The Idea of a Follower: An Investigation of Implicit Followership Theories and Their Correlates

by

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Author's Declaration

This thesis consists of material all of which I authored or co-authored: see Statement of

Contributions included in the thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final

revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Statement of Contributions

Essay 1 is a manuscript that is currently under review at the *Leadership and Organization Development Journal* (Evans & Shen, *under review*).

Abstract

Implicit followership theories (IFTs) are our subjective assumptions, or lay beliefs, about characteristics of followers. These beliefs can exert a powerful influence on workplace relationships between leaders and followers. This dissertation examines the correlates and structure of IFTs to provide further clarification as to why people have differing views of followers and the nature of these views. In Essay 1, I seek to understand why people diverge in their follower views by drawing on self-construal and trait activation theories to examine correlates of people's follower views. Specifically, I conduct a cross-sectional study across two samples (students and employees) to investigate how people's self-construals are differentially related to their IFTs, and whether situational factors interact to influence these relationships. I find that trait independent and interdependent self-construal is correlated with individuals' negative and positive follower views, respectively. Moreover, for workers, performance pressure strengthened the positive relationship between independent self-construal and anti-prototypical IFTs. Thus, Essay 1 contributes insights as to how individuals' traits and situational contexts individually and jointly relate to beliefs about followers. In Essay 2, I focus on explicating our *ideal* follower prototypes themselves—which, IFT theory argues, consist of configurations or patterns of follower traits—and whether different groups hold different prototypes due in part to how they have been socialized (i.e., work and leadership experience, socio-demographic background). In particular, I use latent profile analysis (LPA) to examine ideal IFT prototypes as patterns of traits *within* individuals and examine whether different groups hold different prototypes. I find that students and workers hold one of two, or three, prototypes, respectively (i.e., *Dutiful and Productive*, *Passive*, or *Energetic but Overconfident*). I also find that differences in socialization, specifically leadership and cultural region experiences, are related to

differences in which ideal follower prototypes people tend to espouse. Finally, I also examine

relationships between people's ideal follower prototypes and their leadership and followership

attitudes to provide initial understanding as to how ideal follower prototypes may influence

individuals' choices around adopting leadership or followership positions. Thus, Essay 2

contributes insights as to why and how people may hold different *ideal* IFT prototype views, as

well as how these views are related to attitudes that potentially shape the trajectory of one's

career.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Implicit followership theories (IFTs) are cognitive structures—schemas—that we hold about the traits and characteristics of followers (Sy, 2010). IFTs function as cognitive simplification mechanisms that are crucial for information processing in daily life, helping us to categorize others as followers (or not) and readily interpret follower actions (Shondrick & Lord, 2010; Epitropaki et al., 2013). Previous research suggests that people tend to assess followers along six trait dimensions, i.e., industriousness, enthusiasm, good citizen, conformity, insubordination, and incompetence (Sy, 2010). These dimensions can be amalgamated to form two over-arching views of followers, with the first three forming a prototypical dimension (i.e., a positive follower view) and the second three forming an anti-prototypical dimension (i.e., a negative follower view; Sy, 2010). In addition, people may hold different *types* of IFTs for different followers—for example, they may differentiate between typical, or average, followers, and ideal, or best, followers (Junker & van Dick, 2014).

IFTs are thought to be consequential in affecting follower actions for several reasons. First, leaders' beliefs about followers can create positive (or negative) self-fulfilling prophecies for their followers because leaders may act in ways that cultivate better (or worse) relationships with these followers (Goswami et al., 2019; Sy, 2010). For example, leaders with more positive follower beliefs have better relationships with their followers, which inspire followers to perform better (Whiteley et al., 2012) and improves their career success (Gao & Wu, 2019). Leaders' positive leader beliefs may even improve follower self-efficacy and thereby follower creativity (Kong et al., 2019). Secondly, followers rely on their IFTs as guides for their own actions, influencing the extent to which they comply with their leaders' (un)ethical behaviour or requests (Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013; Knoll et al., 2017).

Thus, given the consequential role of IFTs in framing how we perceive others and in driving leader and follower actions within the workplace, this thesis seeks to provide greater clarity into how these IFTs arise by investigating how different factors are related to IFTs. Previous schema theory and implicit theory research suggest that our implicit theories are formed from a young age based on (a) aspects of one's own self-image, such as personality traits, and (b) socialization experiences with and as followers (Shondrick et al., 2010; Keller, 1999; Keller, 2003; Hunt et al., 1999). However, IFT theorists also posit that our implicit theories, while having a hard-wired structure, may still be flexible enough to change or adapt to different contexts (Shondrick & Lord, 2010; Shondrick et al., 2010). For example, previous implicit theory research found that one's implicit leadership theories—lay-perceptions of leaders—may vary depending on one's organizational context (e.g., Shen, 2019). Investigating which correlates are related to one's *follower views* can provide insight into what factors IFTs tend to be shaped by: traits, socialization experiences, or contextual factors. Currently, we have little knowledge about which correlates are related to IFTs (see Thompson et al., 2018, for an exception). However, such insight offers some direction for whether, and how, we can shift IFTs to have a more positive impact on leader-follower relationships and outcomes in the workplace.

Thus, in Part 1, I seek to address this problem by investigating how two types of correlates, traits and contextual factors, are related to people's IFTs. First, I draw on self-construal theory (Johnson et al., 2006) to argue and test whether one's trait self-construals—the extent to which one sees oneself as independent and unique from others, or as defined by interdependent relationships—is related to negative and positive IFTs, respectively, among worker and student samples. We examine self-construal because it cues different *values* that individuals prioritize and hence affect their social motivations—self- or other-interest. In turn,

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these social values that one holds can affect how negatively or positively one perceives and treats others, such as followers. Second, I draw from trait activation theory (i.e., Tett & Burnett, 2003) to examine the extent to which context shapes IFTs—whether the situation amplifies or diminishes the strength of these trait-IFT relationships. Specifically, I investigate whether workplace factors, i.e., performance pressure and supervisor support, interact with trait self-construals to affect worker IFTs. I examine these contexts, specifically, because they are theorized to be important environmental cues for self- or other-interest, and which, in turn, can affect the strength of the self-construal-IFT relationships. Finally, I provide supplementary analyses to examine how the above hypothesized relationships are affected by the *type* of follower one is thinking about (i.e., typical versus ideal). Thus, Part 1 contributes to the literature by providing some initial insight into where our IFTs may come from, particularly by enriching our understanding of (a) how personal and situational factors are (separately or jointly) related to follower beliefs, and (b) whether the nature and strength of these influences differ depending on the *type* of IFT.

In Part 2, I investigate how different types of socialization experiences are related to IFTs while also incorporating current theorizing about how IFTs are structured to examine these relationships more precisely. Specifically, theory suggests that IFTs are organized and stored in our minds *as a pattern* of associations between follower traits, whereby we categorize others as followers based on how they exhibit *several IFT traits together* as opposed to how they exhibit one particular trait (Shondrick et al., 2010; Shondrick & Lord, 2010). Socialization experiences with, and as, followers are thought to influence the associations we make between IFT traits and thus predispose us towards holding different follower pattern views, or *prototypes* (Shondrick & Lord, 2010). Thus, it is possible that groups who have been socialized differently likely hold

different follower pattern views. Gaining clarity as to what prototypes we hold for *ideal*

followers, and how these socialization experiences are related to these views, is important

because previous research on implicit theories suggests that ideal (versus typical) prototypes

views may be most influential on the quality of our workplace relationships (e.g., van

Quaquebeke et al., 2014). Therefore, understanding whether differing expectations exist for how

good followers *should be* amongst groups who have been differently socialized could provide

insight into a potential source of conflict between teammates of different backgrounds.

Thus, in Part 2, I examine whether different groups of people hold different prototypes

for what *good*, or *ideal*, followers are like using latent profile analysis (LPA). In particular, LPA

allows researchers to examine and model relationships among variables *within* individuals (i.e.,

relationships between different IFT traits), and whether these relationships differ according to

sub-groups (Meyer et al., 2013). Further, I invoke theories regarding schema development (e.g.,

Shondrick et al., 2010) and social learning (Bandura, 1971) to investigate and test how

differences in socialization may lead to endorsement of different ideal follower prototypes.

Specifically, I examine how leadership and sociodemographic (e.g., cultural region, gender, race,

age) related experiences may be related to ideal follower prototypes for both students and

workers. I examine these socialization experiences because they expose one to varied situations

involving followers and may therefore help shape the prototype view of ideal followers that one

develops. Finally, I draw on theorizing about role identities, and identity granting and claiming

(Hogg et al., 1995; DeRue & Ashford, 2010), to explore how holding a specific ideal follower

prototype may predispose people to make assumptions about how others view them as leaders or

followers and may therefore influence their views on leadership and followership.

Therefore, Part 2 build on insights generated by Part 1 about which factors shape IFTs. In particular, Part 2 draws on ideas about schema development to offer insight into how *socialization*, as gained through leadership and sociodemographic related experiences, may help shape our views about followers. Part 2 also expands beyond Part 1 by examining how one's follower prototypes are related to downstream attitudes towards leaders and followers, or how likely we may be to seek further career advancement or increased responsibility over others.

CHAPTER 2: UNDERSTANDING DIVERGENT FOLLOWER VIEWS: PERSONAL AND SITUATIONAL CORRELATES OF IMPLICIT FOLLOWERSHIP THEORIES (ESSAY 1)

The following essay is a manuscript that is currently under review at the *Leadership and Organization Development Journal* (Evans & Shen, under review).

Introduction

Leader-follower relations are critical in organizations (Kaiser et al., 2008). People possess lay theories regarding followers and use these beliefs to guide their classification of, and interactions with, individuals in their environment (Shondrick & Lord, 2010). Research indicates that these *implicit followership theories* (IFTs) are consequential. Leaders who hold positive follower views generally have better relationships with their followers (Goswami et al., 2019), which in turn enhances their followers' performance (Whiteley et al., 2012), creativity (Kong et al., 2019), and career success (Gao & Wu, 2019). IFTs also guide followers' actions in response to their leaders (e.g., Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013).

Although research increasingly shows that IFTs affect important outcomes at work, a key omission in the literature is that little is known regarding the *correlates* of IFTs (Epitropaki et al., 2013; Lord et al., 2020). In other words, even though it is now apparent that individuals vary in their beliefs regarding the characteristics of followers, why this is the case is currently not well understood. One exception is research that found that attachment style is related to IFTs, such that those with insecure attachment styles tended to have more negative follower views (Thompson et al., 2018). However, we need more research regarding the determinants of IFTs, because the nature of these antecedents has important implications for the best course of organizational action to take in capitalizing on emerging IFT effects. For example, if IFTs tend

to be largely shaped by stable traits, then organizations could consider selecting managers who tend to endorse positive follower views. In contrast, if IFTs tend to be significantly shaped by situational factors or are quite malleable, then companies could attempt to change IFTs among their employees via job design interventions or more directly through training programs.

To this end, the purpose of the current paper is to investigate potential antecedents of IFTs, which we do in two samples employing different populations (i.e., students and working adults). First, we examine whether trait self-construals (i.e., how people define themselves in relation to others; Johnson et al., 2012) predict IFTs. Specifically, different forms of self-construals (i.e., independent versus interdependent) are theorized to be critical in shaping people's self-interested and other-interested tendencies (Cross et al., 2011). This in turn should affect their negative and positive follower perceptions, respectively, as self-interest tends to be associated with the devaluation of others (e.g., Campbell et al., 2000), whereas other-interest is related to positive attitudes toward others (e.g., Cross et al., 2000; Ehrhart, 2012). Second, although scholars have theorized that IFTs are likely shaped by both traits and situational factors (Epitropaki et al., 2013), to our knowledge, researchers have not examined how these two classes of antecedents may *jointly* influence IFTs. Thus, drawing on trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) and advancing an interactionist perspective, we further investigate whether specific aspects of workplace context—performance pressure and supervisor support—moderate relations between employee self-construals and IFTs. We study these specific contextual aspects, given that they are relevant to, and could profoundly influence, people's inclinations towards self- and other-interest, respectively.

Our study makes several contributions to the literature. First, we demonstrate that self-construals predict IFTs, thereby providing an initial step towards understanding the origin and

nature of IFT differences across individuals. Specifically, individuals' social-behavioral tendencies are correlated with their follower views, suggesting that individuals' IFTs may differ meaningfully between individuals depending on one's (stable) traits.

Second, we enrich our theoretical understanding of how personal and situational factors work together to influence beliefs about followers by drawing upon trait activation theory to derive our predictions regarding interactive effects. In other words, whereas prior research has investigated traits and contextual factors as separate influences on ILTs and IFTs, we advance an interactionist perspective that highlights that workplace contextual factors can also moderate relations between an individual's traits and their IFTs. Demonstrating moderation of trait-IFT relationships would suggest that such relationships have boundary effects and offers preliminary support for theorists' arguments for contextually dependent implicit theories, or the heightening of follower "biases" depending on one's situation (Shondrick & Lord, 2010).

Finally, the extant literature has tended to primarily examine consequences of followers' ILTs and leaders' IFTs. However, evidence has emerged indicating that ILTs also shape how leaders choose to lead (Tu et al., 2018) and IFTs influence how followers choose to follow (Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013; Knoll et al., 2017). Thus, we aimed to ensure the generalizability of our findings regarding IFT antecedents by utilizing general samples that likely include individuals who identify as leaders and followers.

Implicit Followership Theories (IFTs)

IFTs represent an individual's cognitive schema surrounding followership (Sy, 2010). According to categorization theory (Lord et al., 1984), individuals use these prototypes to label others in their environment as followers or not (Shondrick & Lord, 2010). Thus, IFTs serve as a

cognitive shortcut that simplifies and regulates how people behave towards or as followers, freeing up cognitive resources for other tasks (Alipour et al., 2017).

Research indicates that IFTs have six dimensions, with individuals varying on how much they view followers as industrious, enthusiastic, good citizens, conforming, insubordinate, and incompetent (Sy, 2010). Specifically, views of followers as industrious consist of the extent to which one sees followers as hard-working and contributing meaningfully to work and team objectives, as well as surpassing performance expectations. Views of followers as enthusiastic consist of the extent to which one sees followers as excitable, sociable, and happy. Views of followers as good citizens consist of the extent to which one sees followers as loyal, dependable, and acting in service of their team. Views of followers as conforming consist of seeing followers as easily influenced by others and following trends, as well as lacking in physical presence (i.e., "soft-spoken"). Views of followers as insubordinate consist of the extent to which one sees followers as being interpersonally obnoxious—specifically rude, arrogant or bad-tempered. Finally, views of followers as incompetent consist of the extent to which one sees followers as inefficient and lacking in requisite skills and knowledge to perform one's role satisfactorily.

The above six dimensions can collapse together to form two higher-order IFT factors: prototypical, or "positive", IFTs (i.e., industrious, enthusiastic, and good citizen) and anti-prototypical, or "negative" IFTs (i.e., conforming, insubordinate, and incompetent; Sy, 2010). Previous theorists have expressed confusion around whether the conformity dimension should be collapsed with the other two negative dimensions (i.e., insubordination and incompetence), given that conformity may be a valued follower characteristic under certain circumstances (e.g., under high power distance or high collectivist cultural contexts, such as China; Lord et al., 2020). However, for the purposes of this research, which was conducted within a North American

context only and does not compare IFTs across different cultural contexts, we follow research precedent (i.e., Sy, 2010) to collapse these six dimensions according to the two broader higher-order IFT factors. Below, we develop hypotheses regarding how and why self-construals may be related to these higher-order IFT factors.

Self-Construal and IFTs

Considerable research supports that identity-based processes are central to followership perceptions (Lord & Brown, 2004). Specifically, we theorize that how individuals conceptualize their identity relative to others—their *self-construal*—is related to IFTs. This is because self-construal tends to cue different *values* that individuals prioritize, which can affect their social motivations—how they think of and treat others, including followers.

There are multiple ways in which theorists have conceptualized self-construal. The most prominent theoretical framework argues that individuals can construe themselves in terms of their relationships to others along three dimensions (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Johnson et al., 2006). The first dimension is independent self-construal, which is namely the extent to which people derive their identities through their distinctiveness and uniqueness from others, or how they compare with other individuals. The second dimension is relational self-construal, which is the extent to which people derive their sense of identity from the relationships they develop with specific others, in terms of their role-based relationships in dyads or within their small groups (e.g., mother-child relationships, dyadic relationships between members within a team). Those with high relational self-construals tend to value and prioritize the needs of significant others in their relationships. Finally, the third dimension is collective self-construal, the extent to which people derive their sense of identity from their group memberships. People with highly collective self-construals tend to espouse de-personalized identities that minimize the importance of one's

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uniqueness from others and is based instead on how much one is similar to, or matches with, prototypical characteristics of one's larger group. These individuals tend to prioritize collective group goals over their own self interests.

An alternate conceptualization of self-construal consists of collapsing relational and collective self-construals into a single dimension, or an interdependent self-construal. Thus, a two-dimensional scheme is possible consisting of independent and interdependent self-construals (Singelis, 1994). Self-construal theory specifies that the interdependent self-construal shapes individuals' other-interested inclinations (Johnson et al., 2006), such that individuals with highly interdependent self-construals are characterized by mutual concern for the interests and outcomes of the other. Those who construe themselves as highly relational are likely to act on altruistic motivation to benefit specific others in their relationships, while those who construe themselves as highly collective are concerned with improving group welfare, such that these individuals engage in cooperation in the absence of any interpersonal communication (Batson, 1994).

On the other hand, those with high independent self-construals tend towards self-interested inclinations (Johnson et al., 2006). Previous theory suggests that these inclinations can differ along two dimensions: horizontally, in terms of the extent to which one values equality with others; and vertically, in terms of the extent to which one respects inequality in status, or hierarchy (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). Specifically, individuals with high "horizontal" independent self-construals tend to value self-reliance and uniqueness from others, but do not prioritize "besting" others or acquiring status, while individuals with high "vertical" independent self-construals tend to value distinguishing oneself and acquiring status via competition with others. This paper conceptualizes independent self-construals along this latter, vertical

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dimension, in line with Johnson and colleagues' (2006) conceptualization of independent self-construals in the workplace. Previous research has confirmed the validity of this conceptualization (e.g., Johnson & Lord, 2010; Johnson et al., 2006).

In turn, we argue that independent and interdependent self-construals, through affecting these self- versus other-oriented motivations, are likely to affect one's views of others, including followers. Specifically, we argue that individuals higher on independent self-construal are inclined towards self-interested enhancement, which contributes to more negative views of followers. These individuals derive their sense of self from how they compare with others (Johnson et al., 2006). As a result, they are not only motivated to perceive themselves more favorably than circumstances may warrant (Kitayama et al., 1997), but may also ascribe negative characteristics to others as a way of self-enhancement. For example, leaders higher on independent self-construal tend to blame their followers after treating them poorly (Deng et al., 2020), seemingly attributing negative characteristics to these followers rather than seeing themselves in a negative light. Therefore, we predict that individuals higher on independent self-construal will tend to perceive followers as more conforming, insubordinate, and incompetent.

Hypothesis 1: Independent self-construal is positively related to anti-prototypical IFTs.

In contrast, individuals higher on interdependent self-construal, either relational or collective, are inclined towards caring for others' welfare (i.e., specific individuals or groups), which may be related to more positive follower views. Said otherwise, these individuals derive their sense of self from maintaining their relationships, which serves as an important motivational goal. They may value being sensitive to others' needs (Lalwani & Shavitt, 2009) and likewise assume others do the same, engaging in more organizational citizenship behaviors (Johnson & Saboe, 2011) and cooperating more in their relationships (Utz, 2004). Their

commitment to others' needs may be associated with higher valuation of followership and attribution of positive characteristics to followers. In summary, we predict that individuals higher on interdependent self-construal may tend to perceive followers as more industrious, enthusiastic, and better citizens.

Hypothesis 2: (a) Relational and (b) collective self-construal are positively related to prototypical IFTs.

Interaction between Self-Construal and Contextual Factors

Although some research is now emerging regarding contextual factors that shape ILTs or IFTs (e.g., market conditions, Derler & Weibler, 2014; organizational culture, Shen, 2019), to our knowledge, such research has not examined whether or how traits and contexts could *interact* to shape these prototypes. As such, we also seek to identify workplace factors that influence the strength of relationships between worker trait self-construals and IFTs. Specifically, we draw upon trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) to inform our theorizing.

Trait activation theory argues that, "traits are expressed as responses to trait-relevant situational cues" (Tett & Burnett, 2003, p. 502). This suggests that the impact of independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal on IFTs may be most evident in contexts where these traits are activated or cued. Therefore, in the current study, we also examine whether two salient work conditions, performance pressure and supervisor support, serve as critical "trait-releasers" for independent and interdependent self-construal, respectively, thereby strengthening relations between worker trait self-construals and IFTs.

We chose to focus on performance pressure and supervisor support as key moderators because prior research indicates that they enhance contrasting social-behavioral tendencies

relevant to self-construals. Namely, performance pressure has been argued to increase self-serving attitudes and actions (Mitchell et al., 2018), and supervisor support is theorized to enhance more altruistic or selfless attitudes and actions toward others (Chen & Chiu, 2008; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Thus, performance pressure will be a salient contextual cue for those who prioritize self-interest (i.e., those higher on independent self-construal), whereas supervisor support will be a salient contextual cue for those who prioritize others' interests (i.e., those higher on interdependent self-construal).

Moderating Role of Performance Pressure

Performance pressure represents the degree to which rewards in the workplace (e.g., pay, promotion) are contingent on performance (Mitchell et al., 2018). Generally, organizations characterized by high performance pressure emphasize individual performance, achievement, and setting oneself apart from others. This pressure can promote dysfunctional workplace behaviors, including cheating (Mitchell et al., 2018) and conformity (Gardner, 2012).

Performance pressure is highly trait-relevant to those higher on independent self-construal. High performance pressure environments are theorized to increase workers' concerns about self-interest and self-protection (Wang & Murnighan, 2011), motives that are already salient among those higher on independent self-construal, who care deeply about demonstrating their competence and out-ranking others (Johnson et al., 2006). Therefore, we predict that performance pressure will strengthen the positive association between independent self-construal and anti-prototypical IFTs. In other words, in a "dog-eat-dog" setting, those higher on independent self-construal, who may naturally tend to devalue those around them, may be especially likely to characterize followers as possessing negative characteristics.

Hypothesis 3: Performance pressure will moderate the positive relationship between independent self-construal and anti-prototypical IFTs, such that the effect is stronger when performance pressure is higher.

Moderating Role of Supervisor Support

Supervisor support refers to the extent to which employees feel that their supervisor values their work and cares about them as individuals (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Prior meta-analytic research finds that supervisor support is more strongly related to employee job attitudes than co-worker support (Ng & Sorensen, 2008), indicating the importance of this relationship to workers. Supervisor support also creates a strong social exchange relationship between leaders and followers, typically leading to positive follower reciprocity (Chen & Chiu, 2008).

