl-Bien, M., & Huang, L. (2018). Leader perceptions and motivation as outcomes of followership role orientation and behavior. *Leadership, 14*(6), 731–756. https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715017720306

Carsten, M. K., Uhl-Bien, M., West, B. J., Patera, J. L., & McGregor, R. (2010). Exploring social constructions of followership: A qualitative study. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *21*(3), 543–562. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.03.015

Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (1990). Origins and functions of positive and negative affect: A control-process view. *Psychological Review, 97*(1), 19–35. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.97.1.19

Chaleff, I. (2008). Creating new ways of following. In R. Riggio, I. Chaleff, & J. Lipman-Blumen (Eds.), *The art of followership: How great followers create great leaders and organizations* (pp. 67–87). Jossey-Bass.

Chen, G. (2005). Newcomer adaptation in teams: Multilevel antecedents and outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal*, *48*(1), 101–116. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2005.15993147

Chen, G., Donahue, L. M., & Klimoski, R. J. (2004). Training undergraduates to work in organizational teams. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, *3*(1), 27–40. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMLE.2004.12436817

Cole, M. S., Bedeian, A. G., & Bruch, H. (2011). Linking leader behavior and leadership consensus to team performance: Integrating direct consensus and dispersion models of group composition. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *22*(2), 383–398. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.02.012

Collins, N. L., & Read, S. J. (1990). Adult attachment, working models, and relationship quality in dating couples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *58*(4), 644–663. https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.58.4.644

Collins, N. L., & Read, S. J. (1994). Cognitive representations of attachment: The structure and function of working models. In K. Bartholomew & D. Perlman (Eds.), *Attachment processes in adulthood* (pp. 53–90). Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Colquitt, J. A., Lepine, J. A., & Wesson, M. J. (2009). *Organizational behavior: Improving performance and commitment in the workplace*. McGraw-Hill.

Consedine, N. S., & Magai, C. (2003). Attachment and emotion experience in later life: The view from emotions theory. *Attachment and Human Development*, *5*(2), 165–187. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461673031000108496

Coyle, P. T., Goswami, A., & Foti, R. J. (2023). Using a role-based approach to develop a comprehensive typology of follower characteristics and behaviors. *Group and Organization Management*, *48*(2), 468–506. https://doi.org/10.1177/10596011231162725

Dahling, J. J., & Librizzi, U. A. (2015). Integrating the theory of work adjustment and attachment theory to predict job turnover intentions. *Journal of Career Development*, *42*(3), 215–228. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845314545169

Davidovitz, R., Mikulincer, M., Shaver, P. R., Izsak, R., & Popper, M. (2007). Leaders as attachment figures: Leaders' attachment orientations predict leadership-related mental representations and followers' performance and mental health. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *93*(4), 632–650. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.93.4.632

Deinert, A., Homan, A. C., Boer, D., Voelpel, S. C., & Gutermann, D. (2015). Transformational leadership sub-dimensions and their link to leaders' personality and performance. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *26*(6), 1095–1120. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.08.001

Duan, J., Wang, T., Xu, Y., & Zhu, Y. (2022). Employee status and voice under authoritarian leadership: An attachment perspective. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 38(1),* 607–619. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-022-09845-9

Dulebohn, J. H., Bommer, W. H., Liden, R. C., Brouer, R. L., & Ferris, G. R. (2012). A meta-analysis of antecedents and consequences of leader-member exchange: Integrating the

past with an eye toward the future. *Journal of Management, 38*(6), 1715–1759. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206311415280

Dust, S. B., Resick, C. J., & Mawritz, M. B. (2014). Transformational leadership, psychological empowerment, and the moderating role of mechanistic–organic contexts. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 35*(3), 413–433. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1904

Dvir, T., Eden, D., Avolio, B. J., & Shamir, B. (2002). Impact of transformational leadership on follower development and performance: A field experiment. *Academy of Management Journal*, *45*(4), 735–744. https://doi.org/10.2307/3069307

Dvir, T., & Shamir, B. (2003). Follower developmental characteristics as predicting transformational leadership: A longitudinal field study. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *14*(3), 327–344. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(03)00018-3

Enders, C. K., & Peugh, J. L. (2004). Using an EM covariance matrix to estimate structural equation models with missing data: Choosing an adjusted sample size to improve the accuracy of inferences. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, *11*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15328007SEM1101_1

Feeney, J. A. (1999). Adult attachment, emotional control, and marital satisfaction. *Personal Relationships*, *6*(2), 169–185. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6811.1999.tb00185.x

Felfe, J., & Schyns, B. (2006). Personality and the perception of transformational leadership: The impact of extraversion, neuroticism, personal need for structure, and occupational self-efficacy. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *36*(3), 708–739. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0021-9029.2006.00026.x

Felfe, J., & Schyns, B. (2010). Followers' personality and the perception of transformational leadership: Further evidence for the similarity hypothesis. *British Journal of Management*, *21*(2), 393–410. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2009.00649.x

Ford, J. & Harding, N. (2018). Followers in leadership theory: Fiction, fantasy and illusion. *Leadership*, *14*(1), 3–24. https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715015621372

Fraley, R. C., & Waller, N. G. (1998). Adult attachment patterns: A test of the typological model. In J. A. Simpsons & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 77–114). Guildford Press.

