Personality and Individual Differences 187 (2022) 111383

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Personality and Individual Differences

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/paid

Reckless ambition: How implusivity moderates the effect of ambition on transformational leadership

Lu Zuo [a,*], P.D. Harms [a], Karen Landay [b], Dustin Wood [a]

[a] Culverhouse College of Business, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487, United States
[b] Henry W. Bloch School of Management, University of Missouri-Kansas City, Kansas City, MO 64110, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Ambition
Agency
Transformational leadership
Impulsivity
Peers

ABSTRACT

Ambition is often considered to have a dualistic nature, associated with both being a driver of success and a cause of personal downfalls. However, there is little understanding of what factors may lead to which outcomes. Drawing upon socioanalytic theory, we hypothesize and test a mediation model in which ambition impacts transformational leadership via perceptions of agency. We also utilize the channeling hypothesis to argue that impulsivity acts as a boundary condition for the positive influence of ambition on perceptions of agency. Using multisource data from 333 members of seven student Greek organizations, we found strong support for the positive indirect effect of self-rated ambition on peer-rated transformational leadership through peer-rated agency. We also found that impulsivity attenuated this positive effect such that ambition could be translated into peer-rated agency and, in turn, peer-rated transformational leadership, only when impulsivity was low. Our findings illustrate theoretical and practical implications for ambition that influences leadership outcomes.

1. Introduction

Ambition, defined as aspiration to achieve a high rank or status (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012), represents a classic double-edged sword. Although it can be seen as a virtue that helps individuals achieve greatness, it can also be seen as a vice that leads to destruction (King, 2013; Pettigrove, 2007). Although ambition has not received comparable attention in the leadership literature compared to other potentially problematic traits (e.g., narcissism or psychopathy), there has been a recent increase in interest in the effects of ambition in the workplace and its consequences for workplace outcomes (Hirschi & Spurk, 2021a; Jones et al., 2017; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).

In the present study, we use socioanalytic theory (Hogan, 1996) and the channeling hypothesis of personality (Winter et al., 1998) to hypothesize and test a moderated mediation model in which the interaction between self-rated ambition and impulsivity influences peer-rated transformational leadership through peer-rated agency (Fig. 1). In doing so, we provide a possible explanation for how the positive and negative sides of ambition jointly impact perceptions of leadership.

2. Ambition and leadership

Ambition is a motivational personality dimension characterized by a striving for accomplishment or a desire to advance in the organizational hierarchy (Desrochers and Dahir, 2000; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). Consequently, it is not surprising that ambition has been linked with both increased job performance (Hogan & Holland, 2003; Huang et al., 2014) and occupational attainment (Ashby and Schoon, 2010; Harms et al., 2007; Hirschi & Spurk, 2021a, 2021b; Jansen & Vinkenburg, 2006; Judge et al., 1995; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012; Ng & Feldman, 2014).

Further, ambition is also frequently considered to be a necessary condition for effective leadership (Hogan & Holland, 2003; Judge et al., 2002; Marques, 2016). People with a strong desire to lead tend to exhibit more favorable leadership outcomes (Badura et al., 2020), and ambitious leaders create strategic visions and lead their organizations to remarkable success (Foote et al., 2011). Transformational leadership is defined as "the leader moving the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or individualized consideration" (Bass, 1999, p. 11). Those high in ambition tend to act in ways consistent with transformational leadership behaviors, such as communicating shared vision

* Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: lzuo3@crimson.ua.edu (L. Zuo), pdharms@cba.ua.edu (P.D. Harms), kmlanday@umkc.edu (K. Landay), dustin.wood@cba.ua.edu (D. Wood).

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2021.111383
Received 19 June 2021; Received in revised form 1 November 2021; Accepted 2 November 2021
Available online 22 November 2021

and pursuing collective goals.

Hypothesis 1. Self-rated ambition is positively associated with peer-rated transformational leadership.

3. Perceptions of agentic personality as a mediator

To more fully understand the relationship between ambition and leadership, it is necessary to examine the mechanism through which this relationship occurs. Agentic personality is a repertoire of individual qualities for pursuing social ascendancy and achievement. While agency captures a primary human motive "associated with self-advancement in social hierarchies" (Trapnell & Paulhus, 2012, p. 39), transformational leadership is a leadership style that leaders use to influence followers.

Ambitious individuals tend to see themselves as natural leaders and actively engage in prototypically agentic behaviors (e.g., strivings for mastery and power; Badura et al., 2020). These agentic tendencies strongly predict leader behaviors in the form of transformational leadership (Do and Minbashian, 2014). Socioanalytic theory (Hogan, 1996; Hogan & Roberts, 2000; Hogan & Shelton, 1998) suggests that individuals enact behaviors consistent with their own goals and this, in turn, leads to forming reputations among those who observe those behaviors. To this end, we believe that ambitious individuals who develop a reputation for engaging in agentic behaviors are more likely to be perceived as being effective leaders (Junker & Van Dick, 2014).

Hypothesis 2. Peer-rated agency mediates the relationship between self-rated ambition and peer-rated transformational leadership, such that self-rated ambition is positively associated with peer-rated agency, which in turn is positively associated with peer-rated transformational leadership.