Supervisor support should be pertinent for those higher on interdependent self-construal (i.e., relational and collective self-construal) because higher levels of supervisor support reflect other-focused behaviors that signal to individuals that they and their contributions are valued (e.g., Chen et al., 2008). Thus, for individuals higher on interdependent self-construal, supervisor support should cue their own other-interested inclinations and strengthen beliefs that followers possess positive characteristics. Consequently, we predict that higher levels of supervisor support will strengthen the positive association between interdependent self-construal and prototypical IFTs.

Hypothesis 4: Supervisor support will moderate the positive relationship between (a) relational and (b) collective self-construal, respectively, and prototypical IFTs, such that the effect is stronger when supervisor support is higher.

Study Overview

We tested our hypotheses using two different samples (i.e., university students and working adults) to examine whether Hypotheses 1 and 2 will replicate across two different populations and ensure robustness of self-construal-IFT relationships. In addition, we examine Hypotheses 3 and 4 (which focus on the moderating role of workplace contextual factors) in the working adult sample.

Method

Participants

For Sample A, participants ($N = 396$) were students recruited through a psychology research pool at a Canadian university who received course credit. Fourteen participants were removed for providing duplicate, blank, or long string responses. The final sample of 382 participants were mostly female (77%), and most participants identified as White (40%), East Asian (17%), or Southeast Asian (10%). On average, participants were 20 years old ($SD = 3.2$).

For Sample B, participants ($N = 322$) were workers recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) that were remunerated $2.50 USD. Specifically, participants were pre-screened to ensure that they were 18 or older, full-time employees, and lived in the United States or Canada to minimize potential culture effects (Blair & Bligh, 2018). Prior research demonstrates that MTurk samples are generally more diverse and provide comparable or higher quality data than student samples (e.g., Buhrmester et al., 2011; Paolacci & Chandler, 2014). We also sought to ensure high quality data (i.e., invited participants with approval rates ≥ 98% and completed ≥ 500 studies).

We removed 18 out of 322 participants based on indicators that they may be carelessly responding. In line with prior recommendations (Curran, 2016), participants were removed if one

or more of three indicators (i.e., invariant responding, shorter than usual response times of less than 2 seconds per item, and weak internal consistency across synonymous items) suggested their responses could be problematic. This left us with a final sample of 304 participants. Most participants were female (57%) and White (66%). On average, participants were 32.4 years old ($SD = 9.3$). Most participants identified as front-line employees (72%) versus supervisors (28%). They were also highly educated (i.e., 80% postsecondary graduates) and employed in a variety of occupations (i.e., 29% professionals, 17% clerical workers, 14% managers, 12% skilled or semi-skilled labourers, 11% technicians, and 9% sales).

Procedure

Participants in both samples were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: typical vs. ideal IFTs.[1] In the former, participants rated their views of typical followers (Sample A $N = 193$; Sample B $N = 149$), and in the latter, participants rated their views of ideal followers (Sample A $N = 189$; Sample B $N = 155$). Participants then completed the trait self-construal measure and provided demographic information. Participants in Sample B (i.e., working adults) also reported work environment characteristics.[2]

Measures

Self-Construal

Johnson and colleagues' (2006) 15-item Self-Concept Scale was used to assess independent (5 items, e.g., "I feel best about myself when I perform better than others"; Sample

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[1] Research indicates that people can hold differing views of typical (i.e., "descriptive norm" or average) versus ideal (i.e., "injunctive norm" or best) followers (Junker & van Dick, 2014). Therefore, we include this factor as a control (i.e., condition) in our analyses. We also examined whether this factor affects relationships between self-construal and IFTs, but found little evidence of this besides one interaction (see supplementary materials).

[2] In Sample B analyses, we control for supervisory role (i.e., whether the participant had managerial status and supervised at least one employee or not), as workplace role (e.g., leader or follower) could affect IFTs (Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019). Results do not change when this variable is not included.

A α = .74; Sample B α = .77), relational (5 items, e.g., "It is important to me that I uphold my commitments to significant people in my life"; Sample A α = .78; Sample B α = .75), and collective self-construal (5 items, e.g., "Making a lasting contribution to groups that I belong to, such as my work organization, is very important to me", Sample A α = .61; Sample B α = .65). Participants responded on a 5-point Likert Scale (i.e., *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*).

IFTs

Sy's (2010) 18-item measure was used to assess IFTs along six dimensions (3 items each): industriousness (e.g., "hardworking"), enthusiasm (e.g., "excited"), good citizen (e.g., "loyal"), conformity (e.g., "easily influenced"), insubordination (e.g., "rude"), and incompetence (e.g., "slow"). Participants rated how characteristic each item was of either typical or ideal followers, using a 9-point Likert scale (i.e., *not at all characteristic* to *extremely characteristic*). As with previous research (Sy, 2010), we created a higher-order prototypical variable from the former three factors (Sample A α = .88; Sample B α = .88) and a higher-order anti-prototypical variable from the latter three factors (Sample A α = .83; Sample B α = .86).

Performance Pressure

Mitchell and colleagues' (2018) 4-item measure (α = .83) was used to assess performance pressure (e.g., "If I don't produce at high levels, my job will be at risk"). Participants responded on a 5-point Likert Scale (i.e., *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*).

Supervisor Support

Shanock and Eisenberger's (2006) 6-item measure (α = .93) was used to assess supervisor support (e.g., "My supervisor really cares about my well-being"). Participants responded on a 7-point Likert scale (i.e., *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree)*.

<center>**Results**</center>

Preliminary Analyses

We first conducted confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) to determine whether participants distinguished these variables as intended. CFA model parameters were estimated with R software (version 4.0.2, "Taking Off Again") using the diagonally weighted least squares (WLSMV) method. For Sample A, the theorized five-factor model (i.e., prototypical and anti-prototypical IFT + three dimensions of self-construal) fit the data well, $\chi^2(485) = 1456.95$, $p < .001$, CFI = .92, TLI = .91, RMSEA = .07. Further, it fit significantly better than alternative models, including the one-factor model, $\Delta\chi^2(10) = 860.21$, $p < .001$, the two-factor model (i.e., combined IFT + combined self-construal), $\Delta\chi^2(9) = 382.36$, $p < .001$, and marginally better than the four-factor model (i.e., prototypical and anti-prototypical IFT + independent and interdependent self-construal), $\Delta\chi^2(4) = 9.37$, $p = .05$.[3] For Sample B, the posited seven factor model (i.e., prototypical and anti-prototypical IFT + three dimensions of self-construal + performance pressure and supervisor support) provided the best fit to the data, $\chi^2(839) = 1115.51$, $p < .001$, CFI = .90, TLI = .89, RMSEA = .03 and fit significantly better than alternative one-factor, $\Delta\chi^2(21) = 614.68$, $p < .001$, three-factor (i.e., combined IFTs + combined self-construal + combined context), $\Delta\chi^2(18) = 227.56$, $p < .001$, and six-factor (i.e., prototypical and anti-prototypical IFT + independent and interdependent self-construal + performance pressure and supervisor support), $\Delta\chi^2(6) = 17.07$, $p < .01$, models.

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[3] Given these results, we also re-ran our main analyses using an interdependent self-construal variable (i.e., combining relational and collective self-construal) for Sample A, but results and conclusions did not change.

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Self-Construal and IFTs

For descriptive statistics and correlations among study variables, see Table 1. Table 2 reports multiple regression results examining relations between self-construal and IFTs. Specifically, we find support for *Hypothesis 1* across both samples; independent self-construal was positively associated with anti-prototypical IFTs (Sample A: $B = 0.16$, $SE = 0.08$, $p < .05$; Sample B: $B = 0.35$, $SE = 0.10$, $p < .01$). We also found partial support for *Hypothesis 2* across both samples. In both samples, collective self-construal was positively related to prototypical IFTs (Sample A: $B = 0.41$, $SE = 0.13$, $p < .01$; Sample B: $B = 0.47$, $SE = 0.15$, $p < .01$).

Moderating Role of Workplace Context

Next, we examined whether performance pressure served to activate independent self-construal, strengthening its association with anti-prototypical IFTs in our sample of working adults (i.e., Sample B; see Table 3). Supporting *Hypothesis 3*, performance pressure significantly moderated the relationship between independent self-construal and anti-prototypical IFTs ($B = 0.19$, $SE = 0.09$, $p < .05$). Simple slope analyses show that independent self-construal was positively related to anti-prototypical IFTs when performance pressure was higher (i.e., +1 *SD*; $B = 0.51$, $SE = 0.13$, $p < .01$), but not when it was lower (i.e., -1 *SD*; $B = 0.13$, $SE = 0.13$, $p = .32$; see Figure 1).

Finally, we examined whether supervisor support moderated relations between self-construal and IFTs in our sample of working adults. Failing to support *Hypothesis 4*, supervisor support did not moderate relations between either relational self-construal ($B = -0.01$, $SE = 0.10$, $p = .96$) or collective self-construal ($B = 0.13$, $SE = 0.08$, $p = .13$) and prototypical IFTs. Thus, we only found support for the moderating role of performance pressure.

Table 1. Correlations for Study Variables

	Sample B Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Sample A Mean	SD
1. Prototypical IFTs	6.72	1.29	--	-.46**	.40**	--	.01	.18**	.23**	--	6.87	1.15
2. Anti-prototypical IFTs	4.06	1.49	-.34**	--	-.27**	--	.10	-.13**	-.11*	--	3.70	1.27
3. Condition	--	--	.42**	-.32**	--	--	-.04	-.03	0	--	--	--
4. Supervisory Role	--	--	.16**	.09	.06	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
5. Independent Self-Construal	3.16	0.88	.12*	.23**	-.01	.29**	--	.06	.09	--	3.30	0.81
6. Relational Self-Construal	4.43	0.54	.17**	-.06	.05	-.06	-.14*	--	.55**	--	4.55	0.53
7. Collective Self-Construal	4.19	0.56	.27**	-.05	.05	.13*	0	.55**	--	--	4.26	0.52
8. Performance Pressure	3.30	1.01	.19**	.16**	.05	.28**	.24**	.05	.02	--	--	--
9. Supervisor Support	3.87	1.75	.07	.04	-.06	-.04	.11	-.10	-.06	.04	--	--

Note. Correlations above the diagonal are for Sample A (Pairwise $N = 379\text{-}382$) and correlations below the diagonal are for Sample B

(Pairwise $N = 300\text{-}304$). *IFT = implicit followership theory*. Condition: *0 = typical follower* and *1 = ideal follower*. Supervisory Role:

0 = non-supervisory role and *1 = supervisory role*.

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

Table 2. Relationships Between Self-Construals and Implicit Followership Theories

| | Sample A ($N = 376$) | | | | | |
| | Prototypical IFT | | | Anti-prototypical IFT | | |
	B	*SE*	*95% CI*	*B*	*SE*	*95% CI*
Constant	6.27**	0.08	[6.12, 6.43]	4.04**	0.09	[3.87, 4.21]
Condition	1.01**	0.11	[0.78, 1.23]	-0.68**	0.13	[-0.93, -0.44]
Independent	0.01	0.07	[-0.13, 0.15]	0.16*	0.08	[0.01, 0.31]
Relational	0.23	0.13	[-0.03, 0.49]	-0.29*	0.14	[-0.57, -0.01]
Collective	0.41**	0.13	[0.15, 0.67]	-0.12	0.15	[-0.41, 0.16]
R^2	0.22**			0.11**		
	Sample B ($N = 295$)					
	Prototypical IFT			Anti-prototypical IFT		
	B	*SE*	*95% CI*	*B*	*SE*	*95% CI*
Constant	6.14**	0.10	[5.94, 6.34]	4.46**	0.13	[4.22, 4.71]
Condition	1.03**	0.13	[0.77, 1.29]	-0.96**	0.16	[-1.28, -0.65]
Supervisory Role	0.22	0.16	[-0.09, 0.52]	0.19	0.19	[-0.19, 0.56]
Independent	0.16*	0.08	[0.01, 0.32]	0.35**	0.10	[0.17, 0.54]
Relational	0.16	0.15	[-0.15, 0.46]	0.05	0.19	[-0.32, 0.42]
Collective	0.47**	0.15	[0.18, 0.75]	-0.12	0.18	[-0.47, 0.23]
R^2	0.26**			0.16**		

Note. IFT = implicit followership theory. Condition: *0 = typical follower* and *1 = ideal follower*.

Supervisory Role: *0 = non-supervisory role* and *1 = supervisory role*.

*p < .05, **p < .01.

Table 3. Interactions Between Self-Construal and Contextual Factors on Implicit Followership Theories (Sample B)

	Prototypical IFT						Anti-prototypical IFT					
	Step 1			Step 2			Step 1			Step 2		
	B	SE	95% CI	B	SE	95% CI	B	SE	95% CI	B	SE	95% CI
Constant	6.17**	0.10	[5.97, 6.37]	6.17**	0.10	[5.97, 6.37]	4.50**	0.13	[4.25, 4.75]	4.47**	0.13	[4.22, 4.71]
Condition	1.02**	0.13	[0.76, 1.28]	1.00**	0.13	[0.74, 1.26]	-0.98**	0.16	[-1.29, -0.66]	-0.92**	0.16	[-1.24, -0.61]
Supervisory Role	0.13	0.16	[-0.18, 0.44]	0.06	0.16	[-0.25, 0.38]	0.08	0.19	[-0.30, 0.47]	0	0.20	[-0.38, 0.38]
Independent Self-Construal	0.13	0.08	[-0.03, 0.28]	0.13	0.08	[-0.02, 0.29]	0.31**	0.10	[0.12, 0.51]	0.32**	0.10	[0.13, 0.51]
Relational Self-Construal	0.11	0.15	[-0.19, 0.42]	0.12	0.15	[-0.18, 0.43]	0	0.19	[-0.37, 0.37]	-0.02	0.19	[-0.39, 0.35]
Collective Self-Construal	0.49**	0.14	[0.21, 0.77]	0.50**	0.14	[0.22, 0.78]	-0.09	0.18	[-0.44, 0.26]	-0.13	0.18	[-0.47, 0.22]
Performance Pressure	0.17*	0.07	[0.04, 0.31]	0.16*	0.07	[0.03, 0.30]	0.19*	0.08	[0.02, 0.36]	0.22*	0.08	[0.05, 0.38]
Independent Self-Construal X Performance Pressure				0.13	0.07	[-0.01, 0.28]				0.19*	0.09	[0.01, 0.36]
Relational Self-Construal X Performance Pressure				0	0.17	[-0.33, 0.33]				-0.32	0.21	[-0.73, 0.09]
Collective Self-Construal X Performance Pressure				0.16	0.15	[-0.13, 0.45]				-0.04	0.18	[-0.40, 0.31]
R^2	0.27**			0.29**			0.17**			0.20**		
ΔR^2				0.02						0.03*		
Constant	6.12**	0.10	[5.92, 6.32]	6.10**	0.10	[5.90, 6.30]	4.46**	0.13	[4.21, 4.71]	4.43**	0.13	[4.18, 4.69]
Condition	1.05**	0.13	[0.79, 1.30]	1.06**	0.13	[0.80, 1.31]	-0.96**	0.16	[-1.28, -0.64]	-0.95**	0.16	[-1.27, -0.62]
Supervisory Role	0.24	0.15	[-0.06, 0.55]	0.28	0.15	[-0.03, 0.58]	0.18	0.19	[-0.19, 0.56]	0.20	0.19	[-0.18, 0.58]
Independent Self-Construal	0.15	0.08	[-0.01, 0.30]	0.14	0.08	[-0.01, 0.30]	0.36**	0.10	[0.16, 0.55]	0.36**	0.10	[0.17, 0.55]
Relational Self-Construal	0.18	0.15	[-0.12, 0.48]	0.19	0.16	[-0.12, 0.49]	0.05	0.19	[-0.33, 0.42]	0.07	0.19	[-0.31, 0.45]
Collective Self-Construal	0.46**	0.14	[0.18, 0.75]	0.43**	0.14	[0.15, 0.71]	-0.12	0.18	[-0.47, 0.23]	-0.15	0.18	[-0.50, 0.21]
Supervisor Support	0.08	0.04	[0, 0.15]	0.07	0.04	[-0.01, 0.15]	0	0.05	[-0.10, 0.09]	0	0.05	[-0.10, 0.10]
Independent Self-Construal X Supervisor Support				0.08	0.04	[-0.01, 0.17]				0.09	0.05	[-0.02, 0.19]
Relational Self-Construal X Supervisor Support				-0.01	0.10	[-0.19, 0.18]				-0.02	0.12	[-0.26, 0.21]

Collective Self-Construal X Supervisor Support			0.13	0.08	[-0.04, 0.29]		0.04	0.10	[-0.16, 0.24]
R^2	0.27**		0.28**			0.16**	0.17**		
ΔR^2			0.02				0.01		

Note. N = 294-295. *IFT = implicit followership theory.* Condition: *0 = typical follower* and *1 = ideal follower.* Supervisory Role: *0 = non-supervisory role* and *1 = supervisory role.*

p < .05, **p* < .01.

Figure 1. Interactive Effects of Independent Self-Construal and Performance Pressure on Anti-Prototypical Implicit Followership Theories (Sample B)
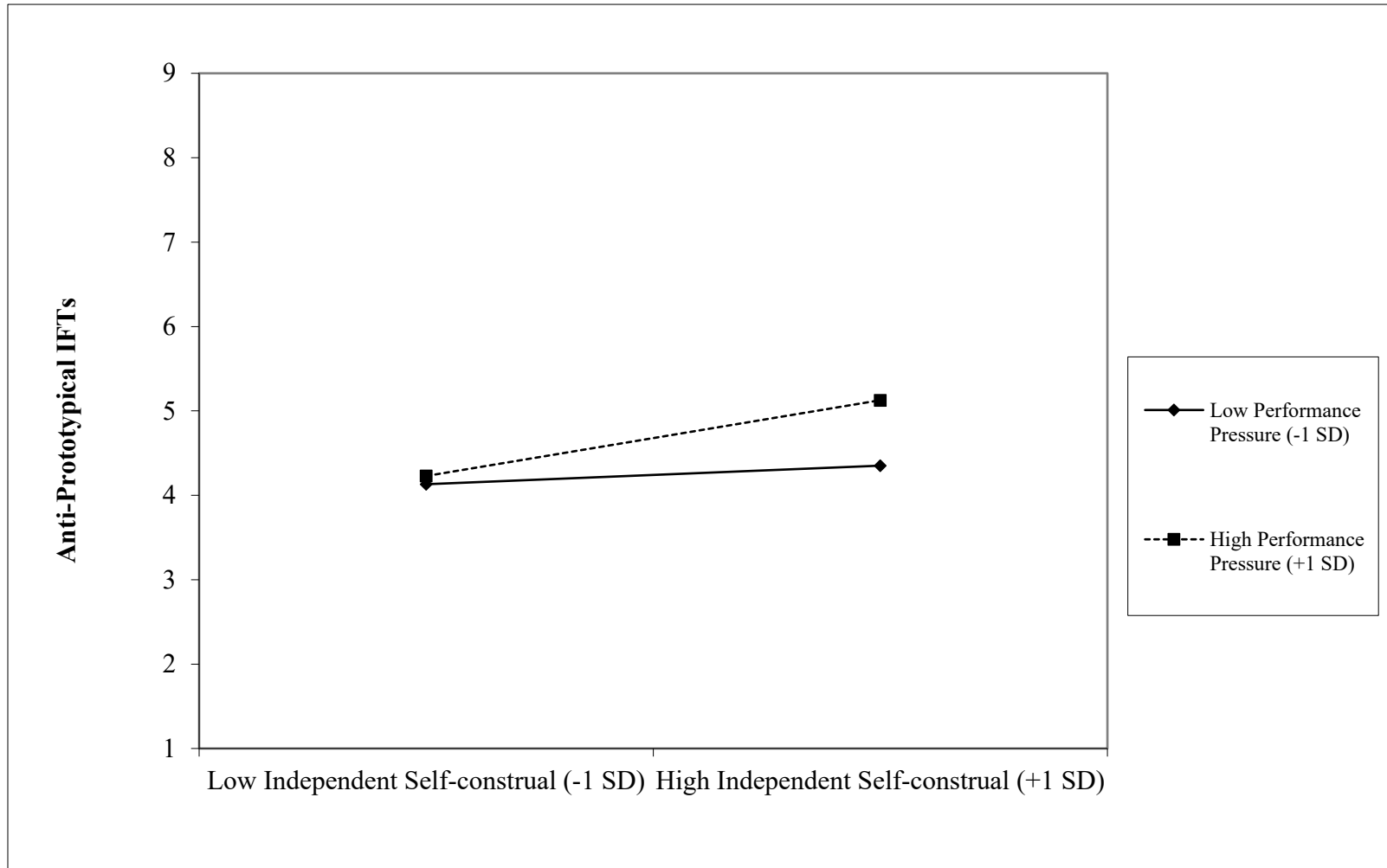
Discussion

IFTs can have a powerful effect on leader-follower relations, yet we remain largely in the dark about why people hold varied beliefs about followers. This paper begins to elucidate important personal and situational correlates of IFTs. Moreover, it represents an important theoretical advancement by highlighting that there may be benefits to considering the *joint* (vs. separate, e.g., Shen, 2019) influence of personal and situational factors in shaping these important beliefs. Therefore, this paper also contributes to our understanding of the potential sources of stability (i.e., traits) and dynamism (i.e., situations) affecting IFTs.

Across two samples, our findings indicate that self-construals are related to positive and negative views of followers. Individuals higher on collective self-construal, who tend to define themselves by their group memberships, are more likely to imbue followers with more positive characteristics. In contrast, individuals higher on independent self-construal, who tend to see themselves as distinct from others, are more likely to view followers as possessing more negative characteristics. Interestingly, individuals higher on collective self-construal do not consistently view leaders more positively (e.g., Shen, 2019), suggesting that self-construal may shape IFTs differently from implicit leadership theories (ILTs).

Taking an interactionist approach, we also examined whether these relationships vary due to workplace contextual factors. In line with trait activation theory, we found that higher levels of performance pressure moderated the relationship between independent self-construal and anti-prototypical IFTs, such that this relationship was only evident when performance pressure was higher. However, we did not find that supervisor support strengthened the relationship between interdependent self-construal and prototypical IFTs. Perhaps this is because workers higher on

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collective self-construal may identify strongly with their employing organization, such that merely being cued about work is associated with a more cooperative mindset.