Frazier, M. L., Gooty, J., Little, L. M., & Nelson, D. L. (2015). Employee attachment: Implications for supervisor trustworthiness and trust. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *30*(2), 373–386. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-014-9367-4

Frazier, M. L., Johnson, P. D., & Bolton, J. F. (2007). Attachment at work questionnaire: Development of a scale. Paper presented at The Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

Geller, D., & Bamberger, P. (2009). Bringing avoidance and anxiety to the job: Attachment style and instrumental helping behavior among co-workers. *Human Relations*, *62*(12), 1803–1827. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726709337524

Gillath, O., Bunge, S. A., Shaver, P. R., Wendelken, C., & Mikulincer, M. (2005). Attachment-style differences in the ability to suppress negative thoughts: Exploring the neural correlates. *NeuroImage*, *28*(4), 835–847. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2005.06.048

Gillath, O., Hart, J., Noftle, E. E., & Stockdale, G. D. (2009). Development and validation of a state adult attachment measure (SAAM). *Journal of Research in Personality*, *43*(3), 362–373. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2008.12.009

Goh, Z., Eva, N., Kiazad, K., Jack, G. A., De Cieri, H., & Spreitzer, G. M. (2022). An integrative multilevel review of thriving at work: Assessing progress and promise. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *43*(2), 197–213. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2571

Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *6*(2), 219–247. https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(95)90036-5

Grant, A. M., Gino, F., & Hofmann, D. A. (2011). Reversing the extraverted leadership advantage: The role of employee proactivity. *Academy of Management Journal*, *54*(3), 528–550. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2011.61968043

Green, J. D., & Campbell, W. K. (2000). Attachment and exploration in adults: Chronic and contextual accessibility. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *26*(4), 452–461. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167200266004

Halbesleben, J. R. B. (2006). Sources of social support and burnout: A meta-analytic test of the conservation of resources model. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, *91*(5), 1134–1145. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.91.5.1134

Halbesleben, J. R. B., Neveu, J.-P., Paustian-Underdahl, S. C., & Westman, M. (2014). Getting to the "COR": Understanding the role of resources in conservation of resources theory. *Journal of Management*, *40*(5), 1334–1364. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314527130

Han, S. H., Seo, G., Yoon, S. W., & Yoon, D.-Y. (2016). Transformational leadership and knowledge sharing: Mediating roles of employee's empowerment, commitment, and citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 28*(3), 130–149. https://doi.org/10.1108/JWL-09-2015-0066

Hansbrough, T. K. (2012). The construction of a transformational leader: Follower attachment and leadership perceptions. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *42*(6), 1533–1549. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2012.00913.x

Hardy, G. E., & Barkham, M. (1994). The relationship between interpersonal attachment styles and work difficulties. *Human Relations*, *47*(3), 263–281. https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679404700302

Harms, P. D. (2011). Adult attachment styles in the workplace. *Human Resource Management Review, 21*(4), 285–296. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2010.10.006

Harms, P. D., Bai, Y., & Han, G. H. (2016). How leader and follower attachment styles are mediated by trust. *Human Relations*, *69*(9), 1853–1876. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726716628968

Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. R. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *52*(3), 511–524. https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.52.3.511

Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. R. (1990). Love and work: An attachment-theoretical perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *59*(2), 270–280. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.59.2.270

Hetland, H., Sandal, G. M., & Johnsen, T. B. (2008). Followers' personality and leadership. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 14*(4), 322–331. https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051808315550

Hildenbrand, K., Sacramento, C. A., & Binnewies, C. (2018). Transformational leadership and burnout: The role of thriving and followers' openness to experience. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *23*(1), 31–43. https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000051

Hinojosa, A. S., Davis McCauley, K., Randolph-Seng, B., & Gardner, W. L. (2014). Leader and follower attachment styles: Implications for authentic leader–follower relationships. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *25*(3), 595–610. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.12.002

Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *The American Psychologist*, *44*(3), 513–524. https://doi.org/10.1037//0003-066x.44.3.513

Hobfoll, S. E. (1998). *Stress, culture, and community*. Plenum Press.

