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Examining the Effects of Referent Power on Intrinsic Motivation in Organisations: A Self-Concept Based Approach

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A Self-Concept Based Approach to Examining the Effects of Referent Power on Intrinsic Motivation in Organisations

Abstract

Using a self-concept based approach we examine the literature for evidence of effects, induced by referent power, on the intrinsic motivation of employees. We propose that the subject of a referent power relationship will be intrinsically motivated to affirm, or enhance their self-concept, in relation to characteristics of a referent agent. Hypotheses were developed and tested using data from 311 employees of a large consulting firm. We found empirical support for the view that referent motivation leads to behaviour in individuals that is in accord with characteristics of a referent agent, with this behaviour resulting in affirmation or enhancement of their self-concept.

INTRODUCTION

Organisations need motivated employees in order to achieve optimal performance (McClelland & Winter, 1969; Ryan & Deci, 2000). For managers, the motivation of employees, and understanding how motivation can be influenced is a key factor in managing successfully. Motivation can be classified as extrinsic or intrinsic (Etzioni, 1975; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Leonard et al., 1995). Extrinsic motivation comes from the desire of an individual to obtain rewards that are external to them and provided by others. Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is concerned with bringing about internally rewarding consequences that are independent of material needs such as remuneration. These intrinsic rewards can be considered as positive feelings, self-administered by the employee and based on personal judgements of their own behaviour, which are independent of any external source of satisfaction. The benefits of having intrinsically motivated employees are substantial, involving higher commitment and performance, without significantly increasing costs to the organisation.

The ability to influence another employee's intrinsic motivation means that the influencer, or agent, has power over the subject (Aguinis, Nesler, Quigley, & Lee, 1996; Raven, 1993). An important form of power is 'referent power', which results from the identification that the subject of this power feels towards the agent. This paper examines the relationship between referent power and intrinsic motivation. This area has been neglected in the literature, despite wide support for the importance and value of intrinsic motivators. In today's business environment the most commonly used motivators are extrinsic, such as remuneration and material rewards mediated by others. Furthermore, managers have limited resources from which they are able to provide employees with extrinsic rewards. It would therefore be of great value for employees to be intrinsically motivated, and for managers to have a mechanism for constructively influencing their intrinsic motivation.

DISCUSSION

In order to explain the background of the hypotheses tested, it is necessary we discuss literature leading to three types of intrinsic motivation, and consider how

these relate to referent power. Firstly, we define intrinsic motivation, and then look at self-concept in terms of actual and ideal self. Next, we link these concepts to referent power, and the idea of enhancing or affirming self-concept. Finally, using the established idea of an internalisation process, facilitated by identification with a referent agent, we identify three types of intrinsic motivation related to referent power. By considering the effects of referent power on intrinsic motivation, we subsequently propose six hypotheses for testing.

Intrinsic Motivation

The concept of intrinsic motivation arose during the 1950s in opposition to the existing focus on external rewards as the sole motivators of behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Yukl, Kim, and Falbe (1996) viewed intrinsic motivation as an important consideration, when getting employees to efficiently complete tasks, whether or not they found them enjoyable. An individual may not enjoy performing a given task, but may feel good about the process of acting in accordance with their internalised standards. Consequently, an individual can be motivated by the desire to receive an intrinsic reward that they will self-administer, by behaving in accordance with their personal internal standards. This definition addresses the fact that the task itself does not need to be fun or enjoyable, in order for the individual to be intrinsically motivated to perform it. The requirement of fun is a theme used in some definitions of intrinsic motivation (e.g. Ryan & Deci, 2000), which does not take account of intrinsic rewards an individual may gain from completing a task that is undertaken in a way congruent to their internalised standards. Intrinsic motivation towards a task an individual may, or may not enjoy, can be inferred if the task is in line with the individual's internalised standards of how they consider themselves to be, or how they want to be (Hayamizu, 1997).

The conceptualisation of intrinsic motivation used in this paper considers the desire of individuals to behave in ways that will deliver intrinsic rewards, through acting in accordance with their individual internalised standards. This statement incorporates the key themes found within similar definitions appearing in the literature. For example, deCharms (1968) defines intrinsic motivation as *behaviours which occur in the absence of external controls*, while Yukl, et al (1996) views

intrinsic motivation as *an intrinsic reward experienced as the result of acting in accordance with one's internalised standards*.