We briefly note some findings that were not hypothesized and did not replicate across student versus worker samples. First, relational self-construal was found to be negatively related to anti-prototypical IFTs in students, but not in workers. One reason could be that students (versus workers) prioritize intimacy in their relationships with other students (Gore et al., 2006). Alternatively, students (vs. workers) may be more apt to identify with the follower role due to their more limited experience. Thus, these individuals could perceive a greater cost to engaging in negative behaviours that discourage intimacy (e.g., being inconsiderate, passive and/or slow) and be more likely to deem these behaviours as un-follower-like.

Second, independent self-construal was positively related to prototypical IFTs among workers, but not students. This effect may be driven in part by the different roles generally inhabited by workers, as ad-hoc analyses revealed that supervisors (but not followers) with higher independent self-construals were the ones who tended to hold more positive follower views. We speculate that this may be because leaders depend on their followers to accomplish their own goals and performance standing; thus, leaders (versus followers) with higher independent self-construals may be motivated to view followers more positively as extensions of their own agency and influence. Alternatively, status attainment is often related to leaders' fair treatment of followers when these followers show them respect (e.g., Blader & Chen, 2012); this respect from followers could contribute to these leaders' holding heightened positive follower views. However, as these findings were not hypothesized, we encourage future studies that replicate and investigate mechanisms underlying these effects.

Theoretical Implications

Our study offers some theoretical insights to the IFT literature. First, we demonstrate that individuals' social-behavioral tendencies are correlated with their follower views and contributes to emerging literature showing relationships between traits and one's IFTs (e.g., Thompson et al., 2018). This study reifies earlier IFT antecedents research while providing additional evidence towards understanding the nature of IFTs as cognitive knowledge structures, i.e., that IFTs are generally stable.

Second, in drawing on trait activation theory, we consider the *joint* influence of situational factors and traits on IFTs, the first study that we know of to take this step—despite theorizing that implicit theories, including IFTs, likely differ according to context (e.g., Shondrick & Lord, 2010). Demonstrating moderation of trait-IFT relationships would suggest that IFTs, particularly negative views, could be contextually dependent depending on *which* contextual feature (i.e., performance pressure). This is a promising insight that should be replicated and studied in future research.

Practical Implications

Organizations may seek to nurture positive follower views among their personnel, improving leader-follower relationships and, indirectly, follower performance. Our results suggest that positive and negative follower views are related to people's self-construals. Thus, one way to cultivate a workforce that holds certain views of followers may be to hire or select based on self-construals.

Our results also suggest that negative follower views may be to some extent malleable or affected by workplace context. Specifically, workers who are competitive or value distinguishing themselves may be more likely to view followers negatively when they are under heightened

pressure to perform well. Given that organizations depend on constructive followership to maintain their competitive advantage and performance (Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019), it may be possible and desirable to help mitigate negative worker views of followers, which workers may use to guide their actions (the Golem effect; Whiteley et al., 2012). Thus, leaders and organizations seeking to neutralize negative views may consider monitoring organizational performance pressure.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study reveals previously unknown insights regarding IFT correlates, it is not without limitations. First, our study used self-report and cross-sectional survey designs. Thus, our results could be affected by common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). However, prior research demonstrates that common method variance is unlikely to impact our ability to detect or interpret interactions (Siemsen et al., 2010). Moreover, we replicated our self-construal results across two independent samples. Nonetheless, to address this limitation, future research could use longitudinal designs to separate measurements of variables.

Second, given our correlational approach, we are unable to determine causality between correlates and IFTs. Future research could tackle this question by utilizing experimental designs. For example, as prior research demonstrates that self-construals can be primed (e.g., Johnson & Saboe, 2011), causal evidence could involve experimentally manipulating self-construals and examining effects on IFTs. Future research could also manipulate different workplace contextual factors via vignettes to ascertain that these factors, rather than unobserved co-occurring variables, moderate relations between self-construals and IFTs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, across two samples, our results revealed that IFTs appear to be (jointly) associated with both personal and situational factors. Specifically, trait self-construals were related to general tendencies to perceive followers positively or negatively. In addition, follower beliefs appear to have different relationships to self-construals under different contexts. Our results suggest that higher performance pressure is related to more negative follower views among workers higher on independent self-construal. Overall, this study helps foster a better understanding of why individuals often diverge in their perceptions and beliefs regarding followers, but also highlights that there is more to learn regarding how our follower beliefs come to be or are maintained.

CHAPTER 3: IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER: A LATENT PROFILE APPROACH TO IDEAL FOLLOWER PROTOTYPES (ESSAY 2)

Introduction

We all hold beliefs regarding what followers are like in terms of the traits and behaviours they (should) exhibit—that is, our implicit followership theories (Sy, 2010). Scholars have argued that we classify others as followers based on whether they exhibit a specific configuration, or pattern, of traits, as opposed to how much or how little they exhibit any single follower characteristic (e.g., as industrious, enthusiastic, *and* not insubordinate, rather than just their standing on industriousness; Shondrick & Lord, 2010; Shondrick et al., 2010). In other words, these configurations or patterns reflect particular ideal follower prototypes. However, although every individual might *think* they know what a good follower is, it is likely that individuals vary in their ideal follower prototypes. This is because our ideal follower prototypes are theorized to be shaped by our differing socialization experiences with and as followers (Epitropaki et al., 2013).

However, although theory suggests that we hold these differing prototypes of ideal followers, we know little about what these prototypes might be and who tends to subscribe to different ideal follower prototypes. By not modeling IFTs according to current theorizing, or accounting for how we perceive IFT traits together *as a pattern*, we may risk drawing inaccurate conclusions about the nature of follower perceptions and their effects. The reason for this lack of knowledge comes in part from researchers' tendencies to use variable-based approaches, such as regression analyses, to understand IFTs (Epitropaki et al., 2013; see Coyle & Foti, 2021, for an exception). Such a variable-based method is focused on identifying relationships between variables across individuals—implicitly assuming that the relationship between follower views

and correlates are homogeneous rather than heterogeneous across people. Moreover, such approaches also fail to examine relationships between variables *within* individuals (i.e., patterns). Thus, although this approach can usefully demonstrate how specific follower views or dimensions (e.g., industriousness) are related to our workplace outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction), it is generally ill-suited to examining how individuals perceive IFT traits together in configurations (i.e., it is not very feasible to examine six-way interactions).

As such, prior research fails to account for the complex and heterogeneous nature of ideal follower prototypes as specified by recent IFT theorizing (for an exception, see Coyle & Foti, 2021). Thus, the current study proposes and utilizes a person-focused approach, latent profile analysis (LPA), to uncover ideal follower prototypes. LPA is a person-focused analysis that is designed to examine relationships among variables within individuals (i.e., patterns or configurations), as well as how these relationships differ between subgroups (Meyer et al., 2013). Specifically, we invoke theories regarding socialization and role identities to examine (a) how background factors and past experiences could shape individuals' endorsement of differing ideal follower prototypes as well as (b) how subscribing to various ideal follower prototypes influence individuals' attitudes and behaviors toward followership and leadership.

This study makes multiple contributions to the literature. First, this study offers an approach to understanding IFTs that is aligned with the most current theorizing regarding how we perceive and judge followers. Recent IFT theorizing suggests that we tend to perceive follower traits holistically—in specific patterns, or configurations—and that we likely classify others as followers (or not) based on our *gestalt* understanding of how followers should be (Shondrick et al., 2010; Shondrick & Lord, 2010). Therefore, the current study aims to comprehensively model our IFTs as holistic configurations of traits. Specifically, by examining

how different gestalts of follower characteristics emerge among sub-samples of individuals, we seek to offer additional, and potentially more accurate, insights about how people perceive ideal followers.

Second, if people do have different ideal IFT prototypes, we seek to address the question of where these differing gestalts come from by drawing on ideas about schema development. Specifically, schema theorists suggest that cognitive knowledge structures, such as IFTs, are formed based on our past experiences with the world and how we have been differently socialized (e.g., based on our follower-related experience and personal characteristics; Hunt et al., 1990). Socialization affects one's IFTs in several ways, including through one's direct experience with followers, as well as vicarious learning through observing different types of followers and followership norms (e.g., social learning; Bandura, 1971). Thus, the current study explores who is more likely to subscribe to certain ideal follower prototypes by examining how these beliefs are related to different socialization experiences, such as those acquired through directly working with and leading others (e.g., work and managerial experience), and through one's sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., race, gender). Without this research, it is unclear not only what factors may shape follower views, but also who, based on their experiences, is likely to have more, or less, favourable ideal follower views than others (see Thompson et al., 2018, for an exception). This insight could help contribute to our understanding into why there can be problematic mismatches between employees, or between supervisors and employees, in what constitutes a good follower (e.g., Carsten et al., 2010).

Additionally, having initially established why people may differ in their ideal follower prototypes, we also explore the implications of endorsing different prototypes. Specifically, we draw on role identity theory, and identity claiming and granting principles (e.g., Hogg et al.,

1995; DeRue & Ashford, 2010), to argue that one's ideal follower prototype is related to the extent to which individuals view leadership and followership positively. This insight is important for understanding how these prototypes affect our attitudes towards ourselves as potential leaders or followers and thus shape our downstream career strivings, such as whether we accordingly seek advancement opportunities and further (or less) responsibility over others.

Finally, this research aims to uncover our holistic views about good, or ideal, followers (i.e., what followers "should be like"), as previous research and theorizing is not clear on what our prototype views of ideal followers may be. Follower typologies (e.g., Kelley, 2008) suggest that people may subscribe to one view of exemplary followers as being "leaders in disguise" (p. 8). However, qualitative research indicates that people identify various follower characteristics as "ideal", ranging from active co-construction of leadership to passivity (Carsten et al., 2010). Still other theorizing suggests that we tend to de-value followers (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014; Hoption et al., 2012), thus leaving open the possibility that people see even ideal followers in a negative light. Previous theorizing suggests that people may hold *destructive* views of followership that help perpetuate or further unethical leader agendas (e.g., conformists or colluders; Thoroughgood et al., 2012). In addition, negative ideal prototypes exist for other implicit theories (e.g., ideal views of leaders as autocratic, anti-prototypical, or laissez-faire; Foti et al., 2012; Bray et al., 2014). Given this lack of consensus, we employ a unique, person-centered method to explore how we perceive ideal followership as a gestalt and how these perceptions may vary across sub-groups. In particular, understanding people's ideal follower prototypes may be key to understanding how people will themselves behave as followers in the workplace, given the degree of overlap between people's self-images and their ideal prototypes (e.g., Foti et al., 2012; Bray et al., 2014).

Literature Review

Theoretical Background on Implicit Followership Theories (IFTs)

Implicit followership theories refer to "cognitive categories individuals hold regarding the traits and behaviours typically associated with followers" (Lord et al., 2020, p. 54). IFTs are lay-theories of followers constructed in the minds of individuals based on subjective perceptions, which help simplify the complexity of interactions between leaders and followers and sense-make follower actions (Epitropaki et al., 2013). It is important for individuals to have an internalized classification scheme of followers to facilitate dyadic communication and coordination between leaders and followers (Sy, 2010). In effect, IFTs help leaders interpret the actions of individuals whom they lead and act accordingly towards them, as well as help followers respond to those leading them (Sy, 2010). Thus, gaining a greater comprehensive understanding of how we categorize others as followers, often an automatic and spontaneous process (McCrae & Bodenhausen, 2001), would provide powerful insight into individuals' actions, decisions and attitudes around leading, and following, others.

Research thus far indicates people tend to view followers along six dimensions—that is, people vary in the extent to which they see followers as industrious, enthusiastic, good citizens, conforming, insubordinate, or incompetent (Sy, 2010). Views on the first three follower traits can be aggregated to form a broad over-arching "prototypical" dimension (i.e., the desirable or positive follower prototype; Junker & van Dick, 2014; Sy, 2010), whereas views on the latter three traits can be aggregated to form a broad over-arching "anti-prototypical" dimension (i.e., the undesirable or negative follower prototype; Junker & van Dick, 2014; Sy, 2010).

Follower prototypes are stored in memory and can be activated when encountering others that resemble their internal conceptualizations of followers (Epitropaki et al., 2013). IFTs result

in largely stable interpretations of followers due to the cumulative nature of individuals'

experiences with and as followers, such that the overall structure of one's follower perceptions

can remain similar across points in time (Shondrick et al., 2010). Thus, given the pervasiveness

and utility of implicit theories, scholars have offered that IFTs must be to some extent hard-wired

and develop from a very early age to interpret others' actions as followers (Epitropaki et al.,

2013). Indeed, other research on implicit theories has shown that young children from five years

old develop and act on lay-theories about leaders (Antonakis & Dalgas, 2009).

At the same time, however, previous implicit theory research has found that people's

prototypes can vary across situations and may be responsive to different contexts (e.g., Dickson

et al., 2006). For example, people within mechanistic organizations (i.e., highly structured

organizations that emphasize hierarchy, rules, policies and clearly defined roles) tended to think

that ideal leaders were autocratic and bureaucratic, while people within organic organizations

(i.e., organizations that emphasize fluid, dynamic roles and participative decision-making)

tended to think of leaders as being more transformational and considerate (Dickson et al., 2006).

Thus, scholars acknowledge that such cognitive structures as IFTs may need to adapt to enable

one to adjust to different contexts and learn novel ways of interacting with others (e.g.,

interacting with members of another culture; Nishida, 1999).

To account for this flexibility in follower perception, theorists posit that prototypes such

as IFTs are stored in people's minds as "attractor regions (i.e., regions of stability) in neural

networks" (Shondrick & Lord, 2010, p. 7). Within this network, follower traits or concepts

function as connected units, and activation of a particular unit (e.g., industriousness) can transfer

activation and inhibition to other units (e.g., enthusiasm, good citizen), depending on the strength

of their connections (Shondrick et al., 2010). Thus, successful recognition and classification of

others as (ideal) followers occurs with the activation of this specific pattern of connections between follower traits, as opposed to the activation of a single follower trait.

Moreover, scholars posit that, although these weighted connections tend to be stable and thus result in generally stable IFTs, IFTs can still change to account for a large enough disruptive experience in one's environment or context (Grossberg, 1999). Such disruptive experiences may include (1) contextual constraints (i.e., specific contexts within which people encounter followers; e.g., at work vs. within sports teams); (2) observing social actors' traits or behaviours (e.g., being uncooperative vs. offering assistance to co-workers); and (3) characteristics of networks unique to the perceiver (i.e., connections between concepts as shaped by one's sociodemographic characteristics; Shondrick & Lord, 2010). When any of these three factors occur singly or in combination, they can result in adjustments made to the weighted connections within a network and result in changes to the pattern of activation (Shondrick & Lord, 2010). In this manner, these networks may not only store changes to a particular follower prototype (e.g., changes or tweaks to the ideal follower prototype), but also different activation patterns for different types of followers (e.g., different trait patterns for typical followers compared with ideal followers).

Types of IFT Prototypes

People are thought to hold and utilize different follower prototypes, or categories of followers. Specifically, previous work suggests that people may differentiate between typical and ideal followers (Junker & van Dick, 2014). On the one hand, a prototype is considered typical if it is the "descriptive norm" of a category and is defined by its family resemblance or similarity to other members of a category (Barsalou, 1985). In other words, typical prototypes are thought to be the "average", or central tendency, conception of a given category. People may view typical

followers as individuals who engage in "common" follower behaviours that do not necessarily facilitate following, such as asking for help from one's leader or social loafing (e.g., tendency to expel less effort in a group than as an individual; Karau & Williams, 1993).

On the other hand, a prototype is considered the most ideal when it can best serve a goal associated with its category (Barsalou, 1985)—leading for leaders, or following for followers (Quaquebeke et al., 2014). In particular, an ideal prototype is usually an extreme case, or the periphery, of a given category, with few category members sharing attributes associated with an ideal prototype (Barsalou, 1985; Van Quaquebeke et al., 2014). People may view ideal followers as individuals who engage in primarily efficacious *follower* behaviours, such as being self-sacrificial and prioritizing leader goals over their own. "Negative" ideal follower views may also exist. Thoroughgood and colleagues (2012) argue that destructive leadership would not be possible without destructive forms of followership—e.g., followers who support leaders' unethical agendas either by remaining silent and complying (i.e., conformists), or by colluding and furthering these agendas (i.e., colluders). Thus, it is possible that individuals may also construe ideal followers as acting negatively or destructively, just as individuals espouse negative leader prototypes (i.e., perceiving ideal leaders as anti-prototypical, laissez-faire or authoritarian; Foti et al., 2012; Bray et al., 2014).

The current paper focuses on explicating what our *ideal* conceptions of followers are to understand the diversity of ideal, or best, follower views that exist. Previous research has also revealed that one's self-characteristics tend to overlap with characteristics pertaining to one's ideal prototypes (Foti et al., 2012; Bray et al., 2014), which suggests that people may draw from their self-images to construct ideal leader and follower prototypes, or vice versa. As a result,

understanding people's ideal follower prototypes may provide insight into how people themselves may choose to follow.

Ideal IFTs and Person-Centered Analytical Approaches

Although theorizing surrounding IFTs suggest that ideal follower prototypes consist of a specific *pattern* of connections between follower traits in addition to the traits themselves, existing research has largely failed to account for these patterns when capturing ideal follower prototypes or whether different subgroups vary in what they see as constituting an "ideal follower". This is because most research on IFTs relies on the variable-focused approach, which makes general claims about relationships between variables across a population or sample of individuals (Coyle & Foti, 2021; Meyer et al., 2013). Variable-centered methods, most often regression or structural equation modeling analyses, tend to assume that IFT trait relationships are not likely to vary among subgroups of participants (Meyer et al., 2013). Thus, results using these methods are based on synthesizing IFT trait relationships across all individuals in a particular sample (Morin et al., 2011). As a result, these methods are not ideal to studying IFTs as patterns or networks, because they cannot properly model ideal follower prototypes based on configurations or how different subgroups may have different ideal follower prototypes.

Thus, researchers have issued a call to supplement the dominant variable-centered approach with person-centered approaches to studying IFTs (Shondrick et al., 2010). The person-centered approach would account for variation in how IFT traits are related to each other within individuals and whether there are meaningful subgroup variations (Meyer et al., 2013; Morin et al., 2011). One such popular analytic approach is latent profile analysis (LPA), which would allow researchers to not only examine patterns of IFTs that is not addressed by variable-centered analyses (Ferguson et al., 2020), but also identify latent subpopulations based on shared patterns

of participant scores on observed variables (Muthen & Muthen, 2000). Once profiles are identified, LPA can be used in conjunction with other statistical methods (e.g., multinomial regression) to examine what factors predict, or is predicted by, belonging to different profiles (Ferguson et al., 2020)**.** Thus, LPA provides a promising approach for examining ideal follower prototypes according to current theorizing about IFTs as patterns or networks of interconnected concepts, enabling researchers to both identify various ideal follower prototypes and compare them across subgroups. Further, once ideal follower prototypes are identified, researchers can explore how ideal follower prototypes may be differentially related to other theoretically posited factors, such as socialization experiences, as well as shape attitudes towards leadership and followership.

Some initial research using the person-centered approach to study IFTs has been conducted by Coyle and Foti (2021) identifying *typical* follower prototypes in a worker sample. This emerging empirical research, although providing a valuable starting point for a person-centered IFT approach, also suggests that significant work remains to clarify existing prototypes that people hold about *ideal* followers. As people can hold different ideal versus typical prototypes, the prototypes that Coyle and Foti (2021) identified for typical followers may not necessarily apply to ideal followers. For example, previous implicit theory research has found that perceived match between one's supervisors and one's ideal leader prototype is more related to employee response towards their supervisors (e.g., perception of relationship quality) than match with typical leader prototypes (van Quaquebeke et al., 2014). This research therefore suggests that people may not use typical and ideal follower prototypes interchangeably and may even rely more on their ideal prototypes when they assess others. Other research on implicit theories suggests that people's ideal prototypes may be related to how people self-characterize

themselves (Foti et al., 2012; Bray et al., 2014), and, therefore, understanding these prototypes could provide important insight into how people act as followers.

Thus, even though we have begun to accumulate some knowledge regarding follower prototypes, we still have further to go. This research seeks to rectify two issues by examining how ideal follower prototype views are related to two different types of correlates. First, we know relatively little about correlates of people's ideal follower prototypes—whether typical or ideal (Lord et al., 2020). However, understanding which individuals are likely to endorse certain follower prototypes may contribute insight into where these configurations come from or how experience shapes these configurations. Therefore, we draw on schema and socialization theories to examine how different aspects of socialization may be related to differences in how one conceptualizes ideal followers. Second, we have little idea about whether people may rely on their follower prototypes to make crucial personal decisions around opting into (or out of) leadership and followership roles. Indeed, one's ideal follower schemas may help shape the trajectory of one's career, as individuals with certain ideal follower schemas may more persistently seek leadership roles and opportunities to lead others, and in turn, be recognized by managers or recommended for further advancement. Therefore, we draw on role identity theory to argue and test that ideal followership prototypes may be related to people's attitudes towards leadership and followership. The sections below detail our research questions.

Ideal IFT Prototypes and Differences in Socialization

In terms of what IFTs "are", or how they arise, IFT scholars posit that IFTs are a type of schema (Sy, 2010; Epitropaki et al., 2013; Shondrick et al., 2010; Shondrick & Lord, 2010). Schemas are created from a young age to cope with the informational complexity that we encounter in daily life and are a type of cognitive shortcut—a simplification mechanism—that

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help individuals make subjective meaning from their surroundings (Shondrick & Lord, 2010). In particular, schemas are thought to develop due to socialization experiences, specifically through experience interacting with and as members of a particular schema category (e.g., followers).

Thus, we can acquire "follower" schemas either directly (e.g., interacting with followers as a leader), or through observing role models who enact follower behaviours (social learning theory; Bandura, 1971). For example, empirical research on leader prototypes has shown that one's parental traits are associated with espousing those characteristics as ideal in leaders (Keller, 1999), suggesting that children (and people) acquire implicit theories through observing their parents modelling specific behaviours. In a similar fashion, other characteristics of our own long-standing personal and social development (Hunt et al., 1990) may also shape whether we see ideal followers as possessing certain patterns of characteristics. That is, we may also be affected by societal expectations that we observe for the type of follower that we should be based on our social status or group memberships (e.g., gender, race). Finally, the diversity of follower experiences within a group of individuals may also affect the number and nature of ideal follower schemas that emerge within this group. As our schemas change to account for situations that deviate from our usual experiences, a group of individuals with similar types of "follower" experiences, may have fewer, or less differentiated, schemas compared to a group of individuals with a wider range of "follower" experiences.

However, although past work acknowledges that different histories and types of interactions with others are likely to contribute to different views of ideal followers, there is little research demonstrating which aspects or types of developmental experiences may lead individuals to acquire or endorse particular ideal follower prototypes (see Thompson et al., 2018, for an exception). Therefore, the current study seeks to offer some answers by investigating

whether two types of developmental experiences, leadership experience and experiences based on one's sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender), may be related to ideal follower prototypes.