Hobfoll, S. E. (2001). The influence of culture, community, and the nested-self in the stress process: Advancing Conservation of Resources theory. *Applied Psychology*, *50*(3), 337–421. https://doi.org/10.1111/1464-0597.00062

Hobfoll, S. E. (2002). Social and psychological resources and adaptation. *Review of General Psychology*, *6*(4), 307–324. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.6.4.307

Hofstede, G. (1980). Motivation, leadership, and organization: Do American theories apply abroad? *Organizational Dynamics*, *9*(1), 42–63. https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616(80)90013-3

Howell, J. M., & Shamir, B. (2005). The role of followers in the charismatic leadership process: Relationships and their consequences. *Academy of Management Review*, *30*(1), 96–112. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2005.15281435

James, L. R., Demaree, R. G., & Wolf, G. (1984). Estimating within-group interrater reliability with and without response bias. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 69*(1), 85–98. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.69.1.85

Jaroliya, D., & Gyanchandani, R. (2022). Transformational leadership style: A boost or hindrance to team performance in IT sector. *Vilakshan – XIMB Journal of Management*, *19*(1), 87–105. http://doi.org/10.1108/XJM-10-2020-0167

Jiang, Z. (2017). Proactive personality and career adaptability: The role of thriving at work. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *98*, 85–97. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2016.10.003

Joplin, J. R. W., Nelson, D. L., & Quick, J. C. (1999). Attachment behavior and health: Relationships at work and home. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *20*(6), 783–

796. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-1379(199911)20:6<783::AID-JOB923>3.0.CO;2-P

Judge, T. A., & Piccolo, R. F. (2004). Transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, *89*(5), 755–768. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.89.5.755

Kark, R., Shamir, B., & Chen, G. (2003). The two faces of transformational leadership: Empowerment and dependency. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, *88*(2), 246–255. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.2.246

Kellerman, B. (2008). *Followership: How followers are creating change and changing leaders*. Harvard Business Press.

Kelley, R. (1988). In praise of followers. *Harvard Business Review*, *66*(6), 142–148.

Kleine, A.-K., Rudolph, C. W., & Zacher, H. (2019). Thriving at work: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *40*(9–10), 973–999. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2375

Lee, A., Lyubovnikova, J., Thomas, G., Schwarz, G., & Cao, J. (2024). A relational perspective on how and when follower attachment style impacts job performance: The moderating role of leader neuroticism. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 97*(3), 977–1010. https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12509

Leiter, M. P., Day, A., & Price, L. (2015). Attachment styles at work: Measurement, collegial relationships, and burnout. *Burnout Research*, *2*(1), 25–35. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.burn.2015.02.003

Lin, B., Law, K. S., & Zhou, J. (2017). Why is underemployment related to creativity and OCB? A task-crafting explanation of the curvilinear moderated relations. *Academy of Management Journal*, *60*(1), 156–177. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2014.0470

Lin, C. P., Xian, J., Li, B., & Huang, H. (2020). Transformational leadership and employees' thriving at work: The mediating roles of challenge-hindrance stressors. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *11*, 1400. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01400

Little, L. M., Nelson, D. L., Wallace, J. C., & Johnson, P. D. (2011). Integrating attachment style, vigor at work, and extra-role performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *32*(3), 464–484. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.709

Littman-Ovadia, H., Oren, L., & Lavy, S. (2013). Attachment and autonomy in the workplace: New insights. *Journal of Career Assessment*, *21*(4), 502–518. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072712475282

Liu, J., Siu, O.-L., & Shi, K. (2010). Transformational leadership and employee well-being: The mediating role of trust in the leader and self-efficacy. *Applied Psychology*, *59*(3), 454–479. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2009.00407.x

Lopez, F. (2003). The assessment of adult attachment security. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology assessments* (pp. 285–299). American Psychology Association.

Lord, R. G., Brown, D. J., & Freiberg, S. J. (1999). Understanding the dynamics of leadership: The role of follower self-concepts in the leader/follower relationship. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 78*(3), 167–203. https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.1999.2832

Lowe, K. B., Kroeck, K. G., & Sivasubramaniam, N. (1996). Effectiveness correlates of transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic review of the MLQ literature. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *7*(3), 385–425. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(96)90027-2

Mathieu, J., Maynard, M. T., Rapp, T., & Gilson, L. (2008). Team effectiveness 1997–2007: A review of recent advancements and a glimpse into the future. *Journal of Management*, *34*(3), 410–476. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308316061

McNeish, D. (2017). Multilevel mediation with small samples: A cautionary note on the multilevel structural equation modeling framework. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, *24*(4), 609–625. https://doi.org/10.1080/10705511.2017.1280797

Mikulincer, M. (1997). Adult attachment style and information processing: Individual differences in curiosity and cognitive closure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *72*(5), 1217–1230. https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.72.5.1217

Mikulincer, M., & Florian, V. (1995). Appraisal of and coping with a real-life stressful situation: The contribution of attachment styles. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *21*(4), 406–414. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167295214011

Mikulincer, M., & Florian, V. (1998). The relationship between adult attachment styles and emotional and cognitive reactions to stressful events. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 143–165). The Guilford Press.

Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2003). The attachment behavioral system in adulthood: Activation, psychodynamics, and interpersonal processes. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology*, *35*. Academic Press. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(03)01002-5

Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2005). Attachment theory and emotions in close relationships: Exploring the attachment-related dynamics of emotional reactions to relational events. *Personal Relationships*, *12*(2), 149–168. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1350-4126.2005.00108.x

Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2007a). *Attachment in adulthood: Structure, dynamics and change*. Guildford Press.

Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2007b). Boosting attachment security to promote mental health, prosocial values, and inter-group tolerance. *Psychological Inquiry*, *18*(3), 139–156. https://doi.org/10.1080/10478400701512646

Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2015). The psychological effects of the contextual activation of security-enhancing mental representations in adulthood. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *1*, 18–21. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.01.008

Mikulincer, M., & Sheffi, E. (2000). Adult attachment style and cognitive reactions to positive affect: A test of mental categorization and creative problem solving. *Motivation and Emotion*, *24*(3), 149–174. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005606611412

Miller, R. S. (2007). *Intimate relationships*. McGraw-Hill.

Morrison, E. W., & Phelps, C. C. (1999). Taking charge at work: Extrarole efforts to initiate workplace change. *Academy of Management Journal*, *42*(4), 403–419. https://doi.org/10.2307/257011

Muthén, L. K., & Muthén, B. O. (1998–2015). *Mplus user's guide* (7th ed.). Muthén and Muthén.

Nelson, D. L., Quick, J. C., & Joplin, J. R. (1991). Psychological contracting and newcomer socialization: An attachment theory foundation. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, *6*(7), 55–72.

Ng, T. W. H. (2017). Transformational leadership and performance outcomes: Analyses of multiple mediation pathways. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *28*(3), 385–417. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2016.11.008

Niessen, C., Sonnentag, S., & Sach, F. (2012). Thriving at work – A diary study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *33*(4), 468–487. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.763

Oc, B., & Bashshur, M. R. (2013). Followership, leadership and social influence. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *24*(6), 919–934. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.10.006

Parke, M. R., Weinhardt, J. M., Brodsky, A., Tangirala, S., & DeVoe, S. E. (2018). When daily planning improves employee performance: The importance of planning type, engagement, and interruptions. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, *103*(3), 300–312. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000278

Paterson, T. A., Luthans, F., & Jeung, W. (2014). Thriving at work: Impact of Psychological capital and supervisor support. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *35*(3), 434–446. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1907

Pfeffer, J. (2010). Building sustainable organizations: The human factor. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *24*(1), 34–45. https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.24.1.34

Piccolo, R. F., & Colquitt, J. A. (2006). Transformational leadership and job behaviors: The mediating role of core job characteristics. *Academy of Management Journal*, *49*(2), 327–340. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2006.20786079

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J.-Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, *88*(5), 879–903. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Moorman, R. H., & Fetter, R. (1990). Transformational leader behaviors and their effects on followers' trust in leader, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *1*(2), 107–142. https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(90)90009-7

Popper, M., & Amit, K. (2009). Attachment and leader's development via experiences. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *20*(5), 749–763. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2009.06.005

Popper, M., & Mayseless, O. (2003). Back to basics: Applying a parenting perspective to transformational leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *14*(1), 41–65. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(02)00183-2

Popper, M., Mayseless, O., & Castelnovo, O. (2000). Transformational leadership and attachment. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *11*(2), 267–289. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(00)00038-2

Porath, C. L., Spreitzer, G. M., Gibson, C., & Garnett, F. G. (2012). Thriving at work: Toward its measurement, construct validation, and theoretical refinement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *33*(2), 250–275. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.756

Preacher, K. J., Zyphur, M. J., & Zhang, Z. (2010). A general multilevel SEM framework for assessing multilevel mediation. *Psychological Methods*, *15*(3), 209–233. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0020141

Quick, J. C., Joplin, J. R., Nelson, D. L., & Quick, J. D. (1992). Behavioral responses to anxiety: Self-reliance, counterdependence, and overdependence. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, *5*(1), 41–54. https://doi.org/10.1080/10615809208250486

Richards, D. A., & Hackett, R. D. (2012). Attachment and emotion regulation: Compensatory interactions and leader–member exchange. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *23*(4), 686–701. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2012.03.005

Richards, D. A., & Schat, A. C. H. (2011). Attachment at (not to) work: Applying attachment theory to explain individual behavior in organizations. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, *96*(1), 169–182. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0020372

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2008). From ego depletion to vitality: Theory and findings concerning the facilitation of energy available to the self. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *2*(2), 702–717. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2008.00098.x

Ryan, R. M., & Frederick, C. (1997). On energy, personality, and health: Subjective vitality as a dynamic reflection of well-being. *Journal of Personality*, *65*(3), 529–565. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1997.tb00326.x

Schmitt, A., Den Hartog, D. N., & Belschak, F. D. (2016). Transformational leadership and proactive work behaviour: A moderated mediation model including work engagement and job strain. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *89*(3), 588–610. https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12143