4. Impulsivity as a potential moderator

That said, there is reason to believe that ambition can be problematic as well (Carucci, 2020). For example, ambition can be associated with a sense of entitlement and can drive self-serving behaviors (Larimer et al., 2007) that can lead to mistrust in others (Marques, 2016). Yet, despite the recognition of negative potential effects for ambition in leadership processes (e.g., Larimer et al., 2007; Marques, 2016), empirical evidence is still lacking as to when and how ambition goes from a virtue to a vice and how this duality impacts effective leadership behaviors (e.g., transformational leadership). Negative accounts of ambition suggest that it derails because of individuals "skipping steps" and "setting unattainable goals" (Beuke, 2011). That is, unregulated ambition leads to poor outcomes.

Consequently, we argue that impulsivity may serve as one potentially important contingency factor for determining whether ambition will become a problem. Impulsivity is defined as a tendency to engage in rapid, unplanned behaviors and act without adequate thought and control, forethought, or consideration of potential negative consequences (Cross et al., 2011; Lykken, 1995; Strickland & Johnson, 2021). While ambitious people are motivated to try to obtain leadership roles and make their organizations successful, failing to control their own impulses can lead them to engage in risky behaviors that can signal deficits in their ability to be responsible and effective in the leadership role and diminish their reputations as leaders (Schwartz and Pines, 2019).

That the effects of a motive such as ambition are moderated by a trait such as impulsivity is consistent with the channeling hypothesis of personality (Winter et al., 1998). Specifically, "traits furnish the particular structures and resources to implement (sometimes also to limit or constrain) the goals specified by motives" (Winter et al., 1998, p. 237). Thus, we suggest that high levels of impulsivity would attenuate the positive effects of ambition on perceptions of effective leadership.

Hypothesis 3. Self-rated impulsivity moderates the positive relationship between self-rated ambition and peer-rated agency, such that as self-rated impulsivity becomes stronger, the positive relationship is weaker.

Hypothesis 4. Self-impulsivity moderates the indirect effect of self-rated ambition on peer-rated transformational leadership through peer-rated agency such that when self-rated impulsivity is low, self-rated ambition increases peer-rated of agency, which in turn leads to higher peer-rated transformational leadership.

5. Method

5.1. Sample and procedure

The present sample consists of 370 members of seven Greek student organizations[1] (four fraternities and three sororities) at a large public university in the Midwest. There were 34 to 75 members per organization. Unlike most other student organizations, Greek organizations provide housing for their members. Consequently, organizational members get to know each other quite well as they interact in both social and organizational contexts. Leaders are elected for a single year term and nearly all senior leaders have been in the organization for at least

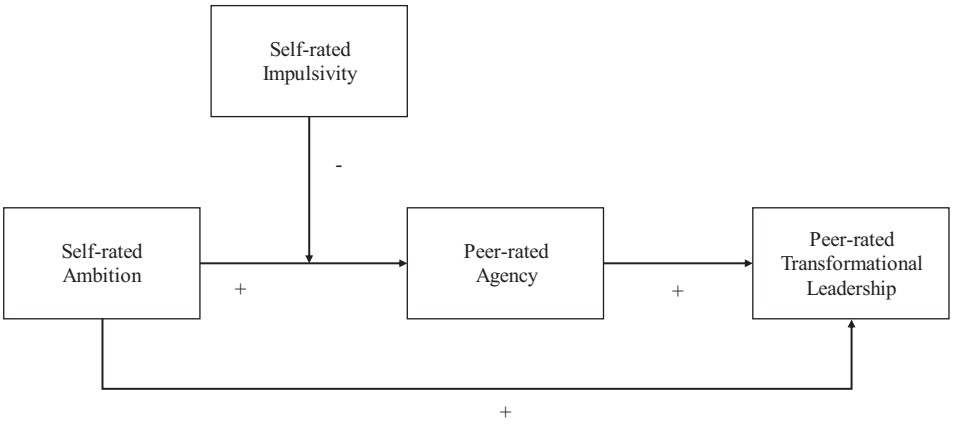

Fig. 1. Theoretical model.

[1] The student organizations are single-sex social clubs referred to as "Greek organizations" in North America by virtue of the fact that they are named using Greek letters.

two years. Thus, the Greek organization hierarchical structure provides a simulated working environment for promoting members' capacity for leadership and engaging them in leadership processes and positions.

Participants were asked to complete a self-report survey containing measures of ambition and impulsivity. Each participant was also rated in terms of his/her agency and transformational leadership by other organizational members who knew them well. Each participant was paid $10. We obtained 333 valid self-reports and 752 peer responses. On average, each participant was rated by 2.26 peers. Of the 333 students, 58% were men and their average age was 20 years old.

5.2. Measures

All measures used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). We measured ambition with Chan and Drasgow, 2001 6-item leader identity scale (e.g., "I have a tendency to take charge in most groups or teams that I work in"). We measured participants' impulsivity by asking them to rate themselves using three trait adjectives: "impulsive," "rebellious," and "reckless" (Harms et al., 2013).