Leadership Experience

Leading others could be a developmental experience that affects one's prototypes of ideal followers. Individuals who assume the leadership mantle (either formally or informally) are often faced with a plethora of responsibilities and new pressures to go with the role (Fletcher & French, 2021). This includes looking after group member well-being and motivating the group to complete tasks efficiently and effectively, defining organizational purpose and direction, and ensuring that their group performance meets or surpasses organizational performance standards (Gjerde & Ladegård, 2019). As such, assuming a leadership role within one's group requires a different mindset from simply being another group member with no or little leadership duties (Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019). Said simply, the experience of *leading* may enable individuals to see or perceive followers in ways that they have not done so before. In particular, motivating and guiding their group to success (or failure) can be an immense, and emotional, undertaking which leaders face daily (Wirtz et al., 2017). Under these instances of emotional pressure, individuals will often undergo schema change that accounts for, and helps them make sense of, particularly disruptive and novel experiences (Poole et al., 1989). In particular, these individuals might adjust their expectations of what ideal followers are like to accommodate and take into account their new experiences with followers. As a result, people who acquire leadership experience could develop altered follower schemas through dyadic interactions with followers.

However, limited research has attempted to address whether and how leadership experience may be related to ideal follower prototypes. This is a serious shortcoming because

leadership experience may itself promote certain follower prototype views that could improve (or lower) leader expectations of followers. On the one hand, increased leadership experience could result in *increased* ideal follower expectations, given that leaders often depend on followers for their own status, thus motivating a greater sense of respect and pride towards their followers (Blader & Chen, 2012). However, on the other hand, increased leadership experience could also result in *decreased* leader expectations of ideal followers. This is because leaders occupy empowered positions relative to their employees and are thus more likely to focus on their egotistical concerns and see others as instrumental for meeting their own goals, resulting in a de-valuation of their followers (Blader & Chen, 2012).

Thus, we address this possibility in the current study in two ways. First, we examine ideal follower prototypes in two different types of samples, workers and students, to examine if different prototypes emerge across two groups that likely differ in their leadership experience, with the former group having more experience. Second, we investigate directly whether managerial experience among workers tends to be related to particular follower prototype views.

Student versus Worker Prototypes of Followers. Research that compares students versus worker prototypes could help shed light on whether differences, on average, in leadership experiences could affect the nature and number of ideal follower prototypes that emerge within a group. We argue that workers may have had more opportunities to inhabit leadership roles, or acquire leadership experience, as opposed to students. According to organizational role theory, leadership behaviour can be thought of as: (1) introducing structural organizational change, (2) improvising ways to meet organizational goals, (3) giving direction and purpose to the organization, (4) facilitating subordinates' growth, and (5) achieving collective goals (Gjerde & Ladegard, 2019). Within an organizational environment, an advancement structure is in place

that rewards workers for taking on and acting in leader capacities, by shaping the direction and purpose of their organizations, facilitating team members' growth (i.e., training or providing feedback to team members), or through performing organizational citizenship behaviours (i.e., taking on extra team duties). Such an advancement structure, which may encourage workers to take on leadership roles within their organization, is largely lacking for students within an academic environment, which tends to emphasize intellectual development within a pedagogical tradition as opposed to "advancement" through inhabiting leadership roles.

On the one hand, given that IFTs are thought to be reflective of early background experiences with followers, it is possible that students' and workers' ideal follower prototypes tend to converge. For example, studies on people's implicit leadership theories (ILTs)—i.e., people's lay beliefs about leaders—suggest that ILTs are formed young (Antonakis & Dalgas, 2009) and do not change significantly over the course of years (Epitropapki & Martin, 2004). However, this research only examined the trajectory of how traits on workers' ILTs changed over time and did not utilize a profile approach to understand whether holistic leader beliefs— i.e., patterns of associations between leader traits—changed.

Thus, we take a person-centred approach to investigating worker and student ideal follower prototypes to uncover whether different prototypes do exist between the two groups. One possibility is that there is no difference in number of ideal follower prototypes among a population of students compared to a population of workers. For example, research on *typical* follower prototypes revealed that a sample of working students have well-developed follower prototypes, comparable to a worker sample (i.e., at least four IFT prototypes; Coyle & Foti, 2021). On the other hand, it is possible that there may be more complex and varied prototypes among a population of workers versus students, especially among students with *little or no* work

experience. This is because workplaces often require workers to take on various roles and acquire diverse experiences working with, and as, followers. Workplaces are complex organizational structures, and task, goal and team interdependence are often tacitly expected within organizations (Raveendran et al., 2020). Such contexts would create expectations for interdependent work relationships that, comparatively, students are not necessarily required to fulfill. In the workplace, task interdependence (i.e., depending on other coworkers or even members of other teams to accomplish one's tasks) may force workers to adopt informal leadership roles to ensure successful cooperation and coordination with others. This increased experience with leading followers may in turn initiate altered cognitive schemas of ideal followers to accommodate these new experiences with followers. As a result, there may be more ideal follower prototypes among workers (versus students), reflecting differing holistic expectations of what followers are like.

Research Question 1: Do worker and student samples have different ideal follower prototypes?

Managerial Experience. As work experience is an imperfect indicator of *leadership* experience, we provide a more direct test of the relationship between leadership experience and ideal follower prototypes by also examining whether *managerial experience*, specifically, is related to ideal follower prototypes. For example, Coyle and Foti's (2021) previous research on typical follower prototypes in a worker sample found that leaders tended to espouse more select, or *fewer*, prototypes than the worker sample. Specifically, they found that the leader sample had only two prototypes, *proactive* (high prototypical characteristics, low anti-prototypical characteristics) or *alienated* (low prototypical characteristics, high anti-prototypical characteristics), while the follower sample had those follower prototypes in addition to two

others: *conforming* (i.e., high Good Citizen, Industriousness, and Conformity) and *negative* (i.e., extreme version of the *alienated* profile). Coyle and Foti posit that this difference in typical prototypes between leader and follower samples may indicate that leaders (versus employees) tended to have more limited views of followers. These limited views may be reflected either in terms of the number of profiles (two profiles as opposed to four), as well as the content of these profiles (i.e., "bad" versus "good" views, as opposed to some mix of "good" and "bad" views). Therefore, it is possible that managerial experience is related to holding certain ideal prototypes among workers.

> *Research Question 2: Is manager experience related to certain ideal follower prototypes*
> *among workers?*

Experience Based on Sociodemographic Characteristics

We also examine how factors reflective of one's social role or upbringing may have significant relationships to ideal follower prototypes. Namely, we focus on one's gender, race, area of the world in which one has lived (i.e., Asia versus North America), and age. These social group characteristics often determine one's social status and determine the behavioural treatment that one receives from others in society; as a result, people may internalize various "scripts" for how they should act (e.g., Stereotype Content Model; Fiske, 2018). These internalized scripts or expectations for how one should act according to one's group could, in turn, affect which ideal follower prototypes one holds (Ayman & Korabik, 2010).

Gender is one such powerful socialization factor that might lead children to develop different ideal follower prototypes. In particular, girls and women are socialized to act communally, while men and boys are socialized to act agentically (Eagly, 1987). As a result, women have been socialized to be good followers, while men are socialized to aim for leadership

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roles and are more likely to become leaders (think manager-think male phenomenon; Schein, 2001). Women and men who do not act according to these gender norms often face social sanctions and backlash (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Braun et al., 2017). In turn, women may be more likely to internalize and espouse traits of a good follower, which emphasize communality, whereas men may be more likely to deprecate followers and endorse traits of a bad follower, because they have been taught to "aim higher" and avoid backlash from being perceived as communal (Braun et al., 2017). Thus, it is possible that these expectations based on one's gender may be related to holding different ideal follower prototypes.

For similar reasons, race (i.e., whether one is Asian or White) may affect one's ideal follower prototype. In particular, Asians may be sensitive to how others view members of their race (e.g., Vorauer et al., 1998) and endorse certain traits or behaviours to avoid being negatively stereotyped (Pinel, 1999) or receiving negative attention from others (Berdahl & Min, 2012). For example, Asians have been racially harassed for acting counter to stereotypical expectations that they behave meekly and coldly towards others (i.e., for acting too dominant and warm; Berdahl & Min, 2012). As a result, they may tend to self-identify as conforming (e.g., easily influenced), a follower characteristic that is in line with societal expectations that Asians act less dominantly and less warmly than Whites (Kim et al., 2021). Thus, we investigate the possibility that these internalized behavioural expectations centered on one's race may be related to holding certain ideal follower prototypes.

In addition, whether one has lived in North America or in Asia for the majority of their life may also be related to holding different ideal follower prototypes. Previous researchers have speculated that cultural differences in values, particularly between Eastern and Western nations may differentially shape follower prototypes (Lord et al., 2020). In particular,

individualism/collectivism is the extent to which people are autonomous and independent from, or interdependent with, their in-groups, respectively (Triandis, 2001), and power distance refers to the degree to which one accepts power imbalance in the manager-employee relationship (Daniels & Greguras, 2014). We examine cultural region as a *proxy* for cultural values that may differentially shape follower prototypes (Lord et al., 2020), as previous research has found that cultural region is a good proxy for differences in these cultural values (e.g., Hofstede et al., 2011). In particular, reliable differences in cultural values between different nations have been validated in numerous studies, with North American nations (i.e., Canada and the US) scoring higher on individualism and lower on power distance, and East and Southeast Asian countries (e.g., China, the Philippines) tending to score higher on collectivism and power distance (Hofstede et al., 2011).

Thus, we argue that individuals from individualist and low power-distance North American nations may tend to prioritize agentic and participative forms of followership, whereas individuals from collectivistic and high-power distance East and Southeast Asian nations may tend to prioritize conforming and harmonious forms of followership. Other implicit theory research helps to confirm that people of different cultural groups may espouse different schemas or expectations for certain roles. For example, there is evidence that individuals from Western and Eastern regions of the world tend to espouse different ideal leader prototypes, and that these differing prototypes are related to their differing power distance and individualist/collectivist values (e.g., Koopman et al., 1999). Thus, differing cultural backgrounds may also be related to variation in ideal follower prototypes.

Finally, we examine whether one's age may be related to ideal follower prototypes. Some research on implicit theories suggests that age may not crucially affect or change follower

prototypes, given that there is evidence that children's and adults' implicit theories surrounding leadership may not drastically differ (Antonakis & Dalgas, 2009). In particular, research suggests that only periods of radical informational environmental change in one's immediate context may be responsible for inducing schema change (e.g., Epitropaki & Martin, 2004); as such, if their contexts do not change drastically, older individuals may not necessarily change their ideal follower prototypes. Alternatively, as older individuals may be more experienced with leading and following others, it is possible that age may shift ideal follower prototypes in systematic ways. For example, older (versus younger) managers may tend to see followers less negatively (Sy, 2010; Epitropaki et al., 2013). Older adults are generally more motivated to prioritize positively valenced information about relationships over negatively valenced information (Carstensen et al., 2003). They also tend to have more prosocial strivings (giving back to others, or generativity; e.g., McAdams et al., 1993) that may prime them to make more positive assumptions about others. Therefore, we investigate the possibility that age is related to certain ideal follower prototypes.

> *Research Question 3: Is (a) gender, (b) race, (c) region where one spends the majority of one's life (i.e., North America or Asia), or (d) age related to specific ideal follower prototype views?*

Ideal IFT Prototypes, Role Identity Theory, and Leadership and Followership Attitudes

The final aim of this research is to investigate whether ideal follower prototypes are related to attitudes around leadership and followership. In particular, we draw from identity theory, and identity claiming and granting principles (Hogg et al., 1995; DeRue & Ashford, 2010), to explain how one's ideal follower prototype may be related to their leadership attitudes (e.g., leader identity, motivation to lead, leadership aspiration, leader self-efficacy) and

followership attitudes (i.e., follower identity). Thus, this research aims to contribute insight into whether people use their ideal follower prototypes for self-relevant decisions, such as assessing which roles they should occupy (and how) within groups.

A central tenet of identity theory argues, "as a reflection of society, the self should be regarded as a multifaceted and organized construct" (Hogg et al., 1995, pg. 256). As such, identity theory suggests that multiple components—or role identities—exist within the self, and that the self can move flexibly between these components or identities to respond to specific situations (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019). Because these role identities are thought to be in part situationally contingent, scholars speculate that identities arise due to identity claiming and granting—an identity negotiation process—between individuals (Hogg et al., 1995; Stets & Burke, 2000). Specifically, individuals gain identities (e.g., leader identity) through both claiming these identities and others granting them these identities (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). For example, in claiming the leader role, an individual believes that they have the capacity to perform according to role expectations (e.g., act according to their own leader schema), and that their partner is likely to grant their leader role identity by performing the counter-role (e.g., be an effective follower; DeRue & Ashford, 2010).

Perceptions of others can affect motivations to assume leader or follower roles. This is because humans are a social species that place an inherent value on being in a group and avoiding social exclusion (Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019). As a result, people's decisions to assume leadership or followership roles in social situations may be affected by cues expressed by others in their groups (Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019). Holding certain ideal follower prototypes, or beliefs about how followers act, may predispose individuals to assume that others are reacting to them in ways that are more or less receptive to their claims to assume the leader role in the

first place. In turn, these individuals may be more (or less) willing to assume leadership responsibilities.

In particular, if an individual believes that good followers are effective, this individual may also believe leading others is primarily beneficial and rewarding for themselves and their groups. This is because they may perceive followers as being committed towards accomplishing team objectives, open to influence, more likely to cooperate and coordinate with the leader to accomplish important objectives, and less likely to challenge their claim to the leadership role (Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019). Thus, this individual may have more positive leadership attitudes (e.g., be more motivated to lead, have higher leader self-efficacy, have higher leadership aspirations, and be more likely to identify as a leader).

By contrast, if an individual believes that even good followers tend to be difficult to manage, this individual may also believe that leading others is primarily onerous. This is because they may perceive good followers as less committed towards team objectives, resistant to leader influence, and unlikely to be helpful or coordinate well with the leader. Such followers who exhibit poor attitudes or skepticism towards their leaders may potentially make it more costly for the individual to lead, or actively challenge and revoke the individual's claimed leadership status (Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019). Thus, as a result, this individual may have less positive leadership attitudes (e.g., be less motivated to lead, have lower leader self-efficacy, have lower leadership aspirations, and be less likely to identify as a leader).

Seeing ideal followers as possessing certain characteristics may also be related to individuals' attitudes towards followership—to the extent that being a follower is seen as a desirable or attractive way of meeting one's goals (e.g., group cohesion, Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019). For example, holding an "effective" ideal follower prototype may be self-enhancing

(Gregg et al., 2011) and generate a positive attitude towards followership (e.g., be more likely to hold a follower identity). However, the follower role may also be seen as undesirable. For example, being seen as a follower is frequently derogated within North America, such that people tend to think of followers as lacking independent thought and feel more poorly about themselves when they are labeled as followers (versus leaders; Hoption et al., 2012). Thus, it is also possible that holding an "effective" ideal follower prototype may not be sufficient to overcome negative attitudes towards followership.

We believe that researching these relationships between ideal follower prototypes and one's (a) leadership attitudes (e.g., leader identity, motivation to lead, leadership aspirations, leader self-efficacy), and (b) followership attitudes (i.e., follower identity), is important because such research could provide insight into how people opt into (or out of) different roles. This research thus differs from the majority of existing IFT research, which aims to show how people use their follower prototypes to aid other-perceptions (e.g., categorizing others as followers, as well as interpreting actions of followers). Rather, this work is in line with some extant research showing that people also use IFTs for guiding certain self-relevant behaviours (e.g., whether to act ethically in response to leader requests; Knoll et al., 2017). Drawing upon this logic, we investigate the possibility that these schemas are related to people's introspective *self-attitudes*— in this case, shaping their own leadership and followership attitudes. That is, this research explores whether people may use their follower prototypes as heuristics to help them assess how they can best contribute to their teams—that is, whether they should put themselves forward as leaders (or followers).

> *Research Question 4: Are ideal follower prototypes related to leadership and followership attitudes?*

Method

Samples Overview

To answer our research questions, we analyze and present data from three different samples. Sample 1 is a student sample from a previously published paper (Kim et al., 2021), Sample 2 is a worker sample (unpublished dataset), and Sample 3 is an additional worker sample from a previously published paper (Kim et al., 2022). The worker samples were left uncombined and analyzed separately, as they answered different research questions (i.e., included different correlates). Please see Table 4 for information about which samples were used to answer each research question.

Table 4. Sample Information

Sample	Characteristics	Research Questions	Measures
1	• *N* = 852 • Canadian university undergraduate students	• (1) Do workers and student samples have different ideal follower prototypes? • (3) Is (a) gender, (b) race, or (c) region where one spends the majority of one's life (i.e., North America or Asia), or (d) age related to specific ideal follower prototype views? • (4) Are ideal follower prototypes related to leadership and followership attitudes?	• Ideal IFTs • Age • Gender • Race • Culture (i.e., region where they spent most of their life) • Leadership Attitudes • Followership Attitudes
2	• *N* = 495 • Full-time workers recruited through MTurk	• (1) Do workers and student samples have different ideal follower prototypes? • (2) Is manager experience related to certain ideal follower prototypes among workers? • (3) Is (a) gender, (b) race, or (c) region where one spends the majority of one's life (i.e., North America or Asia), or (d) age related to specific ideal follower prototype views? • (4) Are ideal follower prototypes related to leadership and followership attitudes?	• Ideal IFTs • Age • Gender • Race • Culture (i.e., region where they spent most of their life) • Managerial Experience (yes or no) • Leadership Attitudes • Followership Attitudes
3	• *N* = 265 • Full-time workers recruited through MTurk	• (1) Do workers and student samples have different ideal follower prototypes? • (2) Is manager experience related to certain ideal follower prototypes among workers? • (3): Is (a) gender and (b) age related to specific ideal follower prototype views?	• Ideal IFTs • Age • Gender • Managerial Experience (yes or no)

Participants

Sample 1

Sample 1 ($N = 852$) consisted of combining two student data collections from a previously published paper (Kim et al., 2021). This is a common approach for ensuring the larger sample sizes necessary for LPA (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2015). Participants were recruited through a Canadian University undergraduate student psychology research pool. The majority of the sample (75%) was female. Additionally, 53% ($N = 449$) identified as White, 46% ($N = 388$) identified as Asian, and 2% ($N = 15$) did not identify their race. Of those who identified as Asian, the majority (i.e., 79% or $N = 306$) indicated that they were Asian Canadian, while the rest (i.e., 21% or $N = 82$) indicated that they identified as another nationality (e.g., Chinese). The majority of Asians also identified ethnically as Chinese (75%), with others indicating that they were Korean (7%), South-East Asian (16%), or Other (2%).

Sample 2

Sample 2 ($N = 495$) consisted of full-time workers recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Most of these workers identified as male (67%) and as having received at least some post-secondary education (86%). On average, they were 33 years old, worked 38 hours a week, and had 12 years of work experience. Most workers also had some formal managerial experience (68%), with the average being 5 years. In terms of race, 60% ($N = 301$) identified as White American, 37% ($N = 185$) identified as Asian American, and 2% ($N = 9$) did not identify their race. Of those who identified as Asian, the majority (i.e., 45% or $N = 83$) indicated that they specifically identified as East Asian, with relatively equal numbers indicating that they were ethnically Chinese (22%), Korean (18%), or Japanese (14%)

Sample 3

Sample 3 (*N* = 265) consisted of a sample of full-time workers recruited through MTurk for a previously published paper (Kim et al., 2022; supplemental materials). The majority (58%) of the sample identified as male, and 78% received some post-secondary education. On average, participants were 34 years old and had 14 years of work experience. Most workers also had some formal managerial experience (57%), with the average being 7 years. Additionally, the majority of the sample identified as White (76%). Unlike Sample 1 and 2, participant participation was not just limited to White and Asian participants.

Procedure

All data for the three samples were collected using cross-sectional surveys that were administered to each of these samples separately and as part of data collection efforts for other (i.e., different) research questions. Please see Table 3 for which measures and questions that were administrated to each sample prior to this study.

Measures

IFTs

Sy's (2010) IFT measure was used to assess ideal follower prototypes. Specifically, participants were asked to rate how characteristic each of 18 traits were of a *good* follower on a 9-point likert scale (*not at all characteristic, extremely characteristic*). Trait ratings were then averaged to form six IFT dimensions (three items each): Industry (e.g., "Hardworking"; Sample 1 α = .85, Sample 2 α = .85, Sample 3 α = .89), Enthusiasm (e.g., "Excited"; Sample 1 α = .86, Sample 2 α = .80, Sample 3 α = .85), Good Citizen (e.g., "Loyal"; Sample 1 α = .81, Sample 2 α = .84, Sample 3 α = .83), Conformity (e.g., "Easily Influenced"; Sample 1 α = .87, Sample 2 α = .78, Sample 3 α = .84), Insubordination (e.g., "Arrogant"; Sample 1 α = .91, Sample 2 α = .95, Sample 3 α = .93), and Incompetence (e.g., "Slow"; Sample 1 α = .85, Sample 2 α = .93, Sample

3 α = .92). Although we did not ask about perceptions of *ideal* followers, asking about people's

perceptions about *good* followers should evoke an evaluatively positive category of followers

who accomplish the goals or tasks of a follower well (Barsalou, 1985; Van Quaquebeke et al.,

2014), equivalent to an ideal follower.

Leadership Attitudes

To tap into participants' leadership attitudes, four different operationalizations were used:

leader identity, motivation to lead, leadership self-efficacy, and leadership aspirations.

Leadership Identity. Leader identity is the component of the self that is related to being

a leader or seeing oneself as a leader (Day & Harrison, 2007). This variable was measured using

Hiller's (2005) 4-item scale (e.g., "I see myself as a leader", Study 1 α = .91, Study 2 α = .94).

Participants indicated agreement with each item on a 7-point likert scale (*1 = not at all*

descriptive, 7 = extremely descriptive).

Motivation to Lead. Motivation to lead (MTL) can be defined as one's guiding reason(s)

for taking on leadership duties, which will affect one's effort at, and persistence in, being a

leader (Chan & Drasgow, 2001). MTL is theorized to have three dimensions: affective MTL is

defined as having an inherent liking for leading others, socio-normative MTL is defined as

leading due to a sense of duty or responsibility, and non-calculative MTL is defined as not

weighing personal gain or benefits against the possible costs of leading (Chan & Drasgow,

2001). The three sub-dimensions were each measured using a 9-item sub-scale from Chan and

Drasgow's (2001) 27-item measure. Sample items include "I usually want to be the leader in the

groups that I work in" (affective; Sample 1 α = .90, Sample 2 α = .84), "I feel that I have a duty

to lead others if I am asked" (socio-normative; Sample 1 α = .75, Sample 2 α = .83), and "I

never expect to get more privileges if I agree to lead a group" (non-calculative; Sample 1 α

= .83, Sample 2 α = .77). Participants indicated their agreement with each item on a 7-point

likert scale (*1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)*. The three sub-scale dimensions were

also averaged to form a general MTL score (Sample 1 α = .87; Sample 2 α = .78).