Schyns, B., & Felfe, J. (2006). The personality of followers and its effect on the perception of leadership: An overview, a study, and a research agenda. *Small Group Research*, *37*(5), 522–539. https://doi.org/10.1177/1046496406293013

Schyns, B., & Sanders, K. (2007). In the eyes of the beholder: Personality and the perception of leadership. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *37*(10), 2345–2363. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2007.00261.x

Shalit, A., Popper, M., & Zakay, D. (2010). Followers' attachment styles and their preference for social or for personal charismatic leaders. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, *31*(5), 458–472. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437731011056461

Shamir, B. (2007). From passive recipients to active co-producers: Followers' roles in the leadership process. In B. Shamir, R. Pillai, M. Bligh, & M. Uhl-Bien (Eds.), *Follower-centered perspectives on leadership: A tribute to the memory of James R. Meindl* (pp. 9–39). Information Age Publishers.

Sharma, A. (2023, July 28). Bengaluru's IT dominance: The Silicon Valley of India. Retrieved August 25, 2023. https://www.codingninjas.com/studio/library/bengalurus-it-dominance-the-silicon-valley-of-india

Shrout, P. E., & Bolger, N. (2002). Mediation in experimental and nonexperimental studies: New procedures and recommendations. *Psychological Methods*, *7*(4), 422–445. https://doi.org/10.1037/1082-989X.7.4.422

Spreitzer, G., Porath, C. L., & Gibson, C. B. (2012). Toward human sustainability. *Organizational Dynamics*, *41*(2), 155–162. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2012.01.009

Spreitzer, G., Sutcliffe, K., Dutton, J., Sonenshein, S., & Grant, A. M. (2005). A socially embedded model of thriving at work. *Organization Science*, *16*(5), 537–549. http://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1050.0153

Ten Brummelhuis, L. L., & Bakker, A. B. (2012). A resource perspective on the work–home interface: The work–home resources model. *The American Psychologist*, *67*(7), 545–556. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027974

Thoits, P. A. (1994). Stressors and problem-solving: The individual as psychological activist. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *35*(2), 143–160. https://doi.org/10.2307/2137362

Uhl-Bien, M., Riggio, R. E., Lowe, K. B., & Carsten, M. K. (2014). Followership theory: A review and research agenda. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *25*(1), 83–104. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.11.007

Wallace, J. C., Butts, M. M., Johnson, P. D., Stevens, F. G., & Smith, M. B. (2016). A multilevel model of employee innovation: Understanding the effects of regulatory focus, thriving, and employee involvement climate. *Journal of Management*, *42*(4), 982–1004. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206313506462

Wang, H., Law, K. S., Hackett, R. D., Wang, D., & Chen, Z. X. (2005). Leader-member exchange as a mediator of the relationship between transformational leadership and

followers' performance and organizational citizenship behavior. *Academy of Management Journal*, *48*(3), 420–432. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2005.17407908

Wu, C.-H., Parker, S. K., & de Jong, J. P. (2014). Feedback seeking from peers: A positive strategy for insecurely attached team-workers. *Human Relations*, *67*(4), 441–464. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726713496124

Yip, J., Ehrhardt, K., Black, H., & Walker, D. O. (2018). Attachment theory at work: A review and directions for future research. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *39*(2), 185–198. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2204

Zaleznik, A. (1965). The dynamics of subordinacy. *Harvard Business Review*, *43*(3), 119–131.

Zigler, C. K., & Ye, F. (2019). A comparison of multilevel mediation modeling methods: Recommendations for applied researchers. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, *54*(3), 338–359. https://doi.org/10.1080/00273171.2018.1527676

Table 1

The Result of Multilevel Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Model	Description	χ^2	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR (within)	SRMR (between)	Change from hypothesized model	
									χ^2	Δdf
Hypothesized Model	Five-factor model[a]	868.17	473	0.95	0.95	0.03	0.05	0.07		
Model 1	Four-factor model[b]	1136.93	477	0.88	0.90	0.10	0.08	0.09	268.76**	4
Model 2	Three-factor model[c]	1786.35	480	0.71	0.73	0.11	0.10	0.14	649.42**	3
Model 3	Two-factor model[d]	2488.67	482	0.73	0.64	0.15	0.16	0.14	702.32*	2
Model 4	One-factor model[e]	3785.81	483	0.56	0.49	0.17	0.14	0.19	1297.14*	1

Note. χ^2 = chi-square; *df* = degrees of freedom; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = Root-Mean-Square Error Approximation; SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$.

[a]Five-factors: secure attachment; overdependence, counterdependence; perceived TFL; thriving at work;

[b]Four-factors: secure attachment; overdependence and counterdependence combined; perceived TFL; thriving at work;

[c]Three-factors: secure attachment, overdependence and counterdependence combined; perceived TFL; thriving at work;

[d]Two-factors: secure attachment, overdependence, counterdependence and perceived TFL combined; thriving at work;

[e]One-factor: secure attachment, overdependence, counterdependence, perceived TFL and thriving at work combined.