Self-Concept

Self-concept is an individual's perception of self (Marsh & Shavelson, 1985). It is generally agreed that an individual's self-concept contains perceptions relating to standards for characteristics, such as traits, competencies, values, beliefs and attitudes that an individual has internalised. These internalised standards associated with the self-concept, constitutes who the individual is, and will influence how they interpret stimuli, or behave in response to them (Leonard et al., 1995; McClelland & Winter, 1969). Korman (1970) considers the self-concept of an individual to be a determinant of the outcome they will seek in order to attain that which will satisfy them. In other words, an individual's intrinsic motivation, resulting from some stimulus, is a function of their self-concept as "human beings have a fundamental need to maintain or enhance the phenomenal self" (Snyder & Williams, 1982: 8). We label the maintenance of one's current self-concept as *affirmation,* where individual actions reinforce their self-concept profile. Alternatively, *enhancement* of one's self-concept describes individual action that moves that person toward a self-concept profile, which is closer to how they want to be.

Leonard et al. (1995) define the self-concept as energising, directing and sustaining behaviour that supports the link between the self-concept and motivation, where the self-concept of an individual fundamentally controls their motivation. The suggestion that others can affect the self-concept of an individual (Snyder & Williams, 1982), supports the possibility that one individual can influence the intrinsic motivation of another. This is because the self-concept influences the individual's motivation, and if one individual affects another's self-concept, they consequently affect their intrinsic motivation. This appears to have significant implications in terms of the effects an individual with referent power may be able to have on another individual's self-concept, and subsequently their intrinsic motivation.

While there are various opinions on the composition of the self-concept (Campbell, 1990; Gustafson & Reger, 1998; Hattie, 1992; Leonard et al., 1995; Shamir, 1990, 1991; Snyder & Williams, 1982), it appears that it consists of three

components: *actual self, ideal self,* and *self-esteem*. We will now discuss the nature of these elements of self-concept.

Actual Self

The actual self is the way that the individual perceives themselves to currently be (Gustafson & Reger, 1998; Leonard et al., 1995). This consists of the standards associated with characteristics that the individual perceives they possess. This self-perception is determined through interaction with one's environment (Leonard et al., 1995, 1999). Within their environment individuals receive feedback about themselves from two primary sources: social feedback and task feedback (Leonard et al., 1995). The individual derives this feedback from the behaviour and communication, both verbal and nonverbal, of others. Jones and Gerard (1967) state that individuals make comparative appraisals of their behaviour in relation to that of others, while they make reflective appraisals by assessing the reactions of others to their behaviour. It is important to note that those giving feedback do not need to intentionally to do so in order for the receiver to interpret an action as social feedback (Leonard et al., 1999). This means the individual has control over whether they experience intrinsic rewards (Deci, 1975). If the individual perceives they have behaved in accordance with these standards, they will feel good. This feeling is an intrinsic reward, and is the result of positive internal feedback (deCharms, 1968).

Ideal Self

The ideal self represents how the individual would ideally like to be (Gustafson & Reger, 1998; Shamir, 1990, 1991), consisting of patterns of characteristics that the person desires to possess (Sedikides & Strube, 1997). This is similar to Schlenker's (1985) notion of an 'idealised image' being the ultimate person one would like to be, and Bandura's (1991) concept of personal standards.

Interaction with others can influence the formation of the ideal self, as the individual observes characteristics in others that they perceive represents how they would ideally like to be (Leonard et al., 1995; Gustafson & Reger, 1998; Shamir, 1990, 1991). Alternatively, the individual may base their ideal self on standards they have determined themselves, without having observed them in others (Snyder &

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Williams, 1982).   Once the individual has identified such characteristics they may then internalise these as their own.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is the evaluative component of self-concept, which the individual assesses to be the difference between their actual and ideal selves (Bracken, 1996; Campbell, 1990; Hattie, 1992; Leonard et al., 1995).   If the difference is relatively large, the individual will have a low self-esteem.   This is because the difference between how the individual desires to be, and perceives they actually are, is considered significant.   Conversely, if the difference between the two perceptions is relatively small the individual will have a high self-esteem, because they are almost how they desire to be (Bracken, 1996; Gustafson & Reger, 1998).

