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What are the Sources of Leader Charisma? An Inductive Study from China

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Abstract

This study aims to put forward a new concept in charismatic leadership theory: source of leader charisma (SLC). Using an inductive approach, we identified the various dimensions of SLC in the Chinese context, and found that SLC comprises of charismatic personality and charismatic behaviors. Charismatic personality consists of three dimensions: high morality, outstanding talents, and attractive characteristics. Charismatic behavior also includes three dimensions: visional inspiration, character development, and morale stimulation. Finally, we developed a primary model to explore the mechanism by which the SLCs are attributed to charisma by follower. Our findings in the present study contribute to new evidence that charismatic leadership theory may transcend cultural boundaries.

Keywords: *Leadership theory, charismatic leadership, China, source of leader charisma*

INTRODUCTION

Charismatic leadership that is strongly rooted in Western ideals, values, and beliefs has received overwhelming attention in the past few decades (Bligh and Robinson, 2010). Nevertheless, leadership theories are context dependent. The relationship between national culture and leadership is an important and controversial subject. Additional research is needed to explore charisma from a cross-cultural perspective, particularly in the face of globalization and technological changes that are rapidly internationalizing the business world (Whetten, 2009; Javidan and Carl, 2004; House, 2004; Avolio et al, 2009; Bligh and Robinson, 2010). Given the unique history and evolution of the Chinese economy, it seems unlikely that a research agenda originally created to understand US managers and organizations would be particularly well suited to understand Chinese managers and organizations(Tsui, 2006; Barney ＆Zhang, 2009). However, several prior studies from India, Canada, and Iran, showed that many characteristics of charismatic leadership, may readily translate across cultural contexts (Bligh, ＆ Robinson,2010; Javidan and Carl, 2004**)**. The current study aims to put forward a new construct of the source of leader charisma (SLC), to distinguish SLC from charisma, and explore the composition of the SLC in the Chinese context.

Although many scholars agree that charisma is a very important element for excellent leaders, and charismatic leaders can change follower's attitudes, beliefs, efforts, satisfaction, and behaviors, and consequently, induce improved organization performance (Beyer, 1999 ; Hater and Bass, 1988; Cheng et al, 2004; Bligh and, Robinson 2010), there are also some inconsistent arguments about the concept of charisma(Conger and Kanungo, 1987; Beyer, 1999; House, 1999), the structure of charismatic leadership(House,1977; Bass, 1985; Conger et al, 1997), and the effect of charismatic leadership(House,1991, 1999; Beyer, 1999). Why are there so many debates on charismatic leadership theory? We argue that there is a crucial defect within prior studies on charismatic leadership, and scholars did not distinguish two important concepts: leader charisma and

SLC. Therefore, in this study, we first proposed that SLC and charisma are interdependent concepts. Then, we conducted an inductive study with normative methods to explore a six dimensions structure of the SLC, and compared our research results to the prior studies.

Overall, the contribution of the current study to the literature is in exploring the composition of SLC in Chinese context, and developing a primary model to explore the mechanism by which SLC is attributed to charisma by followers. Our findings in this study points to new evidence that charismatic leadership may transcend cultural boundaries.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH CONTEXT

Historically, the term '*charisma'* is derived from an ancient Greek word meaning 'gift'. This was later adopted by the early Christian church to describe gifts or charismata from God that enabled the receiver to carry out extraordinary feats such as healing or prophecy. Its application in secular and leadership contexts came much later in the pioneering work of the German sociologist Max Weber (Conger et. al, 1994, p291).According to Weber, charisma is an attributed to an outstanding leader by his followers(Yagil, 1998), and it also refers to an extraordinary quality of a person. However, there are two different aspects of leader charisma: sociological charisma and organization charisma (House, 1999).

Trice and Beyer (1986) summarized Weber's theory as including five elements: (1) an extraordinarily gifted person, (2) a social crisis or situation of desperation, (3) a set of ideas providing a radical solution to the crisis, (4) a set of follower who are attracted to the exceptional person and come to believe that he or she is directly linked to transcendent powers, and (5) the validation of that person's extraordinary gifts and transcendence by repeated successes. On one hand, sociologists are more inclined to see charisma as a social structure that emerges from complex interactions of all of these elements that cannot be separated nearly into causes, moderators, and effects (Beyer, 1999). On the other hand, according to House (1999, P564), organizational behaviorists are

more psychologically oriented and define charisma as one of the following: (1) a relationship between an individual (leader) and others (followers) based on deeply held shared ideological values; (2) an individual who accomplishes unusual feats through the efforts of followers who are exceptionally loyal to the leader, have a high degree of trust in the leader, and are willing to make personal sacrifices in the interest of the leader's vision and the collective led by the leader; (3) a complex set of personal characteristics and/or behaviors of and individual that leads to the above outcomes.

