

DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH QUALITY LEADERSHIP THEORY
AND THE HIGH QUALITY LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE (HQLQ)
INCLUDING FACTOR STRUCTURE COMPARISONS WITH THE
LBDQXII, MLQ5X AND THE ALQ

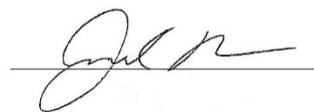
By

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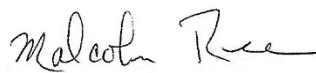
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a summarized and documented step-by-step development process utilized in the creation and development of a new leadership theory called High Quality Leadership (HQL) Theory. Also advanced is a new corresponding measurement instrument called the *High Quality Leadership Questionnaire* (HQLQ) which provides empirical support for the theory. HQL Theory proposes that individuals utilize their own unique background, learning and growth experiences, and just as importantly (perhaps even more importantly) their own unique and personal core values and principles when leading others. HQL Theory posits that both - experience and values - are critically important constructs to becoming a “high quality leader.” HQL Theory defines these constructs as: 1. Capacity (effective / technically competent to lead) and 2. Compass (moral / ethical / high personal values / principles to lead). It follows that the HQLQ was created to measure these constructs. Using the processes of Q-sort, item analyses, and finally, multi-phased confirmatory factor analyses (CFA’s), the HQLQ’s discriminant validity was confirmed and validated as a new, unique theoretical construct to be included within the body of knowledge on leadership studies. HQL Theory – along with its HQLQ - can be a usable model and instrument for current and future research. This was illustrated by CFA and comparing the HQLQ to three of the most popular scholarly instruments used for measuring leadership: *Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire* (LBDQ XII), *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X* (MLQ 5X), and *Authentic Leadership Questionnaire* (ALQ). The HQLQ was developed and is intended for use by leadership scholars, as well as for use by leadership practitioners (e.g., management, executives, executive recruiters, corporate HR staff, hiring managers).

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By my third semester in 2013, I considered Dr. Mark Green a respected and trusted mentor for leadership studies at OLLU (Dr. Green was also a co-founder of the Leadership Studies PhD program). I met in-person with him to discuss my research goal – which was to create my own leadership theory and instrument. Dr. Green told me it could be done but it would be difficult. He was encouraging, as he always is. However, he warned that since the beginning of the Leadership Studies program in the late 1990's, no PhD student had ever taken on such a dissertation research project, so my dissertation was to be a first. I now understand why my research *was* as he advertised: "difficult."

However, through it all, if I were given a chance to do it all over again, I would not change a thing. I learned much - mostly by error – yet the victory was sweeter because of this.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This dissertation introduces a new leadership theory called High Quality Leadership (HQL) Theory, and also a corresponding measurement instrument to measure HQL, called the *High Quality Leadership Questionnaire* (HQLQ). The theory and instrument were developed by the researcher. Below, the introduction and background sections of this research effort follow, along with the “why” the researcher felt a new leadership theory was needed.

Over the last 50 years, tens of thousands of scholarly articles, research studies, and dissertations have been written on the complex subject of “leadership”. Noted leadership scholar Dr. Joanne B. Ciulla discovered 44,392 articles on Bass’s transformational leadership theory and 154,076 articles on authentic leadership theory when she conducted a quick search of the University of Richmond’s library database on June 1, 2014 (Ciulla, 2014, p. 25). Further, well-respected scholar and co-founder of the Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) Leadership Studies doctoral program, Dr. Mark T. Green, declares that there has been an “explosion of leadership programs, popular press books and web sites” since his co-founding of OLLU’s program in 1998 (Green, 2014, p. 2). And when “leadership studies” was entered into the popular internet search engine Google by the researcher on April 21, 2019, more than 1,260,000 results were returned in 0.61 seconds. Clearly the study of leadership has mass appeal and this interest in leadership appears to be growing and accelerating (Green, 2014, p. 2).

In particular, there has been an abundance of scholarly research completed involving three foundational leadership theories: Leader Behavior - The Ohio State Studies (Stogdill, 1963), Full Range of Leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2004), and Authentic Leadership (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). These theories are well-defined, empirically validated, and heavily utilized in scholarly research. They are known to have significant influence within leadership studies (Green, 2014).