Leadership Self-Efficacy. Leader self-efficacy refers to confidence in one's ability to

carry out behaviours within the leader role (Paglis, 2010). Leader self-efficacy was measured

using Murphy's (1992) 8-item scale (e.g., "I know what it takes to make a group accomplish its

task"; Sample 1 α = .87; Sample 2 α = .77). Participants indicated their agreement with each

item on a 7-point likert scale (*1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)*.

Leadership Aspirations. Leadership aspiration is defined as one's interest in securing a

leadership role in one's career and workplace, and being inclined to accept a leadership role if

one is offered (Fritz & van Knippenberg, 2017). For Sample 1, this variable was measured using

five items adapted from the Gregor & O'Brien (2016) measure (e.g., "When I am established in

my career, I would like to manage other employees"; α = .82). Participants indicated their

agreement with each item on a 7-point likert scale (*1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)*.

For Sample 2, this variable was measured using 10 items (α = .90). Three of these items were

adapted and taken from the Fritz and van Knippenberg (2017) measure (e.g., "I would like to

obtain a (higher) leadership position during my career"), and seven items were adapted and taken

from the Gregor and O'Brian (2016) measure. Participants indicated their agreement with each

item on a 5-point likert scale (*1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)*.

Followership Attitude

We operationalized followership attitude as follower identity, the component of oneself

that is related to being a follower or thinking of oneself as a follower (Epitropaki et al., 2017).

This variable was measured using Hiller's (2005) 4-item leader identity scale, which was adapted

to ask about follower identity (e.g., "I see myself as a follower", Study 1 α = .90, Study 2 α = .95). Participants indicated agreement with each item on a 7-point likert scale (*1 = not at all descriptive, 7 = extremely descriptive*).

Analysis

All analyses were conducted using the *Mplus* software (Version 8.4). For all samples, CFAs were first performed to examine IFT six-dimensional fit and to generate factor scores to use for subsequent LPA models (e.g., Morin & Marsh, 2015). For all samples, the six-dimensional model fit was acceptable: Sample 1 $\chi^2(120) = 508.02$, $p < .001$, CFI = .94, TLI = .92, RMSEA = .06; Sample 2 $\chi^2(120) = 225.84$, $p < .001$, CFI = .98, TLI = .97, RMSEA = .04; and Sample 3 $\chi^2(120) = 223.30$, $p < .001$, CFI = .96, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .06. The IFT factor scores that were generated for the CFA were then used as input for subsequent LPAs. For all samples, profile solutions with one to six profiles were modelled. Missing values were estimated using maximum likelihood estimation. Analyses for each model was conducted with 1,000 random sets of start values and retained the 250 best solutions for final stage optimization (Ferguson et al., 2020).

To determine the final profile solutions for student and worker samples (RQ1), various fit statistics were considered, in line with prior research (e.g., Foti et al., 2012; Hancock et al., 2021). First, lower values on the Akaike information criterion (AIC), the Bayesian information criterion (BIC), and the sample-adjusted Bayesian information criterion (SSA-BIC) indicate better fitting models. In addition, higher loglikelihood (LL) indicates better fitting models, and higher entropy values (i.e., closer to 1 than 0) indicate a higher likelihood that participants have been accurately classified into their respective profiles. Significant *p* values on the Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood ratio test (LMR), and the bootstrap likelihood ratio test (BLRT) provide

evidence that the fit of a k-pattern model is superior over a k-1 model, and can be useful for deciding whether a model with more profiles provides a better solution than a model with fewer profiles. The size of profile groups should also be adequate, as profiles sizes close to 0% may be spurious (e.g., greater than or equal to 5%; Ferguson et al., 2020; Masyn, 2013; Hancock et al., 2021). Finally, the number of profile groups should also be parsimonious and theoretically interpretable.

Based on the above criteria, once an optimal LPA solution had been reached, relationships between IFT profile patterns (determined via posterior probabilities) and correlates (e.g., age, gender, race, culture, and managerial experience) were examined (RQ2 and RQ3). Specifically, in modelling covariates of profile patterns, the R3STEP command in *Mplus* was used. This procedure involves conducting several multinomial logistic regressions to examine how an increase in a predictor variable would increase the probability of profile membership for one particular pattern over another (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014). For Sample 1 analyses, study was included as a control, in case student IFTs varied depending on when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. Study 1 data collection occurred in 2018 and 2020, while Study 2 data collection only occurred in 2018. Finally, to model whether IFT profile patterns were related to leader and follower attitudes (RQ4), the DU3STEP command was used. This procedure tests whether outcome means are equal across the different IFT profile pattern groups (Asparouhov & Muthen, 2014). See Appendix B for a flowchart of the analyses above described.

Table 5. Descriptive Information and Correlations between Variables (Sample 1)

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1. Age	20.28	3.82	--																		
2. Gender	--	--	.02	--																	
3. Race	--	--	-.11**	.14**	--																
4. Region	--	--	-.02	.08*	.35**	--															
5. Study	--	--	.04	-.01	-.01	.08*	--														
6. Industry IFT	8.03	1.12	0	-.02	.09**	-.08*	-.11**	.85													
7. Enthusiasm IFT	7.00	1.55	-.07	-.02	.02	-.09*	-.07*	.55**	.86												
8. Good Citizen IFT	8.30	0.87	-.06	.04	.01	-.12**	-.11**	.62**	.55**	.81											
9. Conformity IFT	5.38	2.09	-.08*	.02	.01	.02	-.02	-.26**	-.05	-0.05	.87										
10. Insubordination IFT	1.73	1.07	-.03	.08*	.05	.07*	.08*	-.26**	-.13**	-.26**	.32**	.91									
11. Incompetence IFT	2.34	1.43	-.02	.07*	.03	.04	.06	-.31**	-.21**	-.24**	.29**	.57**	.85								
12. Affective MTL	4.32	1.15	.01	-.05	-.21**	-.09*	.03	.01	.11**	.03	-.01	.02	-.04	.90							
13. Non-calculative MTL	4.87	0.91	.07*	-.16**	-.18**	-.13**	-.05	-.01	.01	0	-.11**	-.13**	-.12**	.24**	.75						
14. Socio-normative MTL	4.75	0.74	-.02	-.07	-.12**	-.11**	.02	.09**	.12**	.13**	.04	-.07*	-.09*	.44**	.18**	.83					
15. Mean MTL	4.44	0.69	-.02	-.07*	-.19**	-.13**	-.38**	.07*	.13**	.09*	.01	-.03	-.08*	.74**	.36**	.60**	.87				
16. Leadership Aspiration	5.08	1.09	-.04	-.05	-.02	-.03	-.10**	.07	.11**	.13**	.03	-.05	-.07	.56**	.13**	.44**	.53**	.82			
17. Leader Self-Efficacy	4.94	0.91	.07*	-.08*	-.20**	-.11**	-.02	.05	.09*	.10**	0	-.03	-.09**	.70**	.31**	.51**	.63**	.57**	.87		
18. Leader Identity	4.11	1.46	.03	-.04	-.14**	-.07*	.06	.02	.14**	.07	.05	.06	0	.79**	.20**	.53**	.63**	.58**	.72**	.91	
19. Follower Identity	3.13	1.38	-.09*	-.01	.25**	.10**	-.03	.07	.02	.02	.04	.02	.05	-.68**	-.29**	-.28**	-.51**	-.43**	-.54**	-.58**	.90

Note. Gender: *Female = 0, Male = 1*. Race: *White = 0, Asian = 1*. Region: where participants indicated that they spent most of their life (i.e., *North America = 0* versus *Asia = 1*). Study: *Study 1 = 1, Study 2 = 2*. IFT = implicit followership theory. MTL = Motivation to lead.
Listwise N = 789.
*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 6. Descriptive Information and Correlations between Variables (Sample 2)

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1. Age	32.60	8.93	--																		
2. Gender	--	--	-.13**	--																	
3. Race	--	--	-.26**	.06	--																
4. Region	--	--	-.06	.03	.30**	---															
5. Managerial Experience	--	--	-.09	-.08	.16**	-.01	--														
6. Industry IFT	7.43	1.49	.08	-.06	-.13**	-.14**	-.02	.85													
7. Enthusiasm IFT	6.59	1.70	.01	.06	-.18**	.02	-.06	.51**	.80												
8. Good Citizen IFT	7.53	1.44	.12*	-.04	-.16**	-.18**	.01	.73**	.52**	.84											
9. Conformity IFT	5.70	2.05	-.01	.10*	-.10*	.04	-.16**	.08	.41**	.19**	.78										
10. Insubordination IFT	3.16	2.56	-.09	.10*	-.06	.11*	-.27**	-.20**	.17**	-.24**	.44**	.95									
11. Incompetence IFT	3.42	2.53	-.06	.11*	-.10*	.08	-.24**	-.27**	.12**	-.25**	.44**	.88**	.93								
12. Affective MTL	4.09	1.22	.01	.08	-.04	.04	-.35**	.01	.13**	-.02	.11*	.10*	.05	.84							
13. Non-calculative MTL	4.15	1.05	.09	-.09	-.02	-.08	-.02	.11*	-.07	.12*	-.30**	-.38**	-.37**	.28**	.77						
14. Socio-normative MTL	4.66	1.04	.07	.05	-.12*	-.05	-.37**	.22**	.36**	.24**	.28**	.22**	.18**	.58**	.19**	.83					
15. Mean MTL	4.20	0.67	0	.12**	-.07	.04	-.39**	.06	.30**	.05	.37**	.37**	.32**	.76**	-.26**	.77**	.78				
16. Leadership Aspiration	4.53	1.26	-.03	.07	.01	.03	-.31**	.19**	.26**	.18**	.13**	.01	-.06	.69**	.27**	.65**	.61**	.90			
17. Leader Self-Efficacy	4.68	1.03	.08	-.02	-.03	-.06	-.30**	.24**	.16**	.28**	-.03	-.21**	-.24**	.62**	.36**	.56**	.48**	.66**	.77		
18. Leader Identity	4.70	1.71	-.03	.12**	-.07	.11*	-.41**	.09	.35**	.09	.36**	.32**	.25**	.77**	.02	.69**	.82**	.69**	.54**	.94	
19. Follower Identity	3.99	1.85	-.10*	.05	-.08	.03	.02	0	.17**	-.04	.29**	.46**	.45**	-.52**	-.42**	-.12*	-.16**	-.36**	-.53**	-.21**	.95

Note. Gender: *Female = 0, Male = 1*. Race: *White = 0, Asian = 1*. Region: where participants indicated that they spent most of their life (i.e., *North America = 0* versus *Asia = 1*). Managerial Experience: *Yes = 0, No = 1*. IFT = implicit followership theory. MTL = Motivation to lead.
Listwise N = 443.
*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 7. Descriptive Information and Correlations between Variables (Sample 3)

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Age	34.11	9.23	--								
2. Gender	--	--	-.08	--							
3. Manager Experience	--	--	-.26**	-.10	--						
4. Industry IFT	8.07	1.18	.11	-.04	-.06	.89					
5. Enthusiasm IFT	6.97	1.53	-.03	-.02	-.13*	.42**	.85				
6. Good Citizen IFT	8.19	1.02	.10	-.12	-.03	.67**	.38**	.83			
7. Conformity IFT	5.35	2.15	-.14*	.09	-.06	-.12	.19**	-.02	.84		
8. Insubordination IFT	2.17	1.88	-.15*	.14*	-.14*	-.40**	-.05	-.55**	.27**	.93	
9. Incompetence IFT	2.29	1.88	-.08	.13*	-.07	-.46**	-.12	-.46**	.30**	.73**	.92

Note. Gender: *Female = 0, Male = 1*. Managerial Experience: *Yes = 0, No = 1*. IFT = implicit followership theory. *Listwise N* = 250.
*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 8. Ideal IFT Prototype LPA Model Fit Summary

Model	Log likelihood	Free Parameters	AIC	BIC	SSA-BIC	Entropy	Smallest Class %	LMR *p*-value	BLRT *p*-value
				Sample 1 (*N* = 846)					
1	-6957.67	12.00	13939.34	13996.22	13958.11				
2	**-6354.14**	**19.00**	**12746.28**	**12836.35**	**12776.01**	**0.85**	**0.28**	**0.02***	**<0.0001***
3	-6052.25	26.00	12156.50	12279.76	12197.19	0.89	0.05	0.28	<0.0001***
4	-5809.08	33.00	11684.15	11840.59	11735.79	0.92	0.04	0.005**	<0.0001***
5	-5706.52	40.00	11493.04	11682.66	11555.63	0.88	0.03	0.39	<0.0001***
6	-5612.96	47.00	11319.91	11542.71	11393.46	0.87	0.02	0.38	<0.0001***
				Sample 2 (*N* = 495)					
1	-4044.90	12	8113.79	8164.25	8126.16				
2	-3368.95	19	6775.90	6855.78	6795.48	0.98	0.35	<0.0001***	<0.0001***
3	**-2809.23**	**26**	**5670.45**	**5779.77**	**5697.25**	**0.98**	**0.19**	**<0.0001***	**<0.0000***
4	-2640.38	33	5346.77	5485.52	5380.77	0.92	0.17	0.038*	<0.0001***
5	-2489.30	40	5058.59	5226.78	5099.82	0.94	0.06	0.11	<0.0001***
6	-2388.40	47	4870.79	5068.41	4919.23	0.95	0.04	0.33	<0.0001***
				Sample 3 (*N* = 265)					
1	-2176.20	12	4376.40	4419.36	4381.31	--			
2	-1797.43	19	3632.86	3700.88	3640.64	0.98	0.20	<0.0001***	<0.0001***
3	**-1659.47**	**26**	**3370.93**	**3464.01**	**3381.57**	**0.99**	**0.09**	**0.022***	**<0.0000***
4	-1577.72	33	3221.43	3339.57	3234.94	0.93	0.07	0.12	<0.0001***
5	-1519.40	40	3118.79	3261.98	3135.16	0.95	0.04	0.28	<0.0001***
6	-1458.80	47	3011.59	3179.84	3030.82	0.94	0.03	0.31	<0.0001***

Note. AIC = Akaïke Information Criterion; BIC = Bayesian Information Criterion; SSA-BIC = Sample-Size Adjusted BIC. LMR = Lo-Mendall-Rubin Likelihood Ratio Test. BLRT = Bootstrap Likelihood Ratio Test.

p < .05. **p* < .01. *** *p* < .001

Table 9. Ideal IFT Prototype Profile Solutions

Profiles	% Sample (N)	Industry	Enthusiasm	Good Citizen	Conformity	Insubordination	Incompetence
		Sample 1 (2 profile solution, Students $N = 846$)					
1 *Passive*	28% (237)	-1.06	-0.83	-1.01	0.47	0.80	0.86
2 *Dutiful and Productive*	72% (609)	0.41	0.33	0.39	-0.18	-0.31	-0.34
		Sample 2 (3 profile solution, Workers $N = 495$)					
1 *Passive*	19% (93)	-1.58	-1.10	-1.56	-0.36	0.42	0.49
2 *Dutiful and Productive*	60% (296)	0.43	0.09	0.44	-0.25	-0.68	-0.69
3 *Energetic but Overconfident*	21% (106)	0.20	0.71	0.14	1.02	1.54	1.49
		Sample 3 (3 profile solution, Workers $N = 265$)					
1 *Passive*	12% (31)	-1.74	-0.74	-1.75	0.12	0.94	0.88
2 *Dutiful and Productive*	79% (210)	0.32	0.08	0.37	-0.12	-0.43	-0.40
3 *Energetic but Overconfident*	9% (24)	-0.57	0.24	-0.98	0.91	2.49	2.31

Note. The estimates reported in the above table are mean factor scores. Final count and proportions for the latent profiles are based on Estimated Posterior Probabilities.

Figure 2. Elbow Plots of Profile Solutions
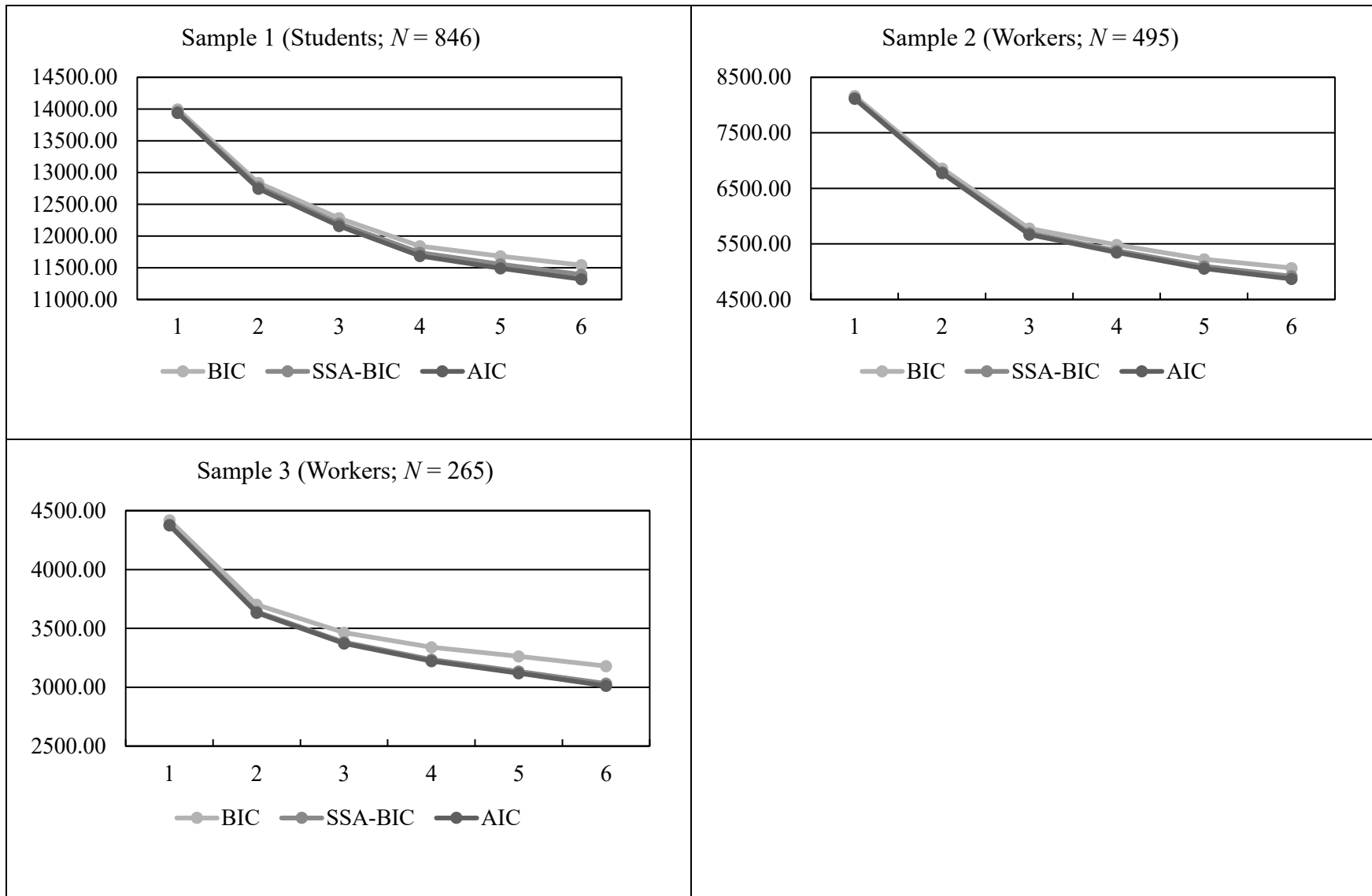
Note. AIC = Akaïke Information Criterion; BIC = Bayesian Information Criterion; SSA-BIC = Sample-Size Adjusted BIC.

Figure 3. Ideal Follower Prototype Profile Solutions for Samples 1, 2, and 3

Results

Means and correlations for each sample are displayed in Tables 5-7. As has been found in previous research (e.g., Sy, 2010), across the three samples, prototypical IFT traits tend to be positively related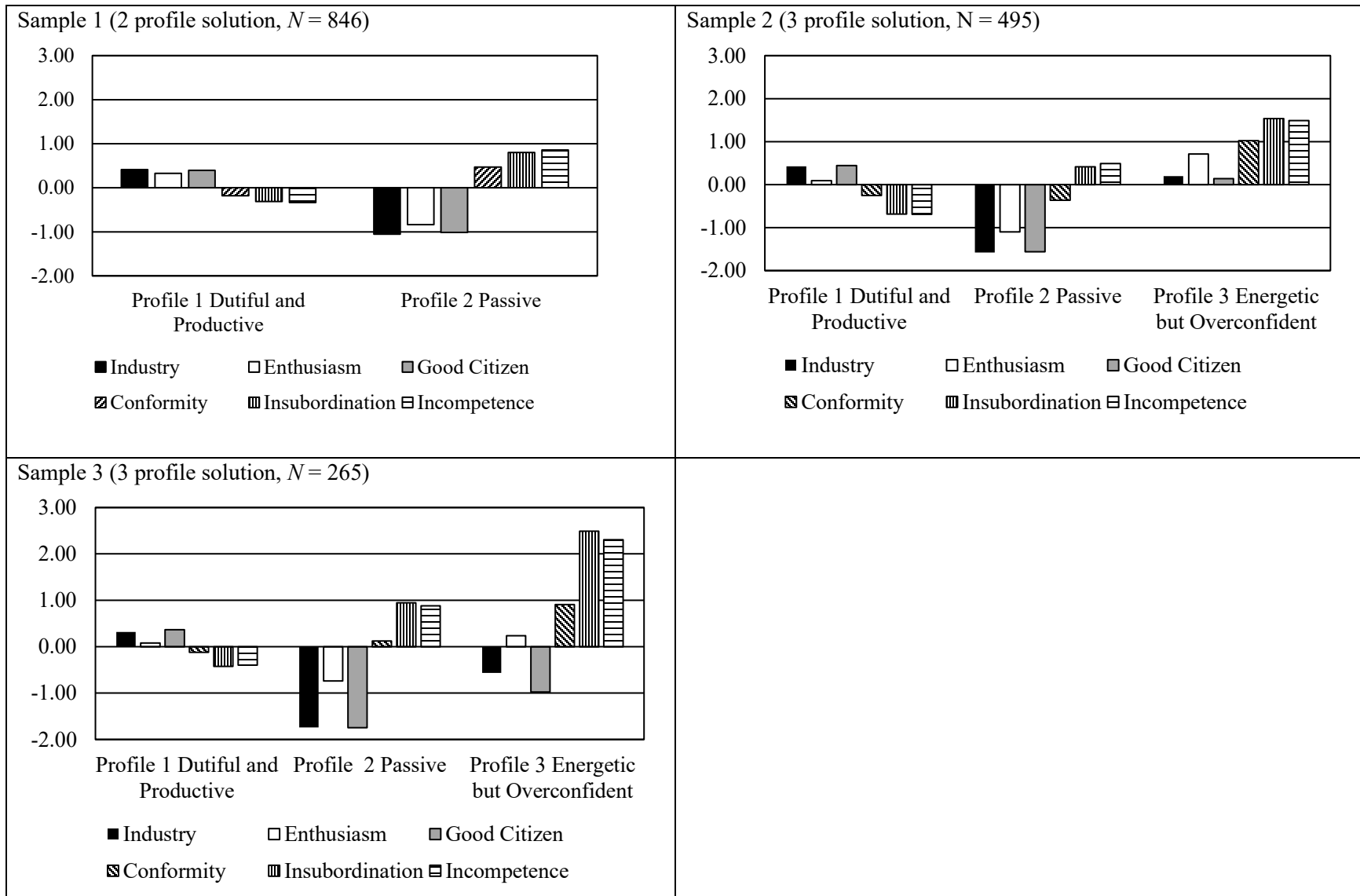 to each other (i.e., industry, enthusiasm and good citizen), and anti-prototypical IFT traits also tend to be positively related to each other (i.e., conformity, insubordination and incompetence). There were also significant correlations between gender and IFTs, such that men tended to think of good followers as more insubordinate and incompetent than women. Finally, race was correlated with IFTs, but not consistently across samples. Specifically, among the student sample (Sample 1; Table 5), Asians (vs. Whites) tended to think of followers as more insubordinate, whereas among the worker sample (Sample 2; Table 6), Asians (vs. Whites) tended to think of followers as less prototypical and conforming.