For peer ratings of focal participants, we provided each participant with the names of three other members and asked them to rate their agentic tendencies with 5 trait adjectives ("powerful," "influential," "self-assured," "strong-willed," and "talkative;" see Abele et al., 2016). Participants' transformational leadership was rated by their peers using a 20-item version of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X; Bass and Avolio, 2004).

Because prior research has established differences in how males and females are perceived when acting in an agentic manner (Badura et al., 2018; Eagly et al., 1995; Kim et al., 2020), we controlled for sex in our analyses. Given evidence for age-related differences in leadership behaviors (e.g., Walter & Scheibe, 2013), we also controlled for age. Further, because a formal position allows others to recognize the people's capability and contribution and impacts others' perception of transformational leadership, we controlled for the number of positions held in the organization.

5.3. Analysis

Because the data had a hierarchical structure with multiple peer ratings nested within persons, we used multilevel path analysis with random intercepts in Mplus 8.3. Full informational maximum likelihood (FIML) was used to estimate the models. Uncentered data were used to test hypotheses because our focus was on cross-level relationships (Bliese et al., 2018). Prior to hypothesis testing, we conducted single level and multilevel confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess the overall fit of the model.

6. Results

6.1. Confirmatory factor analysis

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and correlations of the study variables. We first specified a four-factor CFA model at Level 1 (i.e., ambition, impulsivity, agency, and transformational leadership), including a second-order factor for the five dimensions of transformational leadership.[2] Due to high correlations between the indicators within each transformational leadership dimension, this model did not fit well ($\chi^2_{516} = 1769.45$, $p < .01$, CFI = 0.87, TLI = 0.86, RMSEA = 0.06, SRMR = 0.05). We then averaged the items of each leadership dimension, which yielded a good overall fit of the four-factor model ($\chi^2_{146} = 442.762$, $p < .01$, CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.93, RMSEA = 0.05, SRMR = 0.04).

We also conducted χ^2 difference tests to evaluate discriminant validity between perceived agency and transformational leadership. The two-factor CFA model (i.e., the two latent variables separate at Level 1) fits significantly better than the single-factor CFA model ($\Delta\chi^2_1 = 377.89$, $p < .01$). The two-factor CFA model fit well ($\chi^2_{19} = 80.52$, $p < .01$, CFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.03), while the fit of the single-factor model ($\chi^2_{20} = 458.41$, $p < .01$, CFI = 0.82, TLI = 0.75, RMSEA = 0.17, SRMR = 0.11) was unacceptable. These results provide support for our contention that agency and transformational leadership are different constructs and participants interpreted them differently.

Given the multilevel nature of the data, we lastly examined the multilevel factor structure (i.e., specifying self-rated ambition and impulsivity as Level 2 variables and peer-rated agency and transformational leadership as Level 1 variables). The model fit was acceptable ($\chi^2_{180} = 359.69$, $p < .01$, CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.04, $SRMR_{WITHIN} = 0.06$, $SRMR_{BETWEEN} = 0.13$).

6.2. Hypothesis testing

To test our hypothesized model, we first examined the cross-level effect of self-rated ambition on peer-rated transformational leadership (Hypothesis 1), which decomposes the variance of peer ratings into between-person variance and within-person variance. Parameter estimation showed that self-rated ambition was not associated with peer-rated transformational leadership ($\gamma = 0.04$, *S.E.* = 0.04, $p = .24$; Table 2). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Next, we specified a multilevel mediation model (2-1-1; Preacher et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2009), in which self-rated ambition was assessed at Level 2 and peer-rated agency and transformational leadership were examined at Level 1 (Hypothesis 2). There was a significant indirect effect of ambition on peer-rated transformational leadership through peer-rated agency ($\gamma = 0.07$, *S.E.* = 0.02, $p < .01$), suggesting that self-rated ambition increases perceived agency, which in turn increases peer ratings of transformational leadership. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Finally, following Preacher et al. (2016), we examined the interaction effect of self-rated ambition and impulsivity on peer-rated agency and transformational leadership (Hypotheses 3 and 4). Results of our path analysis indicated that impulsivity reduced the positive relationship between ambition and agency ($\gamma = -0.09$, *S.E.* = 0.04, $p < .01$; Table 2), such that the direct effect of ambition on agency varies with differential levels of impulsivity. When individuals were high in impulsivity (1*SD* above mean), their ambition was less likely to be translated into agentic behaviors observed by peers. However, when individuals' impulsivity was low to moderate, their ambition was positively associated with peer-rated agency (Fig. 2). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Our analysis also showed that the indirect effect of self-rated ambition on peer-rated transformational leadership through peer-rated agency was conditional on different levels of impulsivity ($\gamma = -0.08$, *S.E.* = 0.04, $p < .05$; Table 3). Specifically, the indirect effect of ambition on transformational leadership was significant only when impulsivity was at and below mean. However, when individuals' impulsivity was high, higher ambition did not produce higher perceived transformational leadership via higher peer-rated agency (Fig. 3). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

7. Discussion

Our aim in this research was to explain how ambition, a personality motive associated with both positive and negative outcomes, can impact perceptions of leadership. We tested a moderated mediation model and found support for our proposed model. Our findings substantiate the postulates of both socioanalytic theory and the channeling hypothesis in

[2] Reliabilities for the MLQ subscales: individualized consideration α = 0.93, attributed idealized influence α = 0.75, behavior idealized influence α = 0.74, inspirational motivation α = 0.76, and intellectual stimulation α = 0.83.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and correlations of the study variables.