It should be noted that a low self-esteem does not mean the individual has low self-efficacy, and high self-esteem does not mean the individual has high self-efficacy (Gardner & Pierce, 1998).   For example, an individual may have high self-efficacy because of how their actual self is, but have a low self-esteem because they have a very high ideal-self.   The feedback, which contributes towards the determination of one's self-esteem, is that which the individual receives regarding their actual and ideal selves, and is derived from both internal and external sources.   If a person performs to a standard whereby their actual self further approaches their ideal, the difference between their actual and ideal selves will decrease, and their self-esteem will improve (Snyder & Williams, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

We will now show how these concepts are linked to referent power, and the idea of enhancing or affirming self-concept. Then, using the established idea of an internalisation process, facilitated by identification with a referent agent, we will identify three types of intrinsic motivation related to referent power.

Referent Power

Referent power comes from the ability one individual has to influence another, due to feelings of identification, which the subject of the influence (P) has towards the influencer (French & Raven, 1959).   The individual with referent power is referred to as a referent agent (RA).   P will identify with RA because they have a feeling of

oneness with RA, or a desire for such an identity. If P is already closely associated with RA, he or she will want to maintain this relationship, and if they are not closely associated, P will want to establish this. The identification of P with RA can be maintained, or established, if P behaves as RA does (Mael & Tetrick, 1992).

An important aspect to referent power is it is a form of personal power, is dependent on the subject's perception, and is independent of the agent's responses. It is only possible for a person to be a referent agent if the subject of their influence perceives them to be a referent agent (French & Raven, 1959). This means that while one individual may perceive a person to be referent, another individual may not. Similarly the strength and effectiveness of the agent's referent power will be dependent on the subject's perception of that agent (Aguinis, et al, 1994; Elangovan & Xie, 2000; Raven & Rubin, 1983). Although dependent on P's perception, referent power does not require P to be cognisant of the power that RA exerts over them. This is often the case, and while P may recognise their feelings of identification towards RA, they may not realise that these are allowing RA to influence them.

It is important here to differentiate the type of identification involved in a referent power relationship, which flows from other types of identification. An individual can be extrinsically motivated because the source of their identification and related motivation is provided externally by others. Note that identification related to referent power, is independent of external controls such as feedback from the referent agent, as the individual is their own judge of their individual success in behaving congruently with the referent agent (Raven, 1993) and self-administer any resultant rewards (deCharms, 1968; Deci, 1975).

On the other hand if the individual conforms to another in order to obtain rewards from others, such as praise, we are dealing with reward power. The basic criterion for distinguishing referent power from coercive and reward powers is the mediation of the sanctions. This is in line with existing definitions of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, suggesting that referent power is related to intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation (French and Raven, 1959).

We now consider how the processes of affirming or enhancing self-concept are important to understanding the dynamics of intrinsic motivation.

Affirmation and Enhancement

Individuals have a fundamental need to affirm or enhance their self-concept (Rokeach, 1973; Snyder & Williams, 1982). Identification with a referent agent provides the opportunity for affirmation or enhancement of one's self-concept in relation to that agent. This identification provides a system for self-reference whereby the individual compares their actual self to the referent agent with whom they have identified (Mael & Tetrick, 1992). Katz and Kahn (1978) claim that an individual will be intrinsically motivated to affirm or enhance their self-concept through identification with others. This causes the individual to behave congruently with another, whom they perceive as referent via important characteristics, such as words and acts (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). This enables the individual to experience intrinsic rewards as they observe their behaviour of affirmation, whereby their actual-self is reinforced, or enhancement, whereby their actual-self approaches their ideal-self.

French and Raven (1959) state that the balance of motivation between affirmation and enhancement is determined by the relationship between the individual's actual-self, and their perception of the referent agent. They say that if the individual perceives they are already like the individual with whom they identify, and they perceive their actual self as similar to their referent agent, they will be motivated towards affirmation. However, if the individual perceives the difference between their actual self and the referent agent to be significant, they will be motivated towards enhancement.

We now consider how identification with others facilitates and increases the range of this identification through the internalisation of self-concept.