Ideal Follower Prototypes

Student Profiles

To address RQ1 (do workers and students have different ideal follower prototypes?), it was determined that the 2-profile solution provided the best fit to the data for students (see Table 8, Sample 1). The AIC, BIC and SSA-BIC continued to decrease with each additional profile, and the BLRT was significant for each additional profile. However, the LMR indicated that the 3-profile solution fit is not significantly different from the 2-profile solution fit. In addition, the third profile that emerged in the 3-profile solution had the same qualitative pattern as the first profile that emerged in the 2-profile solution, which suggested profile splitting.

This two-profile solution is consistent with Coyle and Foti's (2021) previous research with workplace leaders (see Table 9 and Figure 3; Sample 1). In particular, the first profile consists of particularly below-average levels of prototypical characteristics (i.e., industry,

enthusiasm, and good citizen) and comparatively higher levels of anti-prototypical characteristics (i.e., conformity, insubordination, and incompetence), with 28% of students belonging to this profile. The second profile consists of above-average levels of prototypical characteristics (i.e., industry, enthusiasm, and good citizen) and below-average levels of anti-prototypical characteristics (i.e., conformity, insubordination, and incompetence). The majority, 72%, of students belonged to this profile.

In sum, these profiles suggest that students tend to think of ideal followers in one of two ways. Students may see ideal followers as being *Passive*—particularly low in supportive, enthusiastic, or initiative-taking behaviours and characteristics, and somewhat more inclined towards counterproductivity (i.e., conforming and being hard to get along or work well with)—or the opposite, *Dutiful and Productive*—that is, supportive, enthusiastic and initiative-taking, as well as less inclined towards counterproductivity (i.e., conforming, and being hard to get along or work well with).

Worker Profiles

In contrast, it was determined that the 3-profile solution provided the best fit to the data for Samples 2-3 (Table 8). The AIC, BIC and SSA-BIC continued to decrease with each additional profile, and the BLRT was significant for each additional profile. However, the LMR value was no longer significant with the addition of a fourth profile for Sample 3, suggesting that the 3-profile solution provided the best fit. For Sample 2, although the LMR value was still significant at the addition of a fourth profile, examining an elbow plot to determine when increases in AIC, BIC and SSA-BIC values begin to taper suggested that an additional profile does not much increase solution fit between the 3-profile and 4-profile solutions (see Figure 2). In addition, the entropy level drops between the 3-profile solution (98%) and the 4-profile

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solution (92%); thus, the likelihood that participants have been correctly classified into their respective profiles is higher at the 3-profile solution than the 4-profile solution. Thus, for Sample 2, the 3-profile solution was also determined to provide the best fit to the data.

This 3-profile solution suggests that workers in both samples tended to think of ideal followers in one of three ways (see Table 9 and Figure 3; Samples 2 and 3). The first profile that emerged among workers was similar to the second profile found with students, with people in this profile tending to think of ideal followers as predominantly having particularly low levels of prototypical characteristics, and only somewhat elevated anti-prototypical, characteristics. People in this profile appear to conceptualize ideal followers as particularly lacking in proactivity and energy, and comparatively unremarkable in other respects—in other words, people in this profile tend to see ideal followers as *Passive*. Only a minority of workers belonged to this profile (Sample 2 = 19%, Sample 3 = 12%).

The second profile that emerged among workers replicated the first profile found with students, with people in this profile tending to think of ideal followers as having above-average levels of prototypical characteristics and below-average levels of anti-prototypical characteristics. That is, people in this profile may conceptualize ideal followers as largely proactive and avoiding counter-productive behaviours—in other words, people in this profile tend to see ideal followers as *Dutiful and Productive*. The majority of workers belonged to this profile (Sample 2 = 60%, Sample 3 = 79%).

Finally, the third profile that emerged among workers was novel and not seen previously with students, with people in this profile tended to think of ideal followers as having high levels of enthusiasm, as well as anti-prototypical characteristics, particularly insubordination and incompetence. People in this profile may conceptualize ideal followers as energetic despite not

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being particularly experienced or cooperative—that is, people in this profile may tend to see ideal followers as *Energetic but Overconfident*. A similar proportion of workers to the first profile subscribed to this profile (Sample 2 = 21%, Sample 3 = 9%).

Based on these profile solutions for the students and workers, in answer to RQ1, worker and student samples do have different ideal follower prototypes. Specifically, workers have one additional ideal follower prototype compared with students. Although students' ideal follower prototypes consist of relatively less differentiated *Dutiful and Productive* or *Passive* profiles, workers appear to differentiate between two kinds of "flawed" ideal followers and thus subscribe to one of three different ideal follower prototypes: *Dutiful and Productive*, *Passive,* or *Energetic but Overconfident*.

Table 10. Correlates of Ideal IFT Prototype Group Membership

Variable	Passive v. Dutiful and Productive			Energetic but Overconfident v. Dutiful and Productive			Passive v. Energetic but Overconfident		
	Coef.	SE	OR	Coef.	SE	OR	Coef.	SE	OR
Sample 1 (Students; $N = 794$)									
Study (1 or 2)	0.51**	0.19	1.66*						
Age	0.02	0.02	1.02						
Gender (Female = 0, Male = 1)	0.28	0.21	1.32						
Race (White = 0, Asian = 1)	-0.30	0.20	0.75						
Region (NA = 0, Asia = 1)	0.86**	0.31	2.37						
Sample 2 (Workers; $N = 443$)									
Managerial experience (Yes = 0, No = 1)	-0.46	0.28	0.63	-2.09**	0.45	0.12***	1.63**	0.50	5.11
Age	-0.06*	0.02	0.95*	-0.03	0.02	0.97	-0.03	0.03	0.98
Gender (Female = 0, Male = 1)	0.29	0.29	1.33	0.48	0.30	1.61	-0.19	0.38	0.83
Race (White = 0, Asian = 1)	0.38	0.30	1.46	-0.72*	0.35	0.49**	1.10**	0.41	3.00
Region (NA = 0, Asia = 1)	1.09*	0.43	2.97	0.99*	0.49	2.69	0.10	0.53	1.11
Sample 3 (Workers; $N = 265$)									
Managerial experience (Yes = 0, No = 1)	0.19	0.46	1.21	-2.15*	0.83	0.12***	2.34*	0.92	10.38
Age	-0.07*	0.03	0.93*	-0.06*	0.03	0.94*	-0.01	0.04	1.00
Gender (Female = 0, Male = 1)	0.58	0.44	1.79	0.78	0.59	2.18	-0.20	0.70	0.82

Note. Coef. = the estimate (β) from the R3STEP multinomial logistic regression analysis; SE = standard error of the coefficient; OR = odds ratio. Analyses were conducted with 794 participants in Sample 1 and with 443 participants in Sample 2 due to listwise deletion. Positive values indicate that a person scoring higher on that antecedent (e.g., 1) is more likely to be in the first latent profile and that a person scoring lower on that antecedent (e.g., 0) is more likely to be in the second latent profile; negative values indicate the reverse. Study: 1 = (year 2020 and 2018), 2 = (year 2018). Region: where participants indicated that they spent most of their life (i.e., North America versus Asia).
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Socialization Experiences and Ideal IFT Prototypes

This research also examines relationships between two aspects of socialization—leadership experience (i.e., managerial experience) and sociodemographic characteristics (i.e., age, gender, race, and cultural region)—and ideal follower prototypes. Specifically, Research Question 2 asked whether having managerial experience is related to ideal follower prototype profile membership amongst workers (Samples 2 and 3; Table 10). We found that managerial experience was related to workers holding certain ideal IFT prototypes over others. Specifically, those who had managerial experience were more likely to belong to the *Energetic but Overconfident* prototype group than the *Dutiful and Productive* prototype group (Sample 2: coefficient = -2.09, *p* < .001, *OR* = 0.12; Sample 3: coefficient = -2.15, *p* < .001, *OR* = 0.12), or to the *Passive* prototype group (Sample 2: coefficient = 1.63, *p* = .001, *OR* = 5.11; Sample 3: coefficient = 2.34, *p* < .05, *OR* =10.38). These results suggest that having managerial experience is related, particularly, to the *Energetic but Overconfident* ideal follower prototype and may help explain the emergence of this novel ideal IFT profile group among workers.

Research Question 3 asked whether sociodemographic correlates are related to ideal follower prototype profile membership (Table 10). Gender did not predict profile membership to any IFT ideal follower prototype for students or workers (Samples 1-3). However, the three other sociodemographic correlates did predict profile membership. Specifically, race and age predicted profile membership for workers only (Samples 2 and 3), and cultural region predicted profile membership for both students and workers (Samples 1 and 2).

For race, workers who were White (versus Asian) were more likely to belong to the *Energetic but Overconfident* profile group than the *Dutiful and Productive* profile group (Sample 2: coefficient = -0.72, *p* = .037, *OR* = 0.49), or the *Passive* profile group (Sample 2: coefficient =

1.10, $p = .008$, $OR = 3.00$). For cultural region, students who had mostly lived in North America (versus Asia) were more likely to have a positive (versus passive) ideal follower prototype (Sample 1: coefficient $= 0.86$, $p = .005$, $OR = 2.37$). Similarly, workers who had mostly lived in North America (versus Asia) was more likely to belong to the *Dutiful and Productive* profile group than the *Passive* profile group (Sample 2: coefficient $= 1.09$, $p = .011$, $OR = 2.97$), or the *Energetic but Overconfident* profile group (Sample 2: coefficient $= 0.99$, $p = .043$, $OR = 2.69$). Finally, for age, workers who were older (versus younger) were slightly more likely to belong to the *Dutiful and Productive* profile group than the *Passive* profile group (Sample 2: coefficient $= -0.06$, $p = .012$, $OR = 0.95$; Sample 3: coefficient $= -0.07$, $p = .036$, $OR = 0.93$). In addition, for Sample 3 only, those who were older (versus younger) were also more likely to belong to the *Dutiful and Productive* profile group than the *Energetic but Overconfident* profile group (Sample 3: coefficient $= -0.06$, $p = .042$, $OR = 0.94$).

In sum, these results suggest that both types of socialization correlates, leadership experience and sociodemographic characteristics, are related to which ideal follower prototype one tends to hold. On the one hand, workers and students that are more socialized into North American norms, and (to some extent) older workers, tended to think of ideal followers as more proactive and capable as well as not possessing negative characteristics. On the other hand, workers who had managerial experience or identified as White (versus Asian), as well as workers and students who had mostly lived in Asia, tended to hold poorer views of ideal followers. Specifically, the workers tended to think of ideal followers as enthusiastic but potentially misguided (i.e., *Energetic but Overconfident)*, while the students tended to think of ideal followers as fairly low in positive characteristics and unremarkable in negative aspects (i.e., *Passive*).

Table 11. Three-Step Results for Leadership and Followership Attitudes (DU3STEP) of IFT Ideal Prototype Groups

	Study 1 (Students)		
Outcomes	*Passive*	*Dutiful and Productive*	Chi square
Leader Identity	4.02	4.13	0.86
Affective MTL	4.29	4.33	0.14
Non-calculative MTL	4.80	4.88	1.09
Socio-normative MTL	4.61	4.80	9.78**
Overall MTL	4.36	4.47	4.34*
Leader Self-Efficacy	4.80	4.99	5.51*
Leadership Aspirations	4.87	5.16	10.07**
Follower Identity	3.14	3.12	0.91

	Study 2 (Workers)			
Outcomes	*Passive* (A)	*Dutiful and Productive* (B)	*Energetic but Overconfident* (C)	Chi square
Leader Identity	4.27^{C}	4.47^{C}	5.95^{AB}	259.31***
Affective MTL	4.21	4.04	4.21	3.55
Non-calculative MTL	4.01^{BC}	4.42^{AC}	3.44^{AB}	178.55***
Socio-normative MTL	4.13^{BC}	4.61^{AC}	5.33^{AB}	149.20***
Overall MTL	4.09^{C}	4.08^{C}	4.72^{AB}	155.70***
Leader Self-Efficacy	4.17^{BC}	4.91^{AC}	4.43^{AB}	56.99***
Leadership Aspirations	4.02^{BC}	4.63^{A}	4.68^{A}	79.25***
Follower Identity	3.99^{BC}	3.38^{AC}	5.92^{AB}	489.64***

Note. All analyses were run utilizing the DU3STEP procedure in *Mplus*. The correlate values for each profile are means. Sample 1 (Students) $N = 846$; Sample 2 (Workers) $N = 495$. Subscripts indicate profiles that are significantly different at $p < .05$. MTL = *Motivation to Lead.*

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Ideal IFT Prototypes and Leadership and Followership Attitudes

Finally, this research examines whether profile membership for students (Sample 1) and

workers (Sample 2) is related to their leadership and followership attitudes (Table 11). For

students, results suggest that those who see ideal followers as *Dutiful and Productive* (versus

Passive) may have a greater willingness to take on leader roles and to believe themselves capable

of leading effectively. Specifically, those who belonged to the *Dutiful and Productive* (versus

Passive) follower profile group tended to have higher socio-normative MTL ($M = 4.80$ v. $M =$

4.61; $\chi^2 = 9.78$, $p = .002$), overall MTL ($M = 4.47$ v. $M = 4.36$; $\chi^2 = 4.34$, $p = .037$), leader self-

efficacy ($M = 4.99$ v. $M = 4.80$; $\chi^2 = 5.51$, $p = .019$), and leadership aspirations ($M = 5.16$ v. $M =$

4.87; $\chi^2 = 10.07$, $p = .002$).

For workers, those who held a *Passive* profile (versus *Energetic but Overconfident* or

Dutiful and Productive profiles) generally perceived leadership less (versus more) positively

(Table 11). Those who belonged to the *Energetic but Overconfident* profile tended to have the

highest socio-normative MTL (*Energetic but Overconfident M* = 5.33; *Passive M* = 4.13; *Dutiful*

and Productive M = 4.61; all comparisons $p < .05$), overall MTL (*Energetic but Overconfident*

M = 4.72 v. *Passive M* = 4.09, $p < .001$; v. *Dutiful and Productive M* = 4.08, $p < .001$), and

leader identity (*Energetic but Overconfident M* = 5.95 v. *Dutiful and Productive M* = 4.47, p

$< .001$; v. *Passive M* = 4.27, $p < .001$). Second, those who belonged to the *Dutiful and*

Productive profile tended to have the highest non-calculative MTL (*Dutiful and Productive M* =

4.42; *Passive M* = 4.01; *Energetic but Overconfident M* = 3.44; all comparisons $p < .05$) and

leadership self-efficacy (*Dutiful and Productive M* = 4.91; *Energetic but Overconfident M* =

4.43; *Passive M* = 4.17; all comparisons $p < .05$). In addition, workers who belonged to either the

Dutiful and Productive ($M = 4.63$, $p < .001$) and *Energetic but Overconfident* ($M = 4.68$, p

< .001) profiles tended to have equivalent and elevated leadership aspirations, compared with the *Passive* profile ($M = 4.02$).

For followership attitude, results were somewhat different. For students, profile membership was not related to follower identity (*Dutiful and Productive M = 3.12, Passive M = 3.14, p = .911*). For workers, those who belonged to the *Energetic but Overconfident* profile tended to have the highest follower identity (*Energetic but Overconfident M = 5.92; Dutiful and Productive M = 3.38; Passive M = 3.99*; all comparisons $p < .05$). These results suggest that espousing views of followers as being excitable yet misguided may be related to identifying as a follower oneself, or having a *positive* attitude towards followers.

Overall, these results suggest that workers who think of ideal followers as enthusiastic but imperfect were most likely to have positive attitudes towards leadership *and* followership. That is, they identify as leaders and followers, have high overall and socio-normative motivation to take on leader roles, and aspire to be leaders themselves. In addition, workers and students who think of ideal followers as proactive and capable, and less prone to counterproductive tendencies, were likely to only espouse positive leadership views; they had high motivation to take on leader roles, were more likely to believe themselves capable of leading effectively, and had high aspirations to be leaders. Finally, workers and students who think of ideal followers as passive and unremarkable were least likely to have positive leadership or followership attitudes.

Please see Table 12 for an overall summary of all findings for each research question.

Table 12. Summary of Findings for Each Research Question

Research Question	Summary of Findings
1: Do worker and student samples have different ideal follower prototypes?	• Student prototypes: *Dutiful and Productive, Passive* • Worker prototypes: *Dutiful and Productive, Passive, Energetic but Overconfident*
2: Is manager experience related to certain ideal follower prototypes among workers?	• Having managerial experience is related to the *Energetic but Overconfident* ideal follower prototype (compared with all other prototypes).
3: Is (a) gender, (b) race, (c) region where one spends the majority of one's life (i.e., North America or Asia), or (d) age related to specific ideal follower prototype views?	• Race: Workers who identified as White (versus Asian) were more likely to hold the *Energetic but Overconfident* prototype (compared with all other profiles). • Cultural Region: Workers and students who had mostly lived in North America (versus Asia) were more likely to hold the *Dutiful and Productive* prototype (compared with all other prototypes). • Age: Workers who were older were more likely to hold the *Dutiful and Productive* prototype than *Passive* (Samples 2 & 3) or *Energetic but Overconfident* (Sample 3) prototypes.
4: Are ideal follower prototypes related to leadership and followership attitudes?	• Students who held the *Dutiful and Productive* (versus *Passive*) prototype were more likely to have positive leadership attitudes (i.e., socio-normative motivation to lead, overall motivation to lead, leader self-efficacy, and leadership aspirations). • Workers who held the *Dutiful and Productive* prototype were more likely to hold positive leadership attitudes (i.e., non-calculative motivation to lead, leader self-efficacy, and leadership aspirations). • Workers who held the *Passive* prototype generally had the least positive leadership attitudes (i.e., motivation to lead, leader identity, leader self-efficacy, leadership aspirations) or followership attitude (i.e., follower identity). • Workers who held the *Energetic but Overconfident* prototype tended to have positive leadership attitudes (i.e., socio-normative motivation to lead, overall motivation to lead, leader identity, and leadership aspirations), and positive followership attitude (i.e., follower identity).

Discussion

Establishing an accurate understanding of how we view followership is highly important because of the ubiquity of the follower role within our hierarchically structured workplaces. Additionally, there is evidence that we default, evolutionarily, towards holding follower roles due to its advantages for our survival (e.g., satisfies need for belongingness, ensures access to resources, avoids risks of being a leader; Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019). As a result, many of us are likely concerned with how to be "good" followers in day-to-day life within our teams and may be highly reliant on our internal ideal follower scripts for how to follow others. Thus, we conducted the current study that more accurately models our ideal follower schemas as patterns to uncover whether different "ideal follower" scripts emerge and understand why we may differentially value, and engage in, certain behaviours as followers.

We found that two samples with different degrees of leadership role experience—i.e., students and workers—held differing ideal follower prototypes. On the one hand, students as a group (i.e., who, on average, should have lower leadership experience) endorsed largely dichotomous views of ideal followers—either *Dutiful and Productive* or *Passive*. On the other hand, workers endorsed one of three ideal follower prototypes: *Dutiful and Productive*, *Passive*, and *Energetic but Overconfident*. That is, workers were more likely to see ideal followers as "imperfect" in somewhat more complex terms: either as particularly lacking in proactive characteristics (e.g., industriousness, enthusiasm, and good citizenship) and being otherwise unremarkable (e.g., slightly prone to insubordination and incompetence), or as being enthusiastic, but overconfident in carrying out their intentions (i.e., highly conforming, insubordinate, and incompetent).

In addition, we sought to determine why different ideal follower prototypes may emerge by drawing on theoretical principles indicating that schemas arise due to socialization experiences. Specifically, we investigated whether leadership experience (i.e., work and managerial) and sociodemographic factors (i.e., race, cultural region, age, and gender) were related to ideal follower prototypes. In particular, people who had managerial experience (versus no managerial experience) were more likely to espouse the *Energetic but Overconfident* prototype view of ideal followers. That is, our results suggest that managerial experience could lead individuals to develop (mostly) negative underlying assumptions about ideal followers, which could drive them to view or treat their followers accordingly or interpret follower actions differently from their subordinates. Future research should further unpack this finding. Specifically, previous research suggests that experience is a multi-dimensional construct (i.e., amount/frequency and type of task; Quinones et al., 1995). Thus, it may be fruitful to explore what aspects of managerial experience (e.g., leading a struggling or poorly perform team, leading a newly formed vs. established team) are related to leaders' ideal follower prototypes— particularly flawed views of followers—and why (i.e., challenges that followers may have the most difficulty supporting their leaders through).

We also uncovered that individuals who had mostly lived in Asia, as opposed to North America, were more likely to hold negative views of followers (e.g., perceive followers as *Energetic but Overconfident* or *Passive*). This finding could potentially be explained by differences in power distance beliefs (i.e., degree to which one espouses a manager-employee relationship power imbalance). As people from Asia (versus North America) generally have *greater* power distance beliefs (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994), these individuals may be more likely to espouse power imbalance between managers and employees and to justify this belief with

views of ideal followers as needing guidance and reining in, or micro-management, to ensure results. We encourage future research to examine this possibility, including the fact that perhaps negative follower profiles such *Energetic but Overconfident* or *Passive* may be more prevalent or widely endorsed in high power distance contexts.