Between the years 2000 and 2014, these theories were some of the most studied in global doctoral dissertations. 60 dissertations were written on Leader Behavior theory, 425 dissertations were written on Full Range of Leadership theory, and 47 dissertations were written on Authentic Leadership theory (Green, 2014). And it stands to reason that since 2014, even more dissertations have been written on these foundational scholarly leadership theories.

Leader Behavior theory was conceptualized to fill the need for “descriptions of individuals’ actions when they acted as leaders of groups or organizations” (Bass & Bass, 2008, p. 539). It stemmed from earlier research focused on “traits” of leaders which had very limited success. By the late 1950’s, it was felt that the study of leadership needed to shift focus on what leaders “did” and not what “traits” they embodied (Bass & Bass, 2008, p. 539). After a few versions of refinement, Leader Behavior theory resulted in 12 subscales or “constructs” of leader behavior. These Leader Behavior constructs are (Stogdill, 1963, p. 3): Representation, Demand Reconciliation, Tolerance of Uncertainty, Persuasiveness, Initiation of Structure, Tolerance and Freedom, Role Assumption, Consideration, Production Emphasis, Predictive Accuracy, Integration, Superior Orientation. Regarding Leader Behavior theory, the researcher will use only two of the

constructs, those being Initiation of Structure and Consideration, in this study. There is an abundance of scholarly research (disproportionately so) on these two constructs (Green, 2014, p. 203) of Leader Behavior theory and completing research with this larger sample size is preferred.

Full Range of Leadership theory was developed to recognize that leadership behaviors should be considered on a spectrum (Full Range of Leadership Model) and that “every leader displays each style to some degree” (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p. 4). Full Range theory has 3 key leadership constructs (Transformational, Transactional, and Passive / Avoidant) with 9 components falling under these constructs (Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 74). Specifically, Transformational leadership’s components are Idealized Influence (Attributed - IIA), Idealized Influence (Behavioral - IIB), Individualized Consideration (IC), Inspirational Motivation (IM), and Intellectual Stimulation (IS). The components for Transformational leadership are often coined the “5 I’s”. Transactional leadership components include Contingent Reward (CR) and Management-by-Exception Active (MBEA). And finally, Passive / Avoidant components (considered “lack of leadership” components) include Management-by-Exception Passive (MBEP) and Laissez-Faire (LF). As stated, regarding these last two components, the researcher will not include these “non-leadership” components in this study (Ree & Carretta, 2017, p. 28).

The third leadership theory the researcher evaluated and compared was Authentic Leadership theory. Authentic Leadership theory is a fairly new theory of the early 2000’s that demanded “we need a new kind of leader – the authentic leader” (George, 2003, p. 9) and this type of leadership is not about an “image or persona” (George, 2003, p. 11).

Instead, this theory professes that we need leaders “guided by qualities of the heart, by passion and compassion, as they are by qualities of the mind” (George, 2003, p. 12). Authentic Leadership theory consists of four behaviors (Walumbwa et al., 2008) and these are Self-awareness, Balanced Processing, Internalized Moral Perspective, and Relational Transparency. More specifics on conceptional definitions for all of these theories will be shared later within this research.

Additionally, these three popular leadership theories all have empirically-validated instruments to measure the factors (constructs, components, and behaviors) within the theories, and this was key to the researcher for choosing to compare HQL Theory and HQLQ to these. The popular instruments for these three theories are: the *Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire XII* (LBDQXII), the *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X* (MLQ5X) and the *Authentic Leadership Questionnaire* (ALQ). As aforementioned, regarding the MLQ5X, the researcher will not include the “non-leadership” components of the Full Range of Leadership theory that fall under the passive / avoidant constructs of this theory. These are MBEP and LF (Ree & Carretta, 2017, p. 28). Further, it is worth mentioning that although Authentic Leadership theory is a newer theory, and there have yet to be any meta-analyses published on the theory (Green, 2015, p. 385), Authentic Leadership theory references, more specifically, a moral compass of leadership. In his book *Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value*, Bill George states (George, 2003, p. 20), “Leaders are defined by their values and their character.... These values define their holder’s moral compass.” Thus, the researcher felt this theory was a solid choice to compare and use in the development of HQL Theory and its HQLQ.