Internalisation is Facilitated by Identification

It is suggested that the desire for relatedness to significant others, to whom the individual feels or wants to feel attached, may lead the individual to adopt characteristics of significant others (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This is supported by Ryan, Connell and Grolnick (1992), who state that internalisation starts from an extrinsic

stimulation, such as that of another individual, and Hayamizu (1997) who claims that internalisation of characteristics enables the individual to feel related to others. Ryan and Deci (2000) go further to suggest that internalisation should be promoted through the influence of significant others.

Identification with another may facilitate internalisation of that individual's characteristics (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). While the identification P feels towards RA will lead P to be intrinsically motivated to affirm or enhance their self-concept in relation to RA, P may additionally internalise other characteristics or standards of characteristics of RA (Gustafson & Reger, 1998; Shamir, 1990). P's identification with RA was caused because P perceived RA to be like their current actual or ideal self. It appears that internalisation may occur, if during P's affirmation or enhancement of their self-concept in relation to RA, P perceives other characteristics or standards of characteristics in RA which they find attractive and adopt. Gustafson and Reger (1998) and Shamir (1990) state that an individual may internalise a characteristic if it expresses who they are or who they would like to be.

As with affirmation and enhancement of existing standards of the self-concept in relation to a referent agent, P will be intrinsically motivated to behave congruently with RA in order to enhance their self-concept (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

We now can integrate all of these aspects of intrinsic motivation into a typology of referent motivation types.

REFERENT MOTIVATION TYPES

Based on our discussion of existing literature, it can be argued there are three types of intrinsic motivation related to referent power.

Type One: *Intrinsic motivation to affirm one's existing self-concept in relation to a referent agent.*

In this situation P identifies with RA because P perceives that they are like RA, or identify with certain characteristics of RA. P will attempt to behave

in accordance with RA in order to affirm their existing self-concept in relation to RA.

Type Two*: Intrinsic motivation to enhance one's existing self-concept in relation to a referent agent.*

In this situation P identifies with RA because they want to be like RA, or identify with certain characteristics of RA. P will attempt to behave in accordance with RA in order to enhance their existing self-concept in relation to RA.

Type Three*: Intrinsic motivation to enhance one's self-concept in relation to a referent agent following internalisation of new characteristics or standards of the agent.*

In this situation P identifies with RA because P perceives that they are like RA, or possesses certain characteristics of RA, or because they want to be like RA. Through their identification with RA, P internalises new characteristics or standards of characteristics of RA. P will attempt to behave in accordance with RA in order to enhance his or her new self-concept in relation to RA.

The term '*Referent Motivation*' is introduced here to refer to these types of intrinsic motivation related to referent power, which can be of type one, two or three. This study investigates only types one and two since a different research design is needed to investigate type three which is beyond the scope of this study. We will now develop the hypotheses from our knowledge of intrinsic motivation and referent power.

HYPOTHESES

Intrinsic motivation has been explained as that which an individual feels, as a result of acting in accordance with the internalised standards associated with their self-concept (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Etzioni, 1975; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Leonard et al., 1995; Shamir, 1990, 1991). The individual's intrinsic motivation to act in accordance with these internalised standards is due to their desire to affirm or enhance their self-

concept (Bracken, 1996; Katz & Kahn, 1978). If the individual is intrinsically motivated to affirm their self-concept, they will be intrinsically motivated to behave in accordance with the standards of their actual self, and thus reinforce how they currently are. Alternatively, if they are intrinsically motivated to enhance their self-concept, they will be intrinsically motivated to behave in accordance with the standards of their ideal-self, and thus become more like how they want to be (Snyder & Williams, 1982). As the individual's actual-self approaches their ideal-self, their self-esteem is improved, resulting in the enhancement of their self-concept.

The individual is the sole judge of their success in the process of affirming or enhancing their self-concept. Intrinsic rewards are independent of external control, and are self-administered. The individual assesses whether to administer intrinsic rewards by observing and assessing the results of their actions. If the individual perceives their behaviour to be consistent with their internalised standards, they will experience positive internal feelings that are intrinsic rewards (deCharms, 1968; Deci & Ryan, 1985).