Lastly, we drew on role identity claiming and granting principles to examine whether ideal follower prototypes were linked to leadership and followership attitudes to understand how these prototypes may shape future career strivings. Specifically, we found that people who held *Passive* follower prototypes generally had less positive leader attitudes, whereas workers who held *Energetic but Overconfident* follower prototypes had more positive follower attitudes. These results suggest that those who think of ideal followers as *Passive* may be the least likely to strive for future responsibilities over others compared with those who think of ideal followers as *Dutiful and Productive* or *Energetic but Overconfident*. Additionally, those who endorse an *Energetic but Overconfident* prototype may be content with either remaining in their current job bracket or seeking further advancement. We speculate that holding this sub-par view of ideal followers may indicate an opportunistic, or instrumental, mindset towards being a leader or follower depending on the nature, or context, of the specific role. For example, individuals who hold this view might derogate others' abilities as followers and aim to be leaders to earn higher compensation or status, or these individuals may opt to be followers if they observe that followers, even poor ones, can reap rewards with little effort or social graces.

Theoretical Implications

First, using a person-focused approach that models our *gestalt* views of followers, we find that two or three different ideal follower patterns (i.e., *Dutiful and Productive*, *Passive*, or *Energetic but Overconfident*) emerge for student and worker samples, respectively. This is

contrary to previous typologies suggesting that people hold homogeneous views of ideal followers (e.g., as "star followers"; Kelley, 2008, p. 8), and is consistent with other research suggesting that people may espouse different views of how followers "should" be (e.g., Carsten et al., 2010). That people may hold "darker" views of ideal followers is not entirely surprising, given previous theorizing about destructive forms of followership that pair with and accentuate destructive leadership (i.e., Thoroughgood et al., 2012). This finding would not have been revealed using a variable-focused approach, which only suggests that people tend to espouse prototypical traits (versus anti-prototypical traits) when thinking about ideal followers (Van Quaquebeke et al., 2014). Thus, going forward, IFT researchers might complement the variable-focused approach with the person-focused approach to gain a more comprehensive understanding of ideal IFT prototypes, or they may strategically use either approach depending on the nature of their research question. For example, researchers may opt to use the variable-focused approach when they do not expect relationships between IFT traits to vary much and person-oriented analytical approaches when they expect there to be distinct subgroups within their dataset.

Second, drawing on previous theorizing on schema development and examining how these prototypes are related to various types of socialization experiences (e.g., Hunt et al., 1990), the current study contributes understanding into why we may hold certain ideal follower prototypes. Based on our results, it seems that one's ideal follower prototype may be more strongly shaped by *role* norms that we conform to as determined by our workplace position and cultural upbringing, versus *social group* norms that we conform to as determined by our "classification" on gender, race, or generation factors. This makes sense if we consider the strength of these respective norms across situations. Compared with social group norms, norms

governing interactions between managers and their employees, as well as between members of a

particular culture, might be easier to observe, either because they are more tightly scripted (e.g.,

interactions between leaders and followers; Gioia & Poole, 1984) or because they are more

pervasive (e.g., culture; Gelfand & Jackson, 2016). Conversely, compared with role norms,

social group norms may be somewhat fuzzier in terms of how people can best adhere to them

across situations (e.g., gender norms; Cislaghi & Heise, 2020). That is, the performativity of

one's physical social group characteristics may be less or more relevant depending on the nature

of one's context, thus blurring the visibility of a particular norm. For example, expectations for

acting agentically as a man may be relaxed if he is seen as a possible friend, rather than as a

breadwinner (e.g., Quayle et al., 2017). Thus, ideal follower prototypes, as products of direct

experience with followers and observational learning, may be more affected by socialization

experiences that are governed by particularly salient norms.

Our research also reveals that IFT prototypes, and possibly other implicit theories, may

be affected by socialization experiences in adulthood, which has not been previously shown. Our

findings are thus consistent with previous theorizing by scholars that IFTs, while largely stable

due to one's formative experiences (Epitropaki et al., 2013; Antonakis & Delgas, 2009), have

elements of dynamism and can still shift to account for one's experiences (Shondrick and Lord,

2010; Shondrick et al., 2010). In particular, we discovered that a small segment of people who

view ideal followers quite negatively (i.e., *Energetic but Overconfident*) tend to have managerial

experience. Thus, our results suggest that the experience of leading other individuals may be a

cognitively disruptive event that results in *negative* changes to one's follower schema. This may

be because employees who become managers experience a major role transition that involves a

high pressure to learn and perform new skills and abilities quickly (Ashforth, 2001), which are

often not acquired prior to promotion (e.g., training and promoting others, coaching others, resolving interpersonal problems; Fletcher & French, 2021). Thus, if managers tend to lack proper training, despite being highly skilled employees, these individuals may initially fail to encourage, or bring out the best, in their followers and thus experience disillusionment with poorly performing followers (e.g., stress or anger responses; Shen et al., 2021; Liang et al., 2016). Therefore, more research attention may be warranted towards understanding and, possibly improving, new manager experiences of leading others in an effort to enhance positive follower views.

Third, we draw on role identity claiming and granting principles to explore the potential ramifications of endorsing different ideal follower prototypes on our self-attitudes, specifically leadership and followership attitudes. Demonstrating this link tentatively suggests that these prototypes could influence how we make decisions around seeking further career advancement or greater responsibility over others. That is, schemas may help an individual navigate cues from others about the success of one's interpersonal "negotiation" for a particular role. If so, these schemas could also play an influential role in how one perceives fit, or compatibility, with one's environment, particularly *interpersonal* situations. Currently, the organizational fit literature only conceptualizes fit as a static entity between one's *organization* and oneself (e.g., how well the characteristics of one's workplace match with an individual's traits; van Vianen, 2018), rather than as a dynamic and situationally-based one (e.g., the extent to which others react in anticipated ways towards one's behaviours during interpersonal interactions). However, this could be an important gap to fill, as people may subjectively assess, and accrue information about, their "fit" with their environments and workplaces through interpersonal interactions, aided by their schemas about how they (and others) should act. Thus, further study of follower

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schemas could contribute preliminary understanding into how people perceive fit within *dynamic and interpersonal* situations.

Finally, this research helps to establish what our holistic views about *good,* or *ideal*, followers are, and that these prototypes differ from our *typical* follower prototypes. In particular, our results suggest that most individuals tend to hold positive holistic views of ideal followers (e.g., *Dutiful and Productive*), which contrasts with previous research indicating that most people tend to view typical followers as flawed (e.g., *Alienated* or *Negative;* Coyle & Foti, 2021). Thus, when taken together with previous research on typical follower prototypes (Coyle & Foti, 2021), the current study underscores the importance of recognizing that people may differentiate between at least two different follower prototypes (e.g., ideal versus typical). These findings are consistent with previous implicit theory research using a variable-centered approach, which found that people associate different traits with different types of leaders (e.g., tend to associate anti-prototypical traits more with typical, versus ideal, leaders; van Quaquebeke et al., 2014).

Practical Implications

Our results indicate that one's managerial experiences and cultural region are related to one's ideal follower views and may be consequential in shaping how different groups of people view ideal followers and interpret their actions. Therefore, the current research highlights the importance of organizational awareness that different groups of people (e.g., leaders and followers) may have different ideas about what good followers are like and thus interpret the same follower actions differently. Organizations looking to curtail possible misunderstandings between employees based on these differing interpretations of follower actions could offer educational sessions to raise employee awareness of their ideal follower "biases" and how such biases could affect the nature of one's workplace interactions (e.g., conflict). In addition, given

the multi-national span of many organizations, such organizations should look to facilitate discussion among their work teams, particularly cross-cultural ones, around employee expectations for how ideal followers should perform. By encouraging their employees to discuss and come to an agreement about what behaviours are expected of them, these organizations could reduce potential misinterpretation of employee behaviours and thus help preserve sense of trust between employees.

In addition, we found that workers who had managerial experience tended to view good followers as *Energetic but Overconfident*. As IFT theorizing suggests that people use their ideal schemas as scripts or to interpret others' actions, leaders who expect and assume that their followers will be difficult to manage may act accordingly towards these followers, negatively influencing follower performance (e.g., Golem effect; Leung & Sy, 2018). Thus, organizational interventions may be warranted in cultivating positive ideal follower attitudes *among leaders*, in particular. To address this, organizational interventions may take the form of preventative measures, such as improving leader preparedness in the form of leader onboarding, support, or training. Organizations could also offer shadow coaching (i.e., coaches who accompany leaders to their workplace for coaching) to help leaders identify and correct their negative follower beliefs on the job (e.g., Roelofs, 2019).

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this research offers some insights, it also has some limitations. First, we utilized cross-sectional data, given the largely exploratory aim of this study; therefore, we cannot make claims about causality. Thus, although we argue that ideal IFT prototypes is related to one's leadership and followership attitudes via identity claiming and granting principles, our research does not test this mechanism explicitly. Rather, attitudes about leaders and followers could also

reciprocally affect one's IFT prototypes (Lord et al., 2001; Shondrick & Lord, 2010). Future studies could use alternative research methodologies, such as time-separated measures or longitudinal designs, to capture how ideal IFT prototypes and leader and follower attitudes affect each other across snapshots in time to study the directionality of this influence.

Second, again due to the correlational nature of the data, the results from this study largely presume that individuals' IFTs are stable, between-person entities. However, future research could focus on identifying dynamic aspects of our holistic IFTs to understand whether people hold different ideal IFT prototypes according to different contexts or situations (Lord et al., 2001). For example, previous research has found that mood is related to differences in how people view followers, with positive and negative affect being related to positive and negative views of followers, respectively (Lord et al., 2020). Therefore, future research could study dynamic change in ideal follower prototypes using experimental designs or daily diary studies to understand whether certain factors (e.g., one's work performance, mood, characteristics of follower) affect *which* ideal follower prototype gets activated.

Third, this research sought to use a person-centered approach, LPA, to study *holistic* IFTs or the configuration of associations that people make between traits. However, this method, while useful for studying sub-groups of people who hold different pattern views of ideal follower prototypes, cannot test *all* aspects of ideal IFTs as patterns (i.e., as networks consisting of IFT traits as nodes and weighted positive or negative connections between nodes; Lord et al., 2001). In particular, using the LPA methodology alone is insufficient for understanding the specific nature of connections that people make between different follower traits (e.g., positive and negative connections, connection weights). Thus, future research could make use of other person-centered analytical methods that examine our ideal IFT prototypes as connectionist

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models. For example, utilizing a network analysis approach to studying IFTs may help elucidate the specific way in which traits are connected within an individual (e.g., Bataille & Vough, 2022). This method could help identify which traits are most central to an individuals' ideal IFT prototype. Such information could provide insight into which trait may be most integrated and therefore crucial (Costantini et al., 2015) for IFT network functioning.

Fourth, although this research provides some insight into people's *ideal follower* prototypes, future research may benefit from investigating these views in conjunction with *ideal leader* prototypes. This may be helpful for understanding why people see ideal followers as flawed (e.g., *Passive, Energetic but Overconfident*), which could be because people perceive them as serving a particular purpose, such as complementing certain types of leaders. For example, people may hold a *Passive* ideal follower prototype if they hold views of leaders as energetic, passionate and able to motivate lackadaisical followers (e.g., charismatic leaders; Conger & Kanungo, 1987), or they may hold an *Energetic but Overconfident* ideal follower prototype if they hold views of leaders as enforcers who can keep order and misguided followers in line (e.g., authoritarian leaders; Harms et al., 2018). Thus, it is possible that certain ideal leader prototypes are related to certain ideal follower prototypes. Moreover, accounting for both prototypes together may be more predictive of one's outcomes, such as one's likelihood of adopting leader or follower roles in the future.

Fifth, we used several variables (e.g., cultural region, sociodemographic characteristics, leadership experience) that may be proxies for other important constructs. Firstly, participant cultural region was assessed as a proxy for cultural values (i.e., power distance and individualism/collectivism) that may affect follower prototype views. Although previous research suggests that cultural region may be a good proxy variable for these cultural values

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(e.g., Hofstede, 2011), future studies could measure power distance and individualism/collectivism specifically and examine relationships between these attitudes and ideal follower prototype views. As well, we assessed participant gender and race by asking them to indicate which sociodemographic group(s) they belonged to. However, individuals may vary in how much they *identify* with these groups (i.e., extent to which one's gender or racial group is an important aspect of one's sense of self; e.g., Wilson & Liu, 2003; Morrison & Ybarra, 2008), which, in turn, may affect how much they observe or adhere to social norms governing their sociodemographic group. Thus, future studies could investigate the extent to which one identifies with one's race or gender is related to espousing particular ideal follower prototypes. Lastly, while we draw on organizational role theory to argue that students and workers likely differ in their level of leadership experience given the types of duties and responsibilities that workers and leaders may be obligated to fulfill within an organizational setting, students may still acquire leadership experience in more informal environments (i.e., as a volunteer coach for a school team) or through short-term work experiences (e.g., internships). Thus, it may be helpful to examine and compare how differences in *amount* or *type* of leadership experiences may affect ideal follower prototypes in future research.

Finally, future research could more conclusively examine when we tend to rely on ideal (versus typical) follower prototypes. Previous research on other implicit theories—ILTs—has found that one's ideal prototypes tend to share similarities with one's self-image (e.g., Foti et al., 2012; Bray et al., 2014), suggesting that individuals may be more likely to act out, or follow, their *ideal* (versus *typical*) follower scripts. Thus, for example, it is possible that people may tend towards being prosocial when they themselves are followers (e.g., dutiful and productive), even if they do not hold positive ideas about *typical* followers, or how followers generally are.

Another possibility is that people may be more likely to rely on average or typical prototypes when they have few or no expectations for the target individual to act in a particular way (e.g., the individual is not one's own follower; van Quaquebeke et al., 2014). Such understanding about whether and when people rely on certain prototypes may provide more precise insight into how people regulate their own actions (e.g., whether they aim to do the bare minimum versus be the best followers), or how they assess others' capacity and potential as followers.

Conclusion

Understanding ideal follower prototypes may be critical for understanding how we likely assess others and guide ourselves as followers and reveal diverging standards across groups for how to be a "good" follower in work and life. The current study uses LPA, a method aligned with IFT theorizing that ideal follower prototypes occur as patterns within individuals, to reveal that we hold different ideal follower prototypes. We find that different groups hold certain views on how good followers "should" behave based on differences in socialization, specifically leadership and cultural region experience. In turn, these prototypes were related to one's leadership and followership attitudes, suggesting that one's ideal follower expectations could have implications for taking leadership (or followership) roles in the future. Thus, this study represents an important initial step towards understanding how and why we perceive ideal followers in certain ways, while underscoring the need for further research into the implications of having different scripts among us for following "well".

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUDING REMARKS

Although IFTs exert a powerful influence on our perceptions of others, particularly affecting leader-follower relationships in the workplace, we currently have little understanding about how IFTs arise or come to be formed (Lord et al., 2020; Epitropaki et al., 2013). Thus, across two essays, I sought to apply various theoretical frameworks and different analytical approaches to generate insights about what factors are related, and potentially give rise, to these important cognitive structures. In Essay 1, I drew on self-construal theory (Johnson et al., 2006) and trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) to understand how one's personal traits, such as trait self-construals, are related to one's IFTs, as well as whether certain contexts (e.g., performance pressure and supervisor support) interact with these personal traits to affect IFTs. In Essay 2, I drew on theorizing about IFTs and schema development (Shondrick et al., 2010; Shondrick & Lord, 2010) while using a person-centred approach to understand whether groups hold different *ideal follower prototypes* based on differences in socialization, particularly leadership- and sociodemographic-related experiences. Essay 2 also draws on role identity theorizing, and identity granting and claiming principles (Hogg et al., 1995; DeRue & Ashford, 2010), to offer additional insight into how IFTs are related to people's leader and follower attitudes, thereby shining a light on how holding certain IFT prototypes could potentially predispose one to assume certain roles in life and work. Together, Essays 1 and 2 offer complementary investigations into how different types of factors (e.g., personality traits, workplace context, socialization) are related to IFTs, therefore contributing different insights into what factors shape our IFT schemas.

Essay 1 and Essay 2 offer, on the surface, somewhat differing insights about what types of factors influence one's IFTs. On the one hand, Essay 1 suggests that IFTs may be

predominantly influenced by stable factors, and the nature of this relationship may be strengthened or diminished depending on workplace context. This is because I found that one's traits, particularly one's self-construal, are robustly related to one's IFTs, with inconsistent evidence of malleability. Specifically, although the strength of the relationship between independent self-construal and anti-prototypical IFTs was found to depend on context (i.e., performance pressure), the relationship between interdependent self-construal and prototypical IFTs did not (at least not based upon supervisor support). On the other hand, Essay 2 indicates that people with differing socialization experiences (e.g., managerial and cultural region experiences among workers) held *different* ideal follower prototypes. Although we did not test whether socialization experiences *affects* one's ideal follower prototypes, comparing the different ideal follower prototypes held by students and workers side-by-side, we raise the possibility for IFTs to shift over time due to external factors.

These conclusions about the nature of IFTs may differ in part because of the methodological approach I took to analyzing relationships between IFTs and other variables between the two essays. In Part 1, I used a variable-focused approach that examined how specific factors were related to specific facets of one's IFTs (i.e., prototypical versus anti-prototypical follower prototypes), whereas in Part 2, I used a person-focused approach that focused on how specific factors were related to different IFT *pattern* views of followers. The latter approach, which models patterns of relationships between IFTs *within* individuals, as well as relationships between these specific patterns and antecedents, may be more sensitive to dynamic influence than the former approach, which only investigates the *average* strength of relationships between particular factors and IFTs. Therefore, future work could apply both methods to the same sample to compare the insights generated about which types of correlates are related to IFTs.

Although this investigation into different types of IFT correlates contributes insight into what factors may affect IFTs, future research could take this investigation further by investigating how one's developmental and life experiences could *cause* IFT change. Specifically, more research could use longitudinal study designs to study individuals across their lifespans and determine what life factors or experiences affect IFTs both across and within individuals (e.g., parenting, culture, organizational influence, job change, supervisor expectations). This research design could also be useful for investigating whether certain types of personal traits may predispose some individuals to change their follower views more than others (e.g., openness to experience). By increasing insight into how our follower perceptions change across time, and which individuals may be more likely to change, we improve understanding of what factors influence largely pervasive cognitive structures such as IFTs. Such understanding could then generate practical guidance for organizations around designing interventions to successfully mitigate or change workers' IFTs, particularly in terms of which factors should be altered within these interventions (e.g., organizational culture or leadership style) and how to tailor interventions depending on how flexibly workers' IFTs change.

In sum, the over-arching aim of this dissertation was to examine what factors are related to our IFTs to get a better understanding about how our follower views come to be. Essay 1 and Essay 2 address this aim using two different approaches to show that key factors—personal traits and socialization experiences—are related to our follower views and may play key roles in forming these views.

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Appendix A (Part 1 Supplemental Materials)

Typical versus Ideal IFTs Moderation Analyses

Research indicates that people can either think of typical (i.e., the average member, or central tendency, of followers generally) versus ideal (i.e., the exemplary member, or how followers should be) followers (Junker & van Dick, 2014). Specifically, our results indicate that, on average, people tended to think of ideal followers more positively than typical followers (i.e., as having increased prototypical traits and decreased anti-prototypical traits). Thus, we controlled for this factor in our analyses in-text.

However, we also sought to understand whether relationships between self-construal and implicit followership theories (IFTs) generalized or were robust to whether people were thinking of typical versus ideal followers. Thus, we performed additional analyses to determine if the type of follower that people thought of (i.e., ideal or typical) influenced our results (i.e., relationships between self-construal and implicit followership theories). That is, we performed additional hierarchical regression analyses in Samples A and B to determine: a) whether relationships between self-construal traits and implicit followership theories (IFTs) were moderated by the type of IFT (i.e., typical versus ideal; Table S1), b) whether relationships between self-construal traits and implicit followership theories (IFTs) as moderated by performance pressure differed by type of IFT (Sample B, Table S2), and c) whether relationships between self-construal traits and implicit followership theories as moderated by supervisor support differed by type of IFT (Sample B, Table S3).

We only uncover one significant moderating effect of condition in Sample B. Specifically, a three-way interaction between collective identity, performance pressure, and

condition on prototypical IFTs ($B = 0.67$, $SE = 0.29$, $t(278) = 2.29$, $p < .05$, 95% CI = [0.09, 1.25]; see Figure 1). Simple slope analysis revealed that, for the typical follower condition, collective identity was not related to prototypical follower views at a higher level of performance pressure (i.e., +1 SD; $B = 0.52$, $t(278) = 1.84$, $p = .07$) and positively related to prototypical follower views at a lower level of performance pressure (i.e., -1 SD; $B = 0.72$, $t(278) = 2.59$, $p < .05$); however, these simple slopes did not significantly differ ($B_{diff} = -0.21$, $t(278) = -0.50$, $p = .62$, 95% CI [-1.03, 0.61]), suggesting that typical followers are perceived similarly across higher levels of collective self-construal and performance pressure. On the other hand, for the ideal follower condition, collective identity was significantly related to prototypical follower views at a higher level of performance pressure (+1 SD; $B = 0.88$, $t(278) = 3.06$, $p < .01$), but was unrelated to prototypical follower views at lower levels of performance pressure (-1 SD; $B = -0.28$, $t(278) = -0.85$, $p = .40$). Further, these simple slopes were significantly different from one another (i.e., $B_{diff} = 1.15$, $t(278) = 2.75$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [0.33, 1.97]). This pattern of results generally indicates that although collective self-construal appears to generally be positively related to positive follower views, this does not appear to hold true in the case when people are thinking of ideal followers under situations where performance pressure is lower.

In sum, these results suggest that people's differentiated views of followers tended to affect their positive views of followers only under very specific conditions (i.e., under the interaction of performance pressure and collective self-construal). Thus, we conclude that the relationships between self-construal and IFTs are largely robust to type of follower category and report these findings here as opposed to the main study for interested readers.

