

## Journal Article Review – the ODQ: Validity and Reliability

A brief response to the article “Testing the validity and reliability of the Organisational Description Questionnaire (ODQ)” by Ken Parry & Sarah Proctor-Thomson (from *International Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 4(3), 111-124).

By Dr Ian Coats<sup>i</sup>

Parry’s article reports his research into the reliability and validity of the ODQ and then goes on to explore the implications for further research and revision of the instrument. Having outlined the conceptual background to the key dimensions of the ODQ, namely transformational and transactional leadership culture, Parry reports the method and findings of his study. Some 1354 managers were administered the ODQ and other scales measuring organisational effectiveness and role conflict as the basis for the statistical exploration of reliability and convergent validity.

Parry reports what he considers ‘adequate’ reliability estimates (Cronback alpha internal consistency of .88 and .74 for the two scales (this rises to .79 without item 19).

On the basis of correlations and factor analysis, he hoped to shed light on the convergent validity of the instrument. Does it relate strongly to other measures in the predicted manner and does its factor structure confirm the basic design of the instrument?

Correlation results suggested that the transformational scale of the ODQ has theoretical coherence, relating positively to displayed social processes of leadership as well as to outcome measures such as effectiveness. The transformation scale related negatively to role conflict, as predicted. By contrast, the transactional scale related in the reverse directions, highlighting that the transformational and transactional scales are negatively correlated on the ODQ (not true on the MLQ!).

Factor analysis confirmed the integrity and coherence of the transformational scale but questioned the helpfulness of regarding the transactional scale as measuring one major, theoretically distinct factor. Rather, a series of more fragmented sub-factors were identified, but these did not appear to capture the complexity of the notion of transactional leadership presumed by the full-range leadership model of the MLQ. Thus, while the distinction between transformational and transactional is largely supported, Parry suggests that considerable more work needs to be done to operationalise effectively the interplay of these concepts at the level of organisational leadership culture.

He concludes that while there is ‘reasonable support for the transactional scale...it would be a mistake to blindly accept this scale as a measurement of a single-factor construct’. The items reflect more the negative side of the transactional concept and do not adequately tap the positive contribution certain levels of transactional leadership clearly have. A revised scale thus needs to take into account the multi-dimensional character of the construct as well as more adequately reflect the positive and negative aspects highlighted in the MLQ conceptuality. Although not discussed by Parry, one wonders whether it would also be useful to incorporate some recognition of role of the laissez faire style in

establishing the climate of leadership culture. However, this would inevitably produce a very different instrument.

Parry concludes by briefly exploring alternative approaches to conceptualising a leadership culture scale and this direction represents the next phase in further revising and/or re-developing the ODQ. Practitioners would benefit greatly from carefully reading this article and exercising due care about claims concerning the validity of the present instrument (especially the transactional dimension) in measuring the organisational culture equivalent to the MLQ leadership model. But its utility for benchmarking transformational leadership culture, and introducing the transformational and transactional concepts to organisations, is supported by this significant study.

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