Table 2

Means, Standard deviations, and Correlations Between Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Individual level												
1. Age	36.76	0.66	–									
2. Gender	–	–	–0.02	–								
3. Education	–	–	0.14	0.08	–							
4. Secure	3.91	0.49	0.01	–0.07	0.09	–						
5. OD	2.23	1.10	–0.03	0.05	–0.06	–0.25*	–					
6. CD	2.37	0.99	–0.07	0.03	–0.04	–0.21***	0.23**	–				
7. Thriving	3.87	0.58	0.14*	–0.13	0.09	0.32**	–0.29**	–0.36***	–			
8. Perceived TFL	2.54	0.42	0.09	0.07	0.13	0.45*	–0.37***	–0.49**	0.41**	–		
Team level												
9. Team tenure	1.34	1.26	0.15	–0.07	0.03	0.15	–0.13	–0.16	–0.16*	0.04	–	
10. Team-level TFL	2.69	1.87	0.10	0.09	0.15	0.19*	–0.15**	–0.23**	0.25*	0.05	0.13	–

Note. N = 587 individuals working within 112 teams. $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{***}p < 0.001$; OD = Overdependence; CD = Counterdependence; TFL = Transformational Leadership.

Table 3

Sensitivity Analyses

Model	Attachment dimensions	Indirect effects	S.E.	p-value	Direct effects	S.E.	p-value
Baseline	Secure	0.38	0.11	<0.001	0.14	0.32	0.28
Model	Overdependence	–0.28	0.16	<0.01	–0.09	0.21	0.31
(Main	Counterdependence	–0.31	0.10	<0.05	–0.16	0.19	0.35
mediation							
model with							
individual							
TFL as							
mediator, and							
team-level							
TFL and							
demographics as controls)							
Model 1	Secure	0.53	0.21	<0.001	0.31	0.25	0.11
(Mediation	Overdependence	–0.43	0.17	<0.05	–0.13	0.23	0.34
without	Counterdependence	–0.49	0.25	<0.01	–0.22	0.31	0.42
team-level							
means of							
TFL as							
control)							
Model 2	Secure	0.24	0.27	<0.01	0.10	0.22	0.16
	Overdependence	–0.21	0.29	<0.01	–0.07	0.20	0.21

(Control team size as an alternative team-level control instead of team-level TFL)	Counterdependence	–0.26	0.23	<0.05	–0.05	0.18	0.25
Model 3	Secure	—	—	—	0.11	0.19	0.14
(No mediator but controls are retained)	Overdependence	—	—	—	–0.10	0.26	0.19
	Counterdependence	—	—	—	–0.08	0.21	0.25
Model 4	Secure	0.41	0.19	<0.001	0.11	0.17	0.08
(No control for demographics)	Overdependence	–0.33	0.29	<0.001	–0.10	0.23	0.06
	Counterdependence	–0.37	0.23	<0.01	–0.15	0.28	0.11
Model 5	Secure	0.14	0.06	<0.05	0.16	0.21	<0.05
(Reverse causality whereby attachment affects TFL	Overdependence	–0.19	0.11	0.07	–0.13	0.17	0.10
	Counterdependence	–0.23	0.04	0.10	–0.07	0.14	0.08

perceptions

via thriving)

Note. TFL = Transformational Leadership; S.E. = Standard Error. Team-level TFL was measured at Time 2, and demographics were measured at Time 1 as control variables. Demographics include age and team tenure.