Table S1

Relationships Between Self-Construals and Implicit Followership Theories, Moderated by Condition

	Prototypical IFT						Anti-prototypical IFT					
	Step 1			Step 2			Step 1			Step 2		
	B	*SE*	*95% CI*	*B*	*SE*	*95% CI*	*B*	*SE*	*95% CI*	*B*	*SE*	*95% CI*
Students *(N = 374)*												
Constant	6.27**	0.08	[6.12, 6.43]	6.28**	0.08	[6.12 ,6.43]	4.04**	0.09	[3.87, 4.21]	4.04**	0.09	[3.87, 4.22]
Condition	1.01**	0.11	[0.78, 1.23]	1.01**	0.11	[0.78, 1.23]	-0.68**	0.13	[-0.93, -0.44]	-0.68**	0.13	[-0.93, -0.44]
Independent SC	0.01	0.07	[-0.13, 0.15]	0.05	0.10	[-0.14, 0.24]	0.16*	0.08	[0.01, 0.31]	0.05	0.11	[-0.16, 0.26]
Relational SC	0.23	0.13	[-0.03, 0.49]	-0.10	0.19	[-0.47, 0.27]	-0.29*	0.14	[-0.57, -0.01]	-0.25	0.21	[-0.65, 0.16]
Collective SC	0.41**	0.13	[0.15, 0.67]	0.42*	0.20	[0.03, 0.82]	-0.12	0.15	[-0.41, 0.16]	0.02	0.22	[-0.42, 0.45]
Independent SC X Condition				-0.07	0.14	[-0.35, 0.21]				0.23	0.16	[-0.08, 0.54]
Relational SC X Condition				0.63*	0.26	[0.11, 1.14]				-0.05	0.29	[-0.61, 0.52]
Collective SC X Condition				-0.07	0.27	[-0.59, 0.46]				-0.27	0.29	[-0.85, 0.31]
R²	0.22**			0.23**			0.11**			0.11**		
ΔR²				0.02						0.01		
Workers *(N = 295)*												
Constant	6.14**	0.10	[5.94, 6.34]	6.14**	0.10	[5.94, 6.34]	4.46**	0.13	[4.22, 4.71]	4.46**	0.13	[4.21, 4.71]
Condition	1.03**	0.13	[0.77, 1.29]	1.02**	0.13	[0.77, 1.28]	-0.96**	0.16	[-1.28, -0.65]	-0.96**	0.16	[-1.28, -0.64]
Supervisory Role	0.22	0.15	[-0.08, 0.52]	0.22	0.16	[-0.09, 0.52]	0.19	0.19	[-0.19, 0.56]	0.20	0.19	[-0.18, 0.58]
Independent SC	0.16*	0.08	[0.01, 0.32]	0.25*	0.11	[0.04, 0.46]	0.35**	0.10	[0.17, 0.54]	0.28**	0.13	[0.02, 0.54]
Relational SC	0.16	0.15	[-0.15, 0.46]	0.02	0.21	[-0.39, 0.42]	0.05	0.19	[-0.32, 0.42]	-0.07	0.25	[-0.57, 0.43]
Collective SC	0.47**	0.14	[0.18, 0.75]	0.55**	0.19	[0.17, 0.92]	-0.12	0.18	[-0.47, 0.23]	0.05	0.23	[-0.41, 0.51]
Independent SC X Condition				-0.16	0.15	[-0.46, 0.14]				0.15	0.19	[-0.22, 0.51]
Relational SC X Condition				0.31	0.31	[-0.30, 0.92]				0.31	0.38	[-0.44, 1.06]
Collective SC X Condition				-0.20	0.29	[-0.77, 0.37]				-0.40	0.36	[-1.10, 0.30]

R^2	0.26**	0.26**	0.16**	0.16**
ΔR^2		0.00		0.00

Note. IFT = *implicit followership theory*. SC = *self-construal*. Condition: *0 = typical follower* and *1 = ideal follower*. Supervisory

Role: *0 = non-supervisory role* and *1 = supervisory role*.

*p < .05, **p < .01.

Table S2

Interactions Between Self-Construal, Condition and Performance Pressure on Implicit Followership Theories (Sample B)

	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3		
	B	*SE*	*95% CI*	*B*	*SE*	*95% CI*	*B*	*SE*	*95% CI*
Prototypical IFT									
Constant	6.17**	0.10	[5.97, 6.37]	6.17**	0.10	[5.97, 6.37]	6.14**	0.10	[5.94, 6.34]
Condition	1.02**	0.13	[0.76, 1.28]	0.99**	0.13	[0.73, 1.25]	0.97**	0.13	[0.71, 1.23]
Supervisory Role	0.13	0.16	[-0.18, 0.44]	0.05	0.16	[-0.26, 0.37]	0.09	0.16	[-0.22, 0.40]
Independent SC	0.13	0.08	[-0.03, 0.28]	0.25*	0.11	[0.04, 0.46]	0.22*	0.11	[0.01, 0.43]
Relational SC	0.11	0.15	[-0.19, 0.42]	-0.04	0.20	[-0.44, 0.36]	0.02	0.20	[-0.38, 0.41]
Collective SC	0.49**	0.14	[0.21, 0.77]	0.63**	0.19	[0.26, 1.00]	0.62**	0.19	[0.25, 0.99]
Pressure	0.17*	0.07	[0.04, 0.31]	0.17	0.09	[-0.01, 0.36]	0.24*	0.10	[0.05, 0.43]
Independent SC X Pressure				0.16*	0.08	[0.01, 0.30]	0.14	0.09	[-0.04, 0.33]
Relational SC X Pressure				-0.03	0.17	[-0.37, 0.31]	-0.27	0.28	[-0.82, 0.27]
Collective SC X Pressure				0.21	0.15	[-0.08, 0.50]	-0.11	0.21	[-0.52, 0.30]
Independent SC X Condition				-0.23	0.16	[-0.54, 0.08]	-0.24	0.15	[-0.54, 0.07]
Relational SC X Condition				0.38	0.31	[-0.23, 1.00]	0.45	0.31	[-0.16, 1.06]
Collective SC X Condition				-0.31	0.29	[-0.88, 0.26]	-0.31	0.29	[-0.87, 0.26]
Condition X Pressure				-0.03	0.14	[-0.30, 0.24]	-0.11	0.14	[-0.37, 0.16]
Independent SC X Condition X Pressure							0.03	0.15	[-0.27, 0.32]
Relational SC X Condition X Pressure							0.29	0.36	[-0.41, 0.99]
Collective SC X Condition X Pressure							0.67*	0.29	[0.09, 1.25]
R^2	0.27**			0.30**			0.33**		
ΔR^2				0.03			0.03**		
Anti-prototypical IFT									
Constant	4.50**	0.13	[4.25, 4.75]	4.47	0.13	[4.22, 4.71]	4.50**	0.13	[4.26, 4.75]

Condition	-0.98**	0.16	[-1.29, -0.66]	-0.91**	0.16	[-1.23, -0.60]	-0.94**	0.17	[-1.27, -0.62]
Supervisory Role	0.08	0.19	[-0.30, 0.47]	0.02	0.20	[-0.36, 0.41]	-0.02	0.20	[-0.40, 0.37]
Independent SC	0.31**	0.10	[0.12, 0.51]	0.27*	0.13	[0.01, 0.53]	0.30*	0.13	[0.04, 0.56]
Relational SC	0.00	0.19	[-0.37, 0.37]	-0.08	0.25	[-0.57, 0.41]	-0.08	0.25	[-0.57, 0.41]
Collective SC	-0.09	0.18	[-0.44, 0.26]	0.14	0.23	[-0.31, 0.60]	0.15	0.23	[-0.30, 0.61]
Pressure	0.19*	0.08	[0.02, 0.36]	0.25*	0.12	[0.02, 0.48]	0.24*	0.12	[0.01, 0.48]
Independent SC X Pressure				0.19*	0.09	[0.01, 0.38]	0.12	0.12	[-0.11, 0.35]
Relational SC X Pressure				-0.38	0.21	[-0.80, 0.03]	-0.64	0.34	[-1.31, 0.04]
Collective SC X Pressure				-0.04	0.18	[-0.40, 0.32]	0.39	0.26	[-0.12, 0.90]
Independent SC X Condition				0.08	0.19	[-0.30, 0.50]	0.08	0.19	[-0.30, 0.45]
Relational SC X Condition				0.18	0.38	[-0.58, 0.94]	0.09	0.38	[-0.66, 0.85]
Collective SC X Condition				-0.62	0.35	[-1.32, 0.08]	-0.61	0.36	[-1.31, 0.09]
Condition X Pressure				-0.04	0.17	[-0.37, 0.29]	-0.02	0.17	[-0.35, 0.31]
Independent SC X Condition X Pressure							0.17	0.19	[-0.20, 0.54]
Relational SC X Condition X Pressure							0.49	0.44	[-0.38, 1.36]
Collective SC X Condition X Pressure							-0.85*	0.37	[-1.57, -0.13]
R^2	0.17**			0.21**			0.23**		
ΔR^2				0.04			0.02		

Note. N = 294-295. *IFT = implicit followership theory. SC = self-construal. Pressure = performance pressure.* Condition: *0 = typical follower* and *1 = ideal follower.* Supervisory Role: *0 = non-supervisory role* and *1 = supervisory role.*

p < .05, ***p* < .01.

Table S3

Interactions Between Self-Construal, Condition and Supervisor Support on Implicit Followership Theories (Sample B)

	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3		
	B	*SE*	*95% CI*	*B*	*SE*	*95% CI*	*B*	*SE*	*95% CI*
Prototypical IFT									
Constant	6.12**	0.10	[5.92, 6.32]	6.11**	0.10	[5.90, 6.31]	6.10**	0.11	[5.90, 6.31]
Condition	1.05**	0.13	[0.79, 1.30]	1.05**	0.13	[0.79, 1.31]	1.05**	0.13	[0.78, 1.31]
Supervisory Role	0.24	0.15	[-0.06, 0.55]	0.26	0.16	[-0.04, 0.57]	0.27	0.16	[-0.04, 0.58]
Independent SC	0.15	0.08	[-0.01, 0.30]	0.20	0.11	[-0.02, 0.41]	0.19	0.11	[-0.02, 0.41]
Relational SC	0.18	0.15	[-0.12, 0.48]	0.06	0.21	[-0.36, 0.47]	0.08	0.22	[-0.34, 0.51]
Collective SC	0.46**	0.14	[0.18, 0.75]	0.50**	0.19	[0.12, 0.87]	0.49*	0.19	[0.12, 0.87]
Support	0.08*	0.04	[0.00, 0.15]	0.10	0.06	[-0.01, 0.21]	0.10	0.06	[-0.01, 0.22]
Independent SC X Support				0.08	0.04	[-0.01, 0.16]	0.05	0.06	[-0.08, 0.17]
Relational SC X Support				0.00	0.10	[-0.19, 0.19]	-0.09	0.14	[-0.37, 0.18]
Collective SC X Support				0.13	0.08	[-0.03, 0.29]	0.20	0.12	[-0.03, 0.43]
Independent SC X Condition				-0.10	0.15	[-0.40, 0.20]	-0.09	0.15	[-0.39, 0.21]
Relational SC X Condition				0.31	0.31	[-0.31, 0.92]	0.29	0.32	[-0.34, 0.92]
Collective SC X Condition				-0.17	0.29	[-0.74, 0.39]	-0.17	0.29	[-0.74, 0.40]
Condition X Support				-0.07	0.08	[-0.22, 0.08]	-0.08	0.08	[-0.24, 0.08]
Independent SC X Condition X Support							0.06	0.09	[-0.12, 0.23]
Relational SC X Condition X Support							0.18	0.20	[-0.20, 0.57]
Collective SC X Condition X Support							-0.14	0.17	[-0.47, 0.19]
R^2	0.27**			0.29**			0.30**		
ΔR^2				0.02			0		
Anti-prototypical IFT									
Constant	4.46**	0.13	[4.21, 4.71]	4.43**	0.13	[4.18, 4.68]	4.44**	0.13	[4.18, 4.69]

	b	SE	95% CI	b	SE	95% CI	b	SE	95% CI
Condition	-0.96**	0.16	[-1.28, -0.64]	-0.95**	0.16	[-1.27, -0.62]	-0.95**	0.17	[-1.28, -0.62]
Supervisory Role	0.18	0.19	[-0.19, 0.56]	0.21	0.19	[-0.17, 0.59]	0.20	0.20	[-0.18, 0.59]
Independent SC	0.36**	0.10	[0.16, 0.55]	0.26	0.14	[0.00, 0.53]	0.26	0.14	[0.00, 0.53]
Relational SC	0.05	0.19	[-0.33, 0.42]	-0.05	0.26	[-0.56, 0.47]	-0.08	0.27	[-0.62, 0.45]
Collective SC	-0.12	0.18	[-0.47, 0.23]	0.02	0.24	[-0.45, 0.49]	0.02	0.24	[-0.45, 0.49]
Support	0	0.05	[-0.01, 0.09]	0.04	0.07	[-0.10, 0.18]	0.03	0.07	[-0.11, 0.18]
Independent SC X Support				0.09	0.06	[-0.02, 0.20]	0.12	0.08	[-0.03, 0.28]
Relational SC X Support				-0.02	0.12	[-0.25, 0.22]	0.08	0.18	[-0.27, 0.43]
Collective SC X Support				0.04	0.10	[-0.16, 0.24]	0.01	0.15	[-0.28, 0.30]
Independent SC X Condition				0.19	0.19	[-0.18, 0.56]	0.18	0.19	[-0.20, 0.55]
Relational SC X Condition				0.33	0.39	[-0.44, 1.09]	0.35	0.40	[-0.43, 1.13]
Collective SC X Condition				-0.40	0.36	[-1.11, 0.30]	-0.39	0.36	[-1.10, 0.32]
Condition X Support				-0.08	0.09	[-0.26, 0.11]	-0.06	0.10	[-0.26, 0.14]
Independent SC X Condition X Support							-0.07	0.11	[-0.29, 0.15]
Relational SC X Condition X Support							-0.19	0.24	[-0.67, 0.29]
Collective SC X Condition X Support							0.07	0.21	[-0.34, 0.48]
R^2	0.16**			0.17**			0.18**		
ΔR^2				0.02			0		

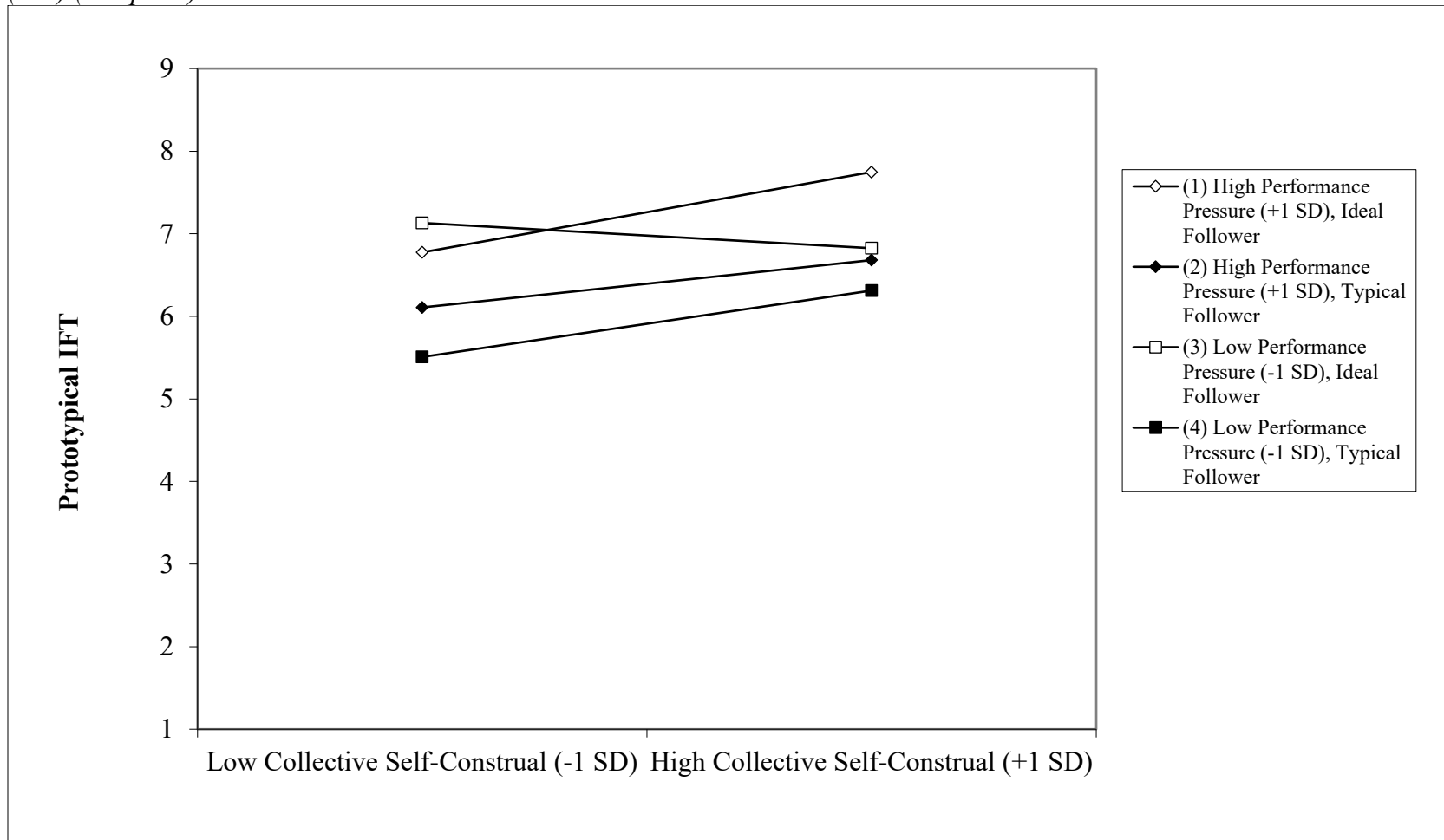Note. N = 294-295. IFT = implicit followership theory. SC = self-construal. Support = supervisor support. Condition: 0 = typical follower and 1 = ideal follower. Supervisory Role: 0 = non-supervisory role and 1 = supervisory role.
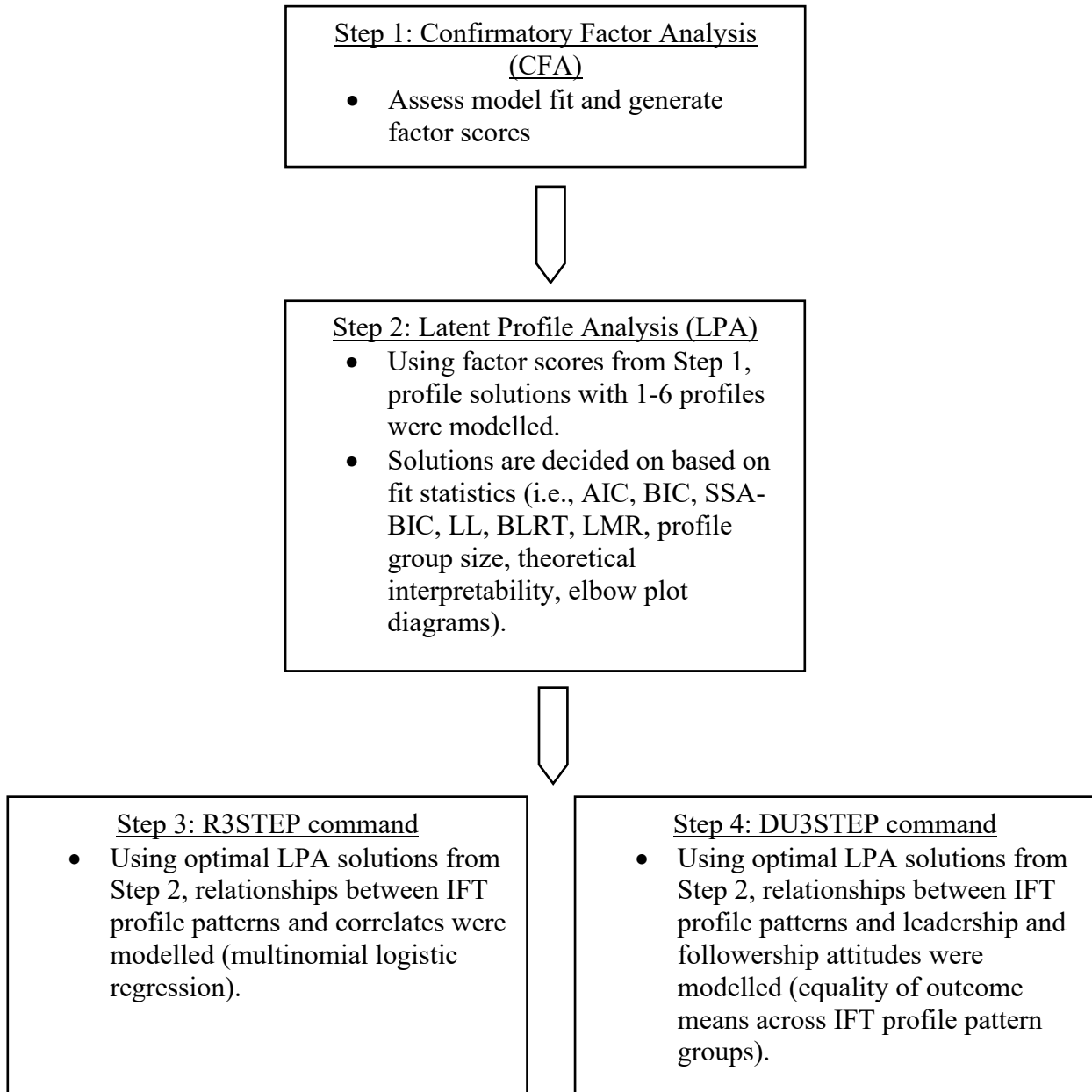
*p < .05, **p < .01.

Figure S1

Interactive Effects of Collective Self-Construal, Condition and Performance Pressure on Prototypical Implicit Followership Theories (IFT) (Sample B)

Appendix B (Essay 2 Flowchart of Analyses)

Step 1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)
- Assess model fit and generate factor scores

Step 2: Latent Profile Analysis (LPA)
- Using factor scores from Step 1, profile solutions with 1-6 profiles were modelled.
- Solutions are decided on based on fit statistics (i.e., AIC, BIC, SSA-BIC, LL, BLRT, LMR, profile group size, theoretical interpretability, elbow plot diagrams).

Step 3: R3STEP command
- Using optimal LPA solutions from Step 2, relationships between IFT profile patterns and correlates were modelled (multinomial logistic regression).

Step 4: DU3STEP command
- Using optimal LPA solutions from Step 2, relationships between IFT profile patterns and leadership and followership attitudes were modelled (equality of outcome means across IFT profile pattern groups).

Appendix C (Essay 2: Samples 1 and 3 Variables and Previous Publications)

Sample 1 Variables	Published in Kim et al., 2021?
1. Age	No
2. Gender	No
3. Race	No
4. Cultural Region	No
5. IFTs (good follower)	No
6. Affective Motivation to Lead	Yes
7. Non-calculative Motivation to Lead	No
8. Socio-normative Motivation to Lead	No
9. Mean Motivation to Lead	No
10. Leadership Aspirations	No
11. Leader Self-Efficacy	Yes
12. Leader Identity	No
13. Follower Identity	No

Sample 3 Variables	Published in Kim et al., 2022?
1. Age	No
2. Gender	No
3. Managerial Experience	No
4. IFTs (good follower)	No