We have illustrated the fact that referent power gives the agent (RA) power over the subject (P) due to P's identification with RA. This identification is caused either because P perceives that they are like RA, or because they want to be like RA (French & Raven, 1959). RA therefore represents P's actual or ideal self (Gustafson & Reger, 1998; Korman, 1970; Shamir, 1990, 1991; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). It is suggested that P will be intrinsically motivated to affirm or enhance their self-concept in relation to RA (referent motivation types one and two respectively). Through affirmation of their self-concept, P is able to maintain their existing relationship with RA, while through enhancement they are able to build the relationship.

It is appropriate to include referent motivation types one and two in the same hypotheses because P's behaviour will be either to affirm or enhance. This is evidenced by the fact that with regard to those characteristics for which P perceives RA as referent, P will not want to both affirm and enhance their self-concept in relation to RA, but rather undertake one or the other (French & Raven, 1959). The means by which P will affirm or enhance their self-concept in relation to RA is through behaviour in accordance with RA (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner,

1986). While an individual can be intrinsically motivated to behave congruently with another for various reasons, their desire to behave in accordance with RA is due to their need to affirm or enhance their self-concept in relation to RA.

If P perceives RA as referent, the basis of P's identification with RA will relate to one or more particular characteristics of RA (French & Raven, 1959). It is improbable that an individual would either perceive another as the same as them with regard to all characteristics and want to maintain this, or would perceive the other as how they would ideally like to be across all characteristics. Obviously, P will perceive a limited set of RA's characteristics as referent, and RA's referent power will relate to these. Those characteristics that P perceives RA to referent for are termed '*referent characteristics*' here. Therefore, as referent power is directly related to referent characteristics, P's level of intrinsic motivation in relation to RA will be directly related to specific referent characteristics of RA rather than general characteristics. Based on the preceding discussion the following hypotheses are developed.

Intrinsic motivation is associated with a finite set of referent characteristics:

HYPOTHESIS 1: The level of an individual's intrinsic motivation, to behave in accordance with an agent's referent characteristics, will be higher than their level of intrinsic motivation to behave in accordance with general characteristics.

The level of referent power is directly related to the individual's need for affirmation (or enhancement) of self-concept:

HYPOTHESIS 2: The level of referent power perceived by an individual will be positively associated with an individual's level of intrinsic motivation to affirm (or enhance) their self-concept.

The level of referent power is directly related to the individual's need to behave in accordance with the referent agent:

HYPOTHESIS 3: Referent power will be positively associated with the subject's intrinsic motivation to behave in accordance with the referent agent in relation to that agent's referent characteristics.

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The level of an individual's intrinsic motivation for affirmation (or enhancement) of self-concept, is consistent with their tendency to behave like the referent agent:

HYPOTHESIS 4: The level of an individual's intrinsic motivation to affirm or enhance their self-concept, in relation to that agent's referent characteristics, will be positively associated with their level of intrinsic motivation to behave in accordance with the perceived characteristics of the referent agent.

It is of interest to investigate whether individuals who have higher levels of intrinsic motivation to affirm (or enhance) their self-concept have higher levels of general intrinsic motivation. If this were the case, it would suggest that individuals with higher referent motivation levels would have higher general levels of intrinsic motivation. Because individuals have a need to affirm or enhance their self-concept, the type of intrinsic motivation involved here would be expected to constitute a significant proportion of an individual's overall intrinsic motivation, and there should be a relationship between the two. To investigate this, the following hypothesis will be tested:

HYPOTHESIS 5: Higher levels of intrinsic motivation to affirm or enhance self-concept in relation to the referent agent will be directly associated with higher levels of general intrinsic motivation.

We now consider perception of ideal-self. P is likely to be more intrinsically motivated to affirm or enhance their self-concept in relation to someone whom they perceive to be close to their ideal self (Bracken, 1996; Sedikides & Strube, 1997; Snyder & Williams, 1982), than someone whom they perceive as significantly different from their ideal self. For example, in relation to the characteristic of aggressiveness, if P perceives individual A as lower than their ideal self, individual B as higher than their ideal self and individual C as the same as their ideal self, it would appear that they will be more intrinsically motivated to behave in accordance with individual C. If P were to behave in accordance with individual A, they would be acting less aggressively than they ideally want to, while if they were to

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behave in accordance with individual C they would be acting more aggressively than they want to. Consequently, it would be expected that the less difference there is between P's perception of RA and their ideal-self, the greater RA's referent power will be.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis was formulated:

HYPOTHESIS 6: *The difference between an individual's perception of referent agent and ideal-self, will be inversely related to perceived levels of agent referent power.*

METHODS

Measures

The instrument used consisted of existing scales that were modified to increase their appropriateness, and items developed specifically for this research. The scale of Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989) was used to measure the five bases of power proposed by French and Raven (1959). Stake's scale for measuring the self-concept of adults, has broad applicability across life settings, roles and activities (Stake, 1994). Amabile, Hill, Hennessey, and Tighe (1994) developed the Work Preference Inventory to measure individuals' intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations.

Participants and Procedure

The instrument was submitted to a formal content validity examination by a review panel following the approach of Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989) and Schriesheim (1978). A pre-test was also conducted to check for issues such as ambiguity, questions respondents may not want to answer, continuity and flow, length and timing, and measurement effectiveness (Cooper & Schindler, 1998; Sekaran, 2000). Feedback was received which led to minor modifications to further increase the questionnaire's clarity. Empirical data for this study was collected from a multinational professional services organization's New Zealand branch. The questionnaire was hosted on an intranet website. A response rate of 43.6% (311 completed responses out of 713) was achieved. Support was found for all of the five hypotheses.

Reliability and Validity

The reliabilities of the scales used were assessed using the internal consistency method. The results are reported in Table 1, show each measure has an acceptable levels of internal consistency reliability, with all Cronbach alpha values exceeding .60.

Construct	Number of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach Alpha
Referent Power	4	3.95	0.66	.83
(Actual Self)				
Likeability	6	5.43	0.81	.71
Morality	6	6.00	0.97	.79
Power	7	4.10	0.79	.71
Task Accomplishment	6	5.40	0.84	.75
Giftedness	5	4.90	0.90	.82
Vulnerability	6	3.70	0.84	.61
(Ideal Self)				
Likeability	6	6.37	0.66	.75
Morality	6	6.47	0.75	.77
Power	7	5.21	0.74	.69
Task Accomplishment	6	6.47	0.60	.72
Giftedness	5	6.30	0.71	.83
Vulnerability	6	5.91	0.95	.67
(Perception of Referent Agent)				
Likeability	6	5.65	0.97	.83
Morality	6	5.86	0.95	.82
Power	7	4.87	0.85	.69
Task Accomplishment	6	5.85	0.82	.78
Giftedness	5	5.58	0.88	.84
Vulnerability	6	4.94	1.02	.63
General Intrinsic Motivation	15	3.07	0.38	.81

Table 1: Cronbach coefficient alpha for internal consistency reliabilities

Factor Analysis

Following the approach taken by the original authors, factor analyses were performed on the scales of Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989), Stake (1994), and Amabile et al. (1994). The modified items from Stake's (1994) scale used to measure ideal self and perception of referent agent were subjected to factor analysis. Principal components analysis was used with Varimax rotation procedure to provide a clearer interpretation of results. All items loaded sufficiently on the same factors they did in the original papers, except one item in Stake's Task Accomplishment construct (used to measure ideal-self), and one item from Amabile et al (1994) Intrinsic Motivation construct. It was decided to retain the item from Stake's scale, because it achieved acceptable

results in the factor analyses of actual-self, and perception of referent agent measure, and retention allowed for more accurate comparisons under hypothesis testing. Similarly, the item of Amabile et al.'s (1994) scale was retained, because being one of containing fifteen items, the net effect of this item would be insignificant.

Validity Testing

Respondents were grouped by their position in the organisation. Kruskal-Wallis tests determined the differences in responses between groups were not statistically significant at a p=.05 level of confidence. These results, displayed in Table 2, illustrate that for each construct measure, position of respondent within the organisation had no effect and this supports convergent validity of the measures.