Yet, leadership scholars have differing points-of-view about how (and even if) a moral compass and morality and ethics are even required for leadership (Levine & Boaks, 2014). Scholarly literature contains two points-of-view on the morality and leadership question. One, of course, is that leadership when defined needs to include a moral aspect. The other point is that leadership when defined does not need to include a moral aspect. Which brings us to what Ciulla calls the “the Hitler problem” (Ciulla, 2014, p. 15). Was Hitler a leader or not? James MacGregor Burns posits that Hitler was not a leader, but rather a “tyrant” (Burns, 1978, p. 3). Burns writes, “Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth” (Burns, 1978, p. 2). He continues that “transforming leadership” absolutely must include an element of “morality” (Burns, 1978, p. 20). Contrast this to scholar Peter Northouse’s understanding of leadership (as he defines it). Northouse does not include a moral component in his definition of leadership. Rather he simply defines leadership as a “process” of “influence” toward a common goal (Northouse, 2010, p. 3). Ciulla perhaps best concludes: “...the ultimate question in leadership studies is not ‘What is the definition of leadership?’ The ultimate point of studying leadership is ‘What is *good* leadership (Ciulla, 2014, p. 16)?”

Thus, this research study posits that a different standard for defining leadership is needed. One with a more holistic and inclusive definition of leadership. A refinement, so to speak, that goes beyond simply “influence” (Northouse, 2010, p. 3), but also includes a leader’s moral motives to lead, and takes stock in leading with selflessness, integrity, and in a spiritually conspicuous way for followers to witness. Further, this study seeks a refined explanation of leadership that would ultimately advance a theory that provides a reasonable and scholarly “answer” to Ciulla’s (2014) “Hitler problem”.

Could Hitler influence? Absolutely. Was Hitler moral? One would have a very hard time answering “yes” to that question. And as stated, some feel Hitler was not a leader at all (Ciulla, 2014, p. 15). And therein lies the argument, the debate, the dilemma. Thus, HQL Theory was born. Pointedly and purposefully, this study seeks a “different” leadership definition. One that should help with these scholarly conflicts. As a new and unique theory, HQL Theory will not classify Hitler’s leadership in terms of “good” or “bad” leadership, or even if Hitler “is” or “is not” a leader. Rather HQL Theory will classify Hitler’s leadership somewhere on a spectrum: a spectrum between “high” quality leadership and “low” quality leadership.

This dissertation will argue that only “half” of what a high quality leader must possess is an ability to influence. Yes, influence to be certain, is a key leadership skill, and is a key element in most scholarly definitions of leadership. So, it might follow that Hitler only showed “one side” (influence) of successful leadership. The researcher posits that Hitler was perhaps strong in Capacity (effective) leader, if he had been administered the HQLQ. Yet, the researcher believes, Hitler would have scored dismally low in the Compass (moral) construct of HQL Theory. Therefore, the researcher is certain, based on HQL Theory, Hitler would not have been considered a high quality leader.

In sum, there is no universally-accepted definition of leadership. There is no agreement among scholars that defining leadership requires both a technical / effective component and a moral component when defining leadership. And by researching the scholarly literature on leadership, it can be concluded that existing theories and measurement instruments appear to have some gaps when evaluating technical leadership and moral leadership in combination.

Background

This research proposes a new, derived-from-original-research leadership theory named High Quality Leadership (HQL) Theory. The researcher sought to remedy (close) some of the aforementioned gaps in leadership theories with the development of HQL Theory. The intention was to combine, into one leadership theory, a technical (effective leadership) and moral (ethical leadership) component in one theory. Thus, this dissertation presents the researcher's effort to (1) propose the HQL Theory and (2) to develop its corresponding assessment instrument, the *High Quality Leadership Questionnaire* (HQLQ).

HQL Theory is grounded in the scholarly literature and contributes to the body of knowledge on leadership. As stated previously, it combines technically and morally good leadership into one theory. HQL Theory's two constructs, Capacity and Compass, were derived after thorough review of the leadership literature (Bass & Bass, 2008). And within HQL Theory, advancing with this dissertation, technical and moral constructs of HQL Theory are referred to as Capacity (for technical / effective leadership) and Compass (for moral leadership).

In addition, there are eight total domains of leadership that fall under the constructs of HQL Theory. Four domains stem from Capacity and four domains stem from Compass. All similarly derived after thorough review of the scholarly leadership literature. Under the Capacity construct are the domains of Cognitive Ability, Getting Results, Compensation Attainment, and Span of Control. Under the Compass construct are the domains of Selflessness, Spiritual Behavior, Accountability, and Integrity.