	Mean	*SD*	*ICC*	1	2	3	4	5	6
Level 1 variables									
1. Transformational leadership	3.39	0.58	0.27	(0.93)	0.48**				
2. Agency	3.41	0.63	0.24	0.47**	(0.68)				
Level 2 variables									
3. Ambition	3.79	0.68		0.09	0.20**	(0.85)			
4. Impulsivity	2.71	0.79		−0.15**	0.05	−0.11	(0.66)		
5. Age	19.53	1.58		−0.03	0.12*	0.11	0.04		
6. Sex	0.42	0.49		−0.12*	−0.15*	−0.08	0.15**	0.03	
7. Number of positions	0.63	0.83		0.13*	0.20**	0.25**	−0.15**	0.10	−0.01

Note. $N = 740–743$ at Level 1, $N = 325–330$ at Level 2. For sex, 1 = male, 0 = female. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients are reported in parentheses along the diagonal. The level-2 correlations are reported under the diagonal.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

Table 2
Unstandardized path analysis coefficients of multilevel path analysis.

	Peer ratings of transformational leadership	Peer ratings of agency
Fixed effects		
Intercept	3.48** (0.33)	1.56** (0.48)
Age	−0.01 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Sex	−0.09 (0.05)	−0.16** (0.05)
Number of positions	0.09 (0.03)	0.11** (0.03)
Ambition	0.04 (0.04)	0.36** (0.10)
Impulsivity		0.42** (0.14)
Ambition * impulsivity		−0.09** (0.04)
Random effects		
Variance components		
Level 1 (e_{ij})	0.25** (0.02)	0.27** (0.02)
Level 2 (u_{0j})	0.08** (0.02)	0.05** (0.02)

Note. $N = 752$ at Level 1, $N = 333$ at Level 2. For sex, 1 = male, 0 = female.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

that the effects of ambition on perceptions of transformational leadership are mediated by peer-reputation for behaving in an agentic, leaderlike manner, but that forming these perceptions is attenuated when individuals are also highly impulsive. This indicates that ambition tends to have a strong, positive effect on peers' evaluation of agency and, subsequently, the degree to which they exhibit transformational leadership behaviors, but only when individuals can resist their impulses.

7.1. Implications

One primary contribution of the present study was to elaborate on prior models linking ambition to leadership outcomes by demonstrating a frequently assumed, but never tested, mediator in the form of peer perceptions of agency. Consistent with socioanalytic theory (Hogan, 1996), we found that high ambition is associated with peer perceptions of agentic personality efforts and, in turn, perceptions of transformational leadership. Our research also provides support for accounts of ambition that link it to positive work and career outcomes.

Our findings contribute to the leadership motivation literature by examining the interaction effect of ambition and impulsivity on peer-ratings of agency/getting ahead. We identified impulsivity as an important contingency factor for ambition in terms of how it is interpreted by others and the resulting reputation. Specifically, in line with the channeling hypothesis (Winter et al., 1998), our study found that impulsivity attenuates the positive effect of ambition on peer evaluations of agentic personality. In other words, impulsive people may not be able to regulate their ambition in order to express it in socially appropriate ways or at appropriate times. We also found that this interaction effect carried over into peer-rated transformational leadership via peer-ratings of agency. This boundary condition for the effects of ambition helps to explain why prior literature on ambition, both theoretical and empirical, has described it as being a double-edged sword frequently showing both positive and negative outcomes.

Despite prior literature establishing an expected relationship between ambition and transformational leadership (e.g., Badura et al., 2020), we did not find a significant direct association between self-rated