Item measured	Significance Level
Referent Power	.797
Actual Self	.172
Ideal Self	.452
Perception of Referent Agent	.581
Intrinsic Motivation to Behave in Accordance with Referent Agent in General	.467
Intrinsic Motivation to Affirm Self-Concept in Relation to Referent Characteristics of Referent Agent	.936
Intrinsic Motivation to Enhance Self-Concept in Relation to Referent Characteristics of Referent Agent	.163
Intrinsic Motivation to Behave in Accordance with Referent Agent in Relation to Agent's Referent Characteristics	.467
General Intrinsic Motivation	.304

Table 2: Significance levels of difference between respondents grouped by their nominal position within the organisation, as a function of each construct measured, using the Kruskal-Wallis Test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ordinal scales were used for data collection, which necessitated use of nonparametric statistical techniques. The results are presented in table 3. All hypotheses were supported at an 0.05 level of confidence.

The results suggested that referent power relates to referent characteristics rather than the agent in general. This opposes previous research on referent power, which has neglected this aspect of the concept. The term *referent characteristic* was introduced here to encompass those characteristics that an individual identifies with.

Our results also indicate that if an individual has referent power over another, the subject will be intrinsically motivated to affirm or enhance their self-concept, and will be intrinsically motivated to achieve this by behaving in accordance with their agent's referent characteristics. These results provided support for the concept *of referent motivation* that we introduced to identify intrinsic motivation that an individual experiences in relation to the referent power of their agent.

Test Conducted	Hypothesis					
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Chi-square goodness of fit x^2 (df=2, N=311)	44.46, p=.000	*	*	*	*	*
Chi-square test of independence x^2 (df=4, N=311)	*	11.48, p=.022	32.46, p=.000	104.79, p=.000	16.81, p=.002	19.56, p=.001
Spearman rho rho value, N=311	*	0.174, p=.002	0.305, p=.000	0.564, p=.000	0.183, p=.001	0.178, p=.002
Kruskal-Wallis x^2 (df=2, N=311)	*	10.68, p=.005	35.74, p=.000	98.50, p=.000	18.67, p=.000	14.31, p=.001
Result	**Supported**	**Supported**	**Supported**	**Supported**	**Supported**	**Supported**

Table 3: Summary of results for hypothesis testing (* Denotes test was not conducted for this hypothesis)

A significant relationship was found between referent motivation and general intrinsic motivation. Higher levels of an individual's intrinsic motivation to affirm or enhance their self-concept, in relation to the referent characteristics of their referent agent, were associated with higher levels of general intrinsic motivation. This suggests that those with higher referent motivation will have higher levels of general intrinsic motivation.

A significant relationship was found to exist between referent power and the difference between an individual's perception of their referent agent and ideal-self. Lower levels of difference between the subject's perception of their referent agent

and ideal-self were inversely related to higher levels of referent power. This suggests that the more similar the subject perceives their referent agent to their ideal-self, the greater the agent's referent power.

CONCLUSION

It can be seen from these results that the effects of referent power on another's intrinsic motivation are significant, and should be recognised and addressed by organisations. On the basis of these findings the following can be concluded. An individual will perceive another as referent if they perceive that person to be like them, in relation to certain characteristics they want to maintain, or if they perceive the agent to be how they want to be, in relation to certain characteristics. If an individual perceives another as referent, they will be intrinsically motivated to behave in accordance with that agent in relation to these referent characteristics. The individual will also be intrinsically motivated to perform this behaviour in order to either affirm or enhance their self-concept in relation to these characteristics.

As referent motivation is an important component of intrinsic motivation, organisations should promote situations where employees can experience it. Also, individuals with higher levels of referent motivation will be more intrinsically motivated in general. Organisations should ensure employees have work associations with others whom they perceive as referent. The referent characteristics of agents that are beneficial to the organisation should be promoted. This will result in employees being intrinsically motivated to behave in accordance with referent agents, in relation to these characteristics, and so perform behaviours of benefit to the organisation.

In using referent agents to influence an employees' intrinsic motivation, management should also select agents that employees perceive to be similar to their ideal-self. The more similar an agent is to the subject's ideal-self, the higher the referent power of that agent. In the selection of appropriate referent agents, management must recognise that an agent can be in any position relative to the subject.

This paper offers valuable insight into the effects of referent power on intrinsic motivation and explains how the referent power of one individual can influence the intrinsic motivation of another. The results discussed here are new, and show the need for further research into the value of intrinsic motivators.

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