Thus, sociologists and psychologists have a great many of inconsistencies about charismatic leadership theory, which are derived from the unattained consensus on the concept of leader charisma. First, some scholars argued that charisma is indeed a rare phenomenon and a leader must have truly exceptional personal qualities to be charismatic (Beyer, 1999; House, 1999). For many years, it was assumed that the concept of charisma was not applicable to lower-level leaders or close leadership situations. Several scholars argued that charismatic leadership could be found only at the top echelon of the organization and was irrelevant to lower-level leadership or close leader-follower relationship (Shamir, 1995). But, other scholars argued that charisma may be a much more common phenomenon, charismatic leadership can be found at all levels of the organization. (Bass, 1998; Kouzes and Posner, 1995; Shamir, 1995). Here is a disagreement about the charismatic effects. Beyer (1999) argued that charisma itself is a transient phenomenon because it involves the coming together of various factors that are likely to be temporary. Unless charismatic leaders stay in place for a relatively long period of time, their vision may not be fully realized and are unlikely to be routinized. House et al (1991, 1999), on the contrary, argued that some charismatic leaders could retain their charisma throughout their entire lives.

Although definitions about leader charisma are now far from consistent, many scholars agree that charisma is a very important element for excellent leaders. Accumulated researches, including a series of meta-analytic studies, have found that charismatic leadership is positively associated with leadership effectiveness and a number of important organizational outcomes across many

different types of organizations, situations, levels of analyses, and cultures such as productivity and turnover (Avolio et al. 2009). According to Conger and Kanungo's model (1998), all leadership is about moving organizational members from an existing state to a future state, and charismatic leaders are distinguished by their ability to indentify deficiencies in the status quo, and then formulate and communicate a vision to change it. This notion of charismatic leadership as a force for change appears to be embraced by most leadership researchers interested in charisma (Levay, 2010). On the other hand, the theory of charismatic leadership suggests that such leaders raise followers' aspirations and activate their higher order values (e.g., altruism) such that followers identify with the leader and his or her mission/vision, feel better about their work, and then work to perform beyond simple transactions and base expectations (Avolio et al. 2009). For these reasons, we argue that charisma has been and will continue to be a topic of great interest for management and organizational researchers.

The relationship between charisma and SLC

Why there are so many debates on charismatic leadership theories since it was presented more than 30 years ago? Partly it is because sociologists and psychologists argued it from different viewpoints and theoretical basis. Besides, the crucial defect found within prior studies on charismatic leadership is that scholars did not distinguish between two important concepts: charisma and SLC.

We proposed that the source of leader charisma (SLC) and charisma are interdependent concepts, just as source of pressure and pressure. However, distinctions between these concepts are usually ignored. For instance, when asking a person about what pressure is, he or she may respond that they feel pressure at work. It is obvious that 'work' is not pressure, and what he or she referring is actually a source of pressure. Similarly, when we ask an employee about what kind of charisma does his or her leader possess, he or she may replies like 'my leader holds spirit of self-sacrifice highly'. It is also apparently that 'spirit of self-sacrifice' is not charisma, but the SLC.

In this context, we contend that SLC is a kind of objective reality attached to a leader, which could be the raw material of leader charisma and is mainly comprised by leader characteristics and leadership behaviors. Then what is charisma? We regard it as a kind of relationship between leader and follower subjectively perceived by a particular follower. The SLC is similar to a 'signal source', which continually sends out information or signals expected to be perceived by followers. There would be multiple SLCs in a charismatic leader. And, followers' perception and attribution system is a 'signal converter', which is responsible for perceiving and transforming SLC. On the condition that signals sent out by particular SLC can be identified and received by this 'signal converter', and further can activate followers' perception and attribution systems, this SLC can possibly emerge charisma in the eyes of followers. Otherwise the SLC would be labeled as an ineffective one. Two main factors that will influence followers' perception and attribution patterns, are follower's personal characteristics, including personality, personal values (i.e., intensity of openness to change, traditional, collectivistic work, self-transcendent, and self-enhancement values), and belief systems, and the context that those followers located in. Firstly, followers' personal characteristics will affect their attribution pattern. De Hoogh, et al. (2005)'s work shows that those followers with specific personality will be prone to attribute leaders as charismatic. Besides, followers' personal values (Sosik, 2005) and belief systems, which reflect as a series of implicit norms, affect followers' behaviors and attitudes, as well as their perception and attribution systems of SLC. Different followers have different values and belief systems and also different patterns of perception and attribution. Hence, to different followers, a particular leader can emerge charisma or not, for the key mechanism is whether or not there is some degree of match between SLC and followers' perception and attribution system. The strength of perceived charisma will vary by the matching degree. The second factor that affects followers' attribution pattern to charisma is the contextual factors, including leader's positions in the organizational hierarchy, and the whole environment that organization encounters and so on.

Why do we study the content of charisma source?