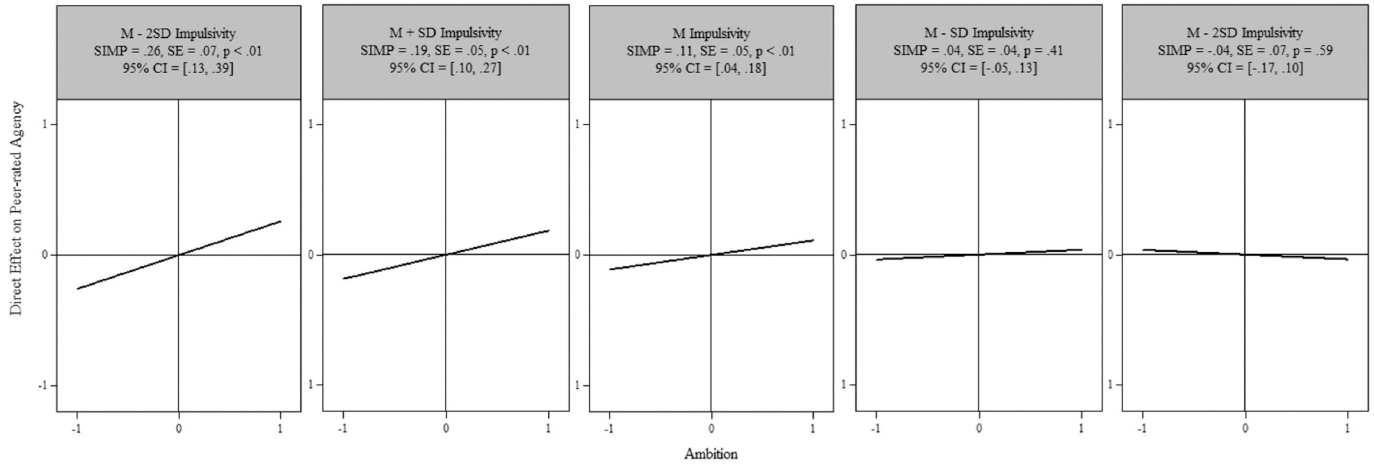

Fig. 2. Simple slopes were probed and plotted at five levels of impulsivity ($M - 2SD$, $M - 1SD$, M, $M + 1SD$, $M + 2SD$). When impulsivity was at and below the mean, self-rated ambition was positively associated with peer-rated agency.

Table 3
Multilevel path analysis for estimating conditional indirect effects of ambition at differential levels of impulsivity.

	Estimates (*S.E.*)
Fixed effects	
Peer ratings of transformational leadership	
Intercept	2.45** (0.30)
Age	−0.03 (0.01)
Sex	−0.04 (0.05)
Number of positions	0.03 (0.03)
Ambition	0.00 (0.03)
Agency	0.43** (0.03)
Peer ratings of agency	
Intercept	1.86** (0.42)
Ambition	0.38** (0.11)
Impulsivity	0.34* (0.15)
Ambition * impulsivity	−0.08* (0.04)
Random effects	
Variance components	
Level 1 (e_{ij}) for agency	0.30** (0.02)
Level 1 (e_{ij}) for transformational leadership	0.20** (0.01)
Level 2 (u_{0j}) for agency	0.07** (0.02)
Level 2 (u_{0j}) for transformational leadership	0.07** (0.01)

Note. $N = 752$ at Level 1, $N = 333$ at Level 2. For sex, 1 = male, 0 = female.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

ambition and peer-rated transformational leadership. In addition to the mediating role of peer-rated agency and the attenuating effect of impulsivity, the lack of a direct relationship could be the result of other accounted-for factors such as likeability and social relationships. For example, Martinko et al. (2018) point out that subordinates' ratings often reflect their personal liking of a leader rather than evaluate the leader's actual behavior. Consequently, if an individual expresses their ambition in an unflattering manner (e.g., attempting to distinguish themselves from others in terms of leadership capacity), they might be seen as not very likeable and thus evaluated as being a poor leader.

7.2. Limitations and future directions

As with all research, the present study has limitations. First, we examined the hypothesized associations using a sample of students in Greek organizations. Students and employees may be reasonably heterogeneous in terms of psychological processes related to leadership; however, Greek organizations operate as an informal social organization in which members are assigned to specific work roles and need to engage in daily operational activities. Like business employees, members of Greek organizations have opportunities to nominate themselves for leadership roles, but senior leadership roles are nearly all elected positions. Although this may raise concerns about potential restriction of range for variables such as ambition, this would only serve to make our estimates more conservative than if a random sample of leaders were selected. That said, self-nominations for leadership positions are somewhat reflective of the way leader emergence happens in real organizations, but elections are likely to be more reflective of leadership processes in community and social organizations than in formal business organizations. With these potential concerns about generalizability in mind, we nonetheless believe that our sample is appropriate for examining the research questions at hand. However, future research is needed to explore our model in a formal work context.

Second, our cross-sectional data could not precisely draw a valid conclusion about causal connections. Further, although we utilized multi-source ratings and multiple raters, we cannot rule out the possibility of reverse-causality within sources, specifically as it pertains to the peer ratings of agentic personality and transformational leadership. Although we used the two-stage least squares approach to diagnose and exclude alternative explanations in the paths from self-reported ambition and impulsivity to peer-rated agency and transformational leadership, there is still a potential threat of endogeneity in the path from agency to transformational leadership. Randomized experiments that allow manipulation of independent variables would be a possible method for resolving these causal issues (Antonakis et al., 2010). Thus, future research could potentially design experiments for re-examining these relationships.

Finally, there are several related personality characteristics that closely resemble ambition in that they are associated with a persistent striving for success, such as proactive personality (Bateman & Crant, 1993), grit (Credé et al., 2017; Duckworth et al., 2007), and passion for leadership roles (Pollack et al., 2020). We did not examine these characteristics in the present study, as the goal was to illuminate the processes underpinning the dualistic nature of ambition. However, it would be interesting to see whether these other traits, though they are most often treated as uniformly positive, are also subject to similar boundary conditions as ambition, particularly as it pertains to perceptions of leadership and reputations in the workplace.

8. Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate the dualistic nature of ambition by developing and testing a moderated mediation model examining the mechanisms explaining the link between ambition and transformational leadership. The results of this research provide insights

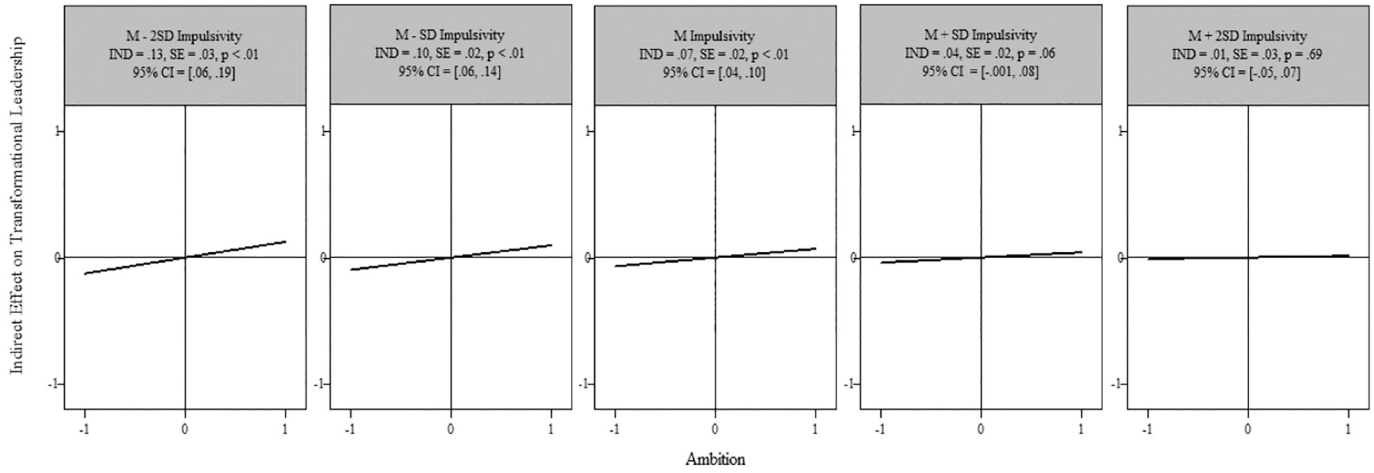

Fig. 3. Significant conditional indirect effect was probed and plotted at five levels of impulsivity ($M - 2SD$, $M - 1SD$, M, $M + 1SD$, $M + 2SD$). When impulsivity was at and below the mean, high ambition increased peer-rated agency, which in turn led to higher peer ratings of transformational leadership.

into why and how ambition leads to important work and career outcomes and helps to explain why it is so often treated as a double-edged sword. Specifically, we demonstrated that trait impulsivity is a key moderating factor for determining how ambition will be interpreted and how one's reputation influences how one is viewed as a leader. This study adds further evidence to the position that accounts of leadership can be improved by considering both motives and traits and by more thoroughly exploring the processes by which personality characteristics shape social relationships and reputations in the workplace (Hogan & Foster, 2016; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005).

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Lu Zuo: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft. **P.D. Harms:** Conceptualization, Investigation, Writing – review & editing, Supervision. **Karen Landay:** Writing – review & editing, Project administration. **Dustin Wood:** Investigation.

Appendix A. Statistical models

Hypothesis 1

$$TL_{ij} = \gamma_{00}{}^{(1)} + \gamma_{01}{}^{(1)}\ AM_j + \gamma_{02}{}^{(1)}\ age_j + \gamma_{03}{}^{(1)}\ sex_j + \gamma_{04}{}^{(1)}\ NP_j + e_{ij}{}^{(1)} + u_{0j}{}^{(1)} \quad (A.1)$$

Hypothesis 2

$$AG_{ij} = \gamma_{00}{}^{(2)} + \gamma_{01}{}^{(2)}\ AM_j + \gamma_{02}{}^{(2)}\ age_j + \gamma_{03}{}^{(2)}\ sex_j + \gamma_{04}{}^{(2)}\ NP_j + e_{ij}{}^{(2)} + u_{0j}{}^{(2)} \quad (B.1)$$

$$TL_{ij} = \gamma_{00}{}^{(3)} + \gamma_{01}{}^{(3)}\ AM_j + \gamma_{10}{}^{(3)}\ AG_{ij} + \gamma_{02}{}^{(3)}\ age_j + \gamma_{03}{}^{(3)}\ sex_j + \gamma_{04}{}^{(3)}\ NP_j + e_{ij}{}^{(3)} + u_{0j}{}^{(3)} \quad (B.2)$$

Hypothesis 3

$$AG_{ij} = \gamma_{00}{}^{(4)} + \gamma_{01}{}^{(4)}\ AM_j + \gamma_{02}{}^{(4)}\ IMPL_j + \gamma_{03}{}^{(4)}\ AM_j{*}IMPL_j + \gamma_{04}{}^{(4)}\ age_j + \gamma_{05}{}^{(4)}\ sex_j + \gamma_{06}{}^{(4)}\ NP_j + e_{ij}{}^{(4)} + u_{0j}{}^{(4)} \quad (C.1)$$