Figure 1

Hypothesized Model

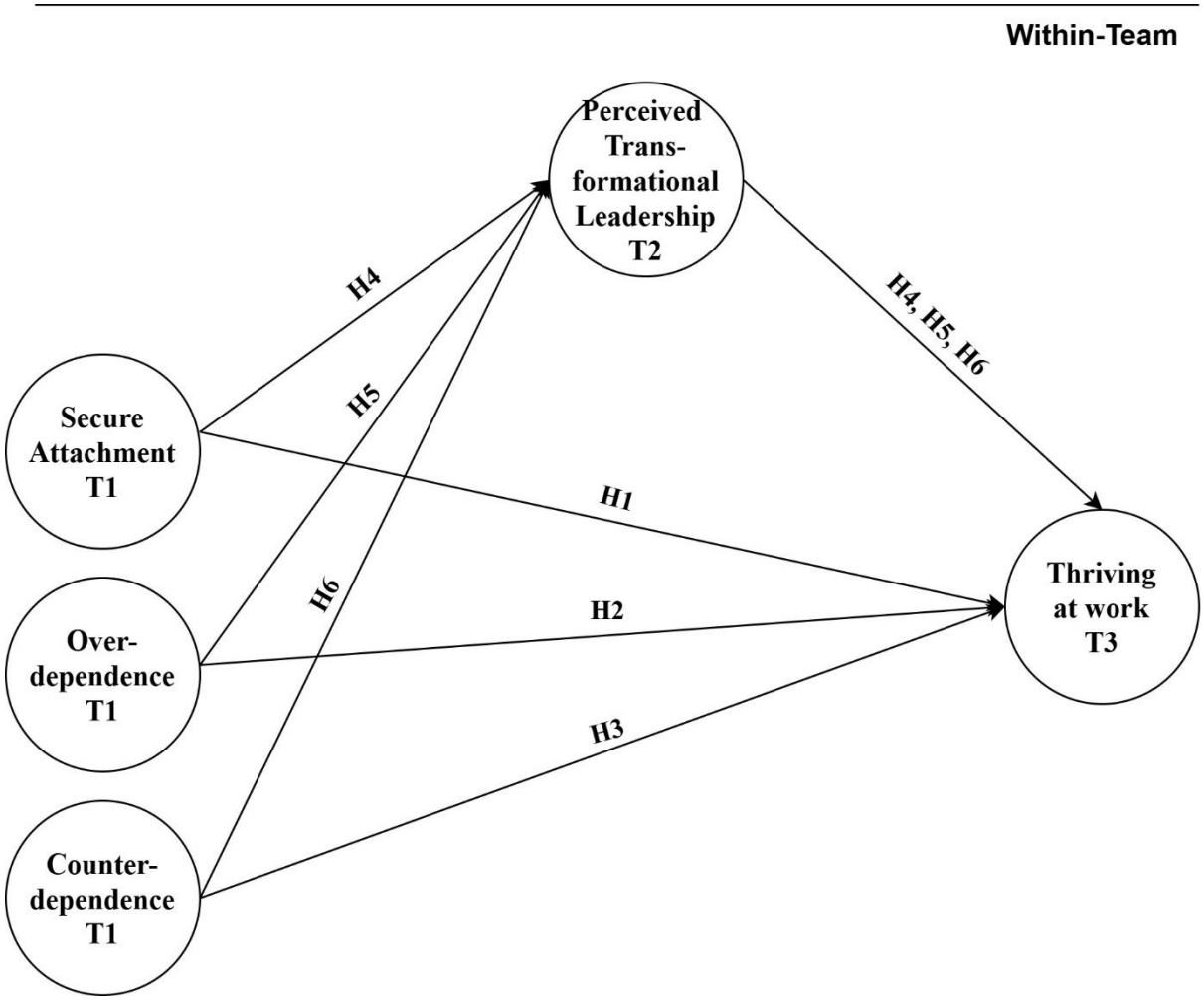
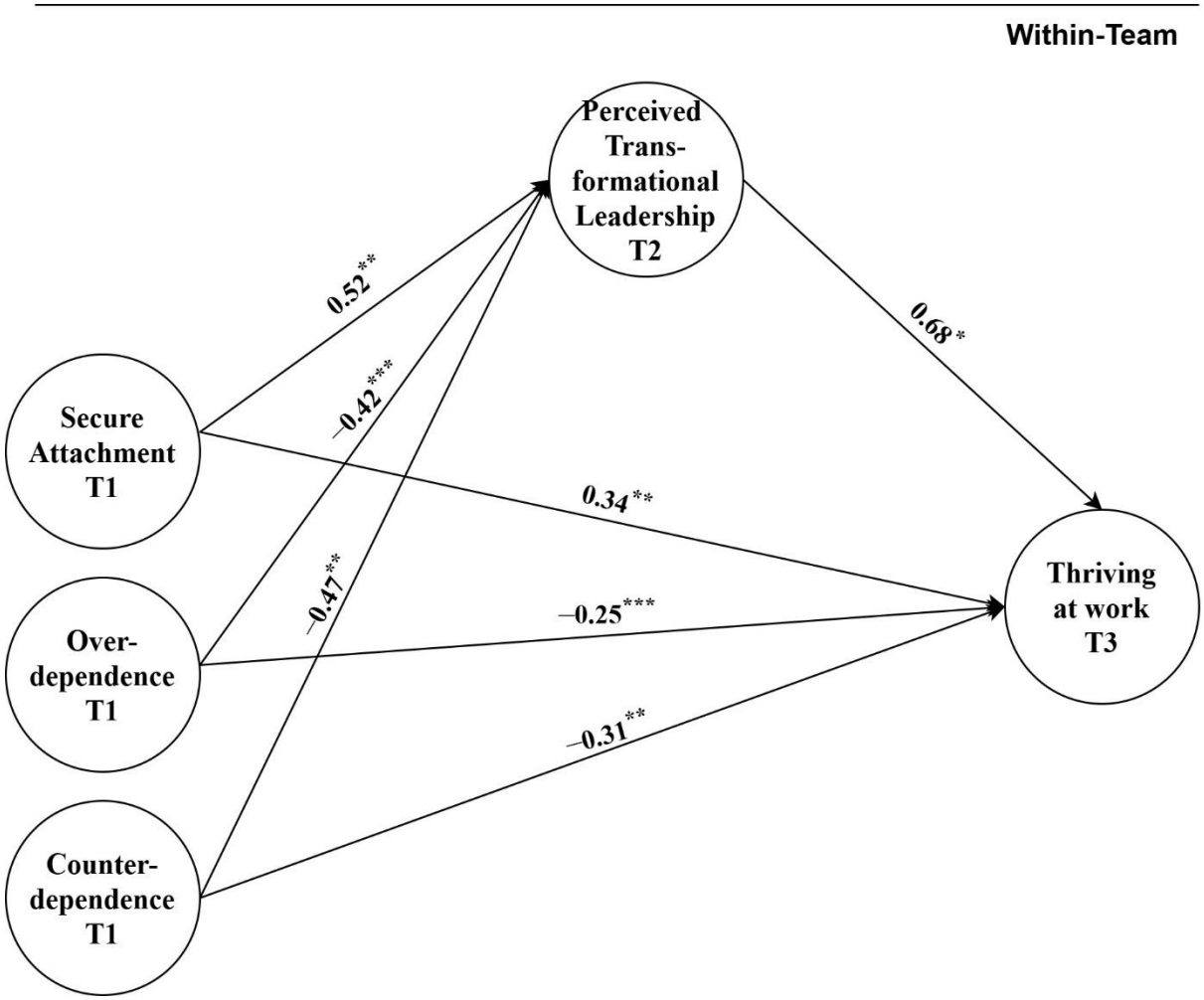


Figure 2

Path Diagram with Estimates



Note. $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{***}p < 0.001$.

Appendix

Full Attachment Scale and Supplemental Tables

Attachment Scale –

AWQ-I-1	On some tasks I can work effectively without other people.
AWQ-I-2	The actions I take are usually right.
AWQ-I-3	I feel secure in my ability to meet work challenges.
AWQ-I-4	I can usually take care of my own work but I don't mind getting help if I need it.
AWQ-I-5	I can perform high quality work with little support from others.
AWQ-I-6	I have a good give and take relationship with others at my work.
AWQ-I-7	I am successful at what I do.
AWQ-O-1	I often worry that I'll be excluded at work.
AWQ-O-2	I often worry that my coworkers do not really like me.
AWQ-O-3	I worry about having others not accept me.
AWQ-O-4	I often worry that my coworkers will not want to work with me.
AWQ-O-5	My desire to be close to my coworkers sometimes scares them away.
AWQ-C-1	Needing someone is a sign of weakness.
AWQ-C-2	Life would be much easier if I didn't have to deal with other people.
AWQ-C-3	Friends at work are a waste of time because in the end they will desert you.
AWQ-C-4	People will always reject you when they find out what you are really like.
AWQ-C-5	There is no one who can understand things in my life.
AWQ-C-6	I put myself at risk if I ever let anyone know I need them.
AWQ-C-7	I don't like it when people try to find out too much about me.

C = Counterdependent (Avoidant)
I = Secure or interdependent
O = Overdependent (Anxious)

Table A

Model Comparison

	Perceived TFL (T2)		Thriving at work (T3)		
Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Step 1. Individual level					
Age (T1)	0.14	0.08	0.04	0.05	0.03
Secure Attachment (T1)		0.53**		0.35**	0.21
OD (T1)		–0.44***		–0.26***	–0.16
CD (T1)		–0.48**		–0.32**	–0.19
Perceived TFL (T2)					0.72*
Step 2. Team level					
Team tenure (T1)	0.11	0.06	0.09	0.05	0.04
Team-level TFL (T2)	0.02	0.13	0.08	0.16*	0.14*
Overall F	2.54**	4.76***	0.63	2.88	3.17*
R^2	0.13	0.16	0.05	0.14	0.19
ΔF		6.14*		3.29**	3.98*

ΔR^2	0.03	0.09	0.05

Note. N = 587 individuals and 112 teams. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. OD = Overdependence; CD = Counterdependence; TFL = Transformational Leadership. $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{***}p < 0.001$.

Table B

Path Estimates

Path	Effect	β	p-value	S.E.	95% CI
Secure attachment → Perceived TFL	Path 1	0.52	< 0.01	0.17	[0.32, 0.49]
Perceived TFL → thriving at work	Path 2	0.73	< 0.01	0.29	[0.17, 0.36]
Overdependence → Perceived TFL	Path 1	– 0.42	< 0.001	0.21	[–0.19, – 0.26]
Perceived TFL → thriving at work	Path 2	0.67	< 0.01	0.15	[0.34, 1.20]
Counterdependence → Perceived TFL	Path 1	– 0.47	< 0.01	0.32	[–0.28, – 0.47]
Perceived TFL → thriving at work	Path 2	0.65	< 0.05	0.24	[0.39, 1.14]

Note. TFL = Transformational Leadership; S.E. = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval.

All estimates are **standardized** unless otherwise indicated.