As Willner (1984) pointed out, that the most common misconception about charisma is that it is located in the quality or combination of qualities of a person. We believed that SLC is not the same as charisma. It is charisma, not SLC, that change follower's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, and induce improved organizational performance. Distinguishing SLC from charisma adds vital value in academic research. In doing so, we can better understand charismatic leadership theories and the emerging mechanism of charismatic leaders. Furthermore, we can create a new area of research on charismatic leadership theoretical studies. However, almost all current studies focus on issues of charisma itself (Beyer, 1999; House, 1999), behavioral dimensions of charismatic leadership (Conger and Kanungo, 1992, 1994), antecedents to charismatic leadership (Walter and Bruch, 2009), and contextual factors of charismatic leadership (Shamir and Howell, 1999), and so on. There are no relevant studies on the source of charisma. The content and structure of SLC remains unknown. According to Walter and Bruch(2009), some antecedents of charismatic leadership have been well researched. But, it is different between the antecedent of charismatic leadership and SLC. Even though SLC is very important to explore the complex of charismatic leadership, empirical research has rarely investigated it.

Charismatic leadership is always closely associated to change and innovation in both social and organizational settings (Levay, 2010). In the context of China, we assume Chinese society to be a complex mix of modernity and traditionality. As Tsui (2006) argued that 'the transition from a centrally planned to a quasi-market economy has changed the employment landscape in China. These changes have engendered much scholarly interest in describing, explaining and understanding the nature of such corporate transformations and their effects on firm behavior and outcomes'. Many scholars have agreed that charismatic leadership is generally associated with social change and renewal (Levay, 2010). We also believe that charisma plays an important role in the process by which the leaders change their organizations and lead their followers. But, there is a paucity of research on the nature of the charismatic

leadership in the Chinese cultural context. There is no doubt that cultural factors affect the basic processes underlying leadership relations (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Ensari and Murphy (2003) compared a US sample and a Turkish sample to investigate cross-cultural variations in leadership perceptions and attributions of charisma to the leader. Their results indicated that in different cultures (individualistic vs. collectivistic culture) individuals adopt different information processing types (recognition-based vs. inference-based) on charisma attributions. Chinese society has been profoundly branded with Confucian and Taoism. This kind of dual-cultural character will significantly influenced leadership phenomenon. To date, little is known about charisma and SLC in Chinese cultural context. So, we believe that it is necessary to explore the dimensions of SLC in China.

METHOD

To explore the structure of SLC in China, we conducted an inductive study, which called for collecting descriptions of leader characteristics and behavioral incidents from respondents. Using content analysis, we classified them into several categories with an agreement index constructed using multiple judges (Hinkin 1998, Kerlinger 1986). Given that there is little theory to define the structure of SLC, this approach could be the appropriate way to identify the inner composition of SLC. Our survey contained only two questions. The respondents firstly were asked if they have encountered a charismatic leader in their career experience. If yes, they continue to describe what qualities reflect the leader's charisma. If not, the next open question is not necessary. By means of the above procedure, those items we collected form participants can really point to SLC.

Sample Characteristics

We conducted our survey in several cities in mainland China. Questionnaires were distributed in business education programs or training classes by one researcher. 118 participants were included in our original sample,

12 of them mentioned they did not experience a charismatic leader. Among them, 77 percent were male, 76 percent had worked in their current organization for more than 5 years, and 80 percent had at least an undergraduate education. In terms of organization type, 39 percent of the participants were from SOEs (State-Owned Enterprises), 49 percent from POEs (Private-Owned Enterprises), and 12 percent from FIEs (Foreign Investment Enterprises). Detailed sample characteristics were demonstrated within the following table. In conclusion, our sample was highly diverse in demographics, making it very appropriate for our explorative study.

Table 1 Sample Characteristics (N=106)

Characteristics	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	82	77%
Female	24	23%
Age		
20-30	8	8%
31-40	67	63%
41-50	29	27%
>50	2	2%
Tenure		
Less than 2 years	5	5%
2-5 years	20	19%
5-10 years	30	28&
More than 10 years	51	48%
Education		
High school	1	1%
Junior college	20	19%
Undergraduate	72	68%

Master or doctor	13	12%
Organization type		
State-Owned Enterprises	41	39%
Private-Owned Enterprises	52	49%
Foreign-Investment Enterprises	13	12%

Procedures

When conducting data analysis, our goal is to extract core contents from large amounts of qualitative data. This process is similar to factor analysis in quantitative studies (Lee, 1999). Following Xin et al. (2002), and Tsui, Wang and Xin's (2006) strategy, our analysis included 3 main steps. The first step was to preprocess the original items by screening. The second step was to code the original items into major themes guided by a general theoretical framework, and then identify subcategories in each theme. The last step was to test the reliability of our category system by nine judges in three groups.

Step 1: Data preprocessing

The 106 respondents generated a total of 638 items (6 items per respondent), all of which were coded into computer. Two authors of this paper screened all items based on three criteria: (1) the item must have clear meaning in the Chinese language; (2) the item must refer to leader characteristic or behavior; and (3) each item must conveys only one usable meaning. If this was not satisfied, we deleted the item or split it to more than one item. The screening process resulted in 646 items.

Step 2: Coding of major themes and subcategories

To improve the validity and reliability of item classification, we employed the bisection method. Our original sample was randomly separated into two sub-samples, an even coded one and