Hypothesis 4

$$AG_{ij} = \gamma_{00}{}^{(5)} + \gamma_{01}{}^{(5)}\ AM_j + \gamma_{02}{}^{(5)}\ IMPL_j + \gamma_{03}{}^{(5)}\ AM_j{*}IMPL_j + \gamma_{04}{}^{(5)}\ age_j + \gamma_{05}{}^{(5)}\ sex_j + \gamma_{06}{}^{(5)}\ NP_j + e_{ij}{}^{(5)} + u_{0j}{}^{(5)} \quad (D.1)$$

$$TL_{ij} = \gamma_{00}{}^{(6)} + \gamma_{01}{}^{(6)}\ AM_j + \gamma_{02}{}^{(6)}\ IMPL_j + \gamma_{03}{}^{(6)}\ AM_j{*}IMPL_j + \gamma_{10}{}^{(6)}\ AG_{ij} + \gamma_{04}{}^{(6)}\ age_j + \gamma_{05}{}^{(6)}\ sex_j + \gamma_{06}{}^{(6)}\ NP_j + e_{ij}{}^{(6)} + u_{0j}{}^{(6)} \quad (D.2)$$

TL = peer-rated transformational leadership; AG = peer-rated agency; AM = self-rated ambition; IMPL = self-rated impulsivity, NP = number of positions.

References

Abele, A., Hauke, N., Peters, K., Louvet, E., Szymkow, A., & Duan, Y. (2016). Facets of the fundamental content dimensions: Agency with competence and assertiveness – Communion with warmth and morality. *Frontiers in Psychology, 7*, 1810. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01810

Antonakis, J., Bendahan, S., Jacquart, P., & Lalive, R. (2010). On making causal claims: A review and recommendations. *The Leadership Quarterly, 21*, 1086–1120. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.10.010

Ashby, J., & Schoon, I. (2010). Career success: The role of teenage career aspirations, ambition value and gender in predicting adult social status and earnings. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 77*, 350–360. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.06.006

Badura, K., Grijalva, E., Galvin, B., Owens, B., & Joseph, D. (2020). Motivation to lead: A meta-analysis and distal-proximal model of motivation and leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 105*, 331–354. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000439

Badura, K., Grijalva, E., Newman, D., Yan, T., & Jeon, G. (2018). Gender and leadership emergence: A meta-analysis and explanatory model. *Personnel Psychology, 71*, 335–367.

Bass, B., & Avolio, B. (2004). Multifactor leadership questionnaire: Manual leader form, rater, and scoring key for MLQ (Form 5x-Short). *MindGarden*.

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

Bateman, T., & Crant, J. (1993). The proactive component of organizational behavior: A measure and correlates. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 14*(2), 103–118. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030140202

Beuke, C. (2011, December). The limits of ambition: Five steps to achievable goals. In *Psychology Today*. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/youre-hired/201112/the-limits-ambition.

Bliese, P. D., Maltarich, M. A., & Hendricks, J. L. (2018). Back to basics with mixed-effects models: Nine take-away points. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 33*(1), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-017-9491-z

Carucci, R. (2020, April 13). How ambitious should you be?. In *Harvard Business Review*. https://hbr.org/2020/04/how-ambitious-should-you-be.

Chan, K., & Drasgow, F. (2001). Toward a theory of individual differences and leadership: Understanding the motivation to lead. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*, 481–498. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.3.481

Credé, M., Tynan, M., & Harms, P. D. (2017). Much ado about grit: A meta-analytic synthesis of the grit literature. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 113*(3), 492–511. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000102

Cross, C., Copping, L., & Campbell, A. (2011). Sex differences in impulsivity: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 137*, 97–130. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0021591

Desrochers, S., & Dahir, V. (2000). Ambition as a motivational basis of organizational and professional commitment: Preliminary analysis of a proposed career advancement ambition scale. *Perceptual and Motor Skills, 91*, 563–570.

Do, M. H., & Minbashian, A. (2014). A meta-analytic examination of the effects of the agentic and affiliative aspects of extraversion on leadership outcomes. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*(5), 1040–1053. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.04.004

Duckworth, A., Peterson, C., Matthews, M., & Kelly, D. (2007). Grit: Perseverance and passion for long-term goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92*(6), 1087–1101. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.92.6.1087

Eagly, A., Karau, S., & Makhijani, M. (1995). Gender and the effectiveness of leaders: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 117*, 125–145. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.1.125

Foote, N., Eisenstat, R., & Fredberg, T. (2011). The higher-ambition leader. *Harvard Business Review*. https://hbr.org/2011/09/the-higher-ambition-leader.

Harms, P. D., Jones, D., & Brummel, B. (2013, June 20-22). The Mini-Markers of Evil: A new measure for the assessment of dark personality traits [Poster presentation]. In *The 3rd Biennial Conference of the Association for Research in Personality, Charlotte, NC*.

Harms, P. D., Roberts, B., & Wood, D. (2007). Who shall lead? An integrative personality approach to the study of the antecedents of status in informal social organizations. *Journal of Research in Personality, 41*, 689–699. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2006.08.001

Hirschi, A., & Spurk, D. (2021a). Ambitious employees: Why and when ambition relates to performance and organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 127*, Article 103576. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2021.103576

Hirschi, A., & Spurk, D. (2021b). Striving for success: Towards a refined understanding and measurement of ambition. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 127*, Article 103577. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2021.103577

Hogan, R. (1996). A socioanalytic perspective on the five-factor model. In J. S. Wiggins (Ed.), *The five-factor model of personality: Theoretical perspectives* (pp. 163–179). Guilford Press.

Hogan, R., & Foster, J. (2016). Rethinking personality. *International Journal of Personality Psychology, 2*, 37–43.

Hogan, J., & Holland, B. (2003). Using theory to evaluate personality and job-performance relations: A socioanalytic perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*, 100–112. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.1.100

Hogan, R., & Kaiser, R. (2005). What we know about leadership. *Review of General Psychology, 9*, 169–180. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.9.2.169

Hogan, R., & Roberts, B. (2000). A socioanalytic perspective on person-environment interaction. In W. B. Walsh, K. H. Craik, & R. H. Price (Eds.), *Person-environment psychology: New directions and perspectives* (pp. 1–23). Lawrence Eribaum Associates Publishers.

Hogan, J., & Shelton, D. (1998). A socioanalytic perspective on job performance. *Human Performance, 11*, 129–144. https://doi.org/10.1080/08959285.1998.9668028

Huang, J., Ryan, A., Zabel, K., & Palmer, A. (2014). Personality and adaptive performance at work: A meta-analytic investigation. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 99*, 162–179. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0034285

Jansen, P., & Vinkenburg, C. (2006). Predicting management career success from assessment center data: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 68*, 253–266. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2005.07.004

Jones, A., Sherman, R., & Hogan, R. (2017). Where is ambition in factor models of personality? *Personality and Individual Differences, 106*, 26–31. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.09.057

Judge, T., Bono, J., Ilies, R., & Gerhardt, M. (2002). Personality and leadership: A qualitative and quantitative review. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*, 765–780. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.4.765

Judge, T., Cable, D., Boudreau, J., & Bretz, R. (1995). An empirical investigation of the predictors of executive career success. *Personnel Psychology, 48*, 485–519. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1995.tb01767.x

Judge, T., & Kammeyer-Mueller, J. (2012). On the value of aiming high: The causes and consequences of ambition. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 97*, 758–775. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028084

Junker, N., & Van Dick, R. (2014). Implicit theories in organizational settings: A systematic review and research agenda of implicit leadership and followership theories. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*, 1154–1173.

Kim, J.-Y., Hsu, N., Newman, D., Harms, P., & Wood, D. (2020). Leadership perceptions, gender, and dominant personality: The role of normality evaluations. *Journal of Research in Personality, 87*, Article 103984. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2020.103984

King, W. (2013). *Ambition, a history: From vice to virtue.*. Yale University Press.

Larimer, C., Hannagan, R., & Smith, K. (2007). Balancing ambition and gender among decision makers. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 614*, 56–73.

Lykken, D. (1995). *The antisocial personalities*. Erlbaum.

Marques, J. (2016). Leadership and ambition. In J. Marques, & S. Dhiman (Eds.), *Leadership today: Practices for personal and professional performance* (pp. 353–370). Springer.

Martinko, M., Mackey, J., Moss, S., Harvey, P., McAllister, C., & Brees, J. (2018). An exploration of the role of subordinate affect in leader evaluations. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 103*(7), 738–752.

Ng, T., & Feldman, D. (2014). A conservation of resources perspective on career hurdles and salary attainment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 85*, 156–168. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2014.05.008

Pettigrove, G. (2007). Ambitions. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice, 10*, 53–68. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10677-006-9044-4

Pollack, J., Ho, V., O'Boyle, E., & Kirkman, B. (2020). Passion at work: A meta-analysis of individual work outcomes. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 41*(4), 311–331. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2434

Preacher, K., Zhang, Z., & Zyphur, M. (2016). Multilevel structural equation models for assessing moderation within and across levels of analysis. *Psychological Methods, 21*, 189–205. https://doi.org/10.1037/met0000052

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

Schwartz, T., & Pines, E. (2019, April). Great leaders are thoughtful and deliberate, not impulsive and reactive. In *Harvard Business Review*. https://hbr.org/2019/04/great-leaders-are-thoughtful-and-deliberate-not-impulsive-and-reactive.

Strickland, J., & Johnson, M. (2021). Rejecting impulsivity as a psychological construct: A theoretical, empirical, and sociocultural argument. *Psychological Review, 128*, 336–361. https://doi.org/10.1037/rev0000263

Trapnell, P. D., & Paulhus, D. L. (2012). Agentic and communal values: Their scope and measurement. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 94*(1), 39–52. https://doi.org/10.1080/00223891.2011.627968

Walter, F., & Scheibe, S. (2013). A literature review and emotion-based model of age and leadership: New directions for the trait approach. *The Leadership Quarterly, 24*, 882–901. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.10.003

Winter, D., John, O., Stewart, A., Klohnen, E., & Duncan, L. (1998). Traits and motives: Toward an integration of two traditions in personality research. *Psychological Review, 105*, 230–250. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.105.2.230

Zhang, Z., Zyphur, M., & Preacher, K. (2009). Testing multilevel mediation using hierarchical linear models: Problems and solutions. *Organizational Research Methods, 12*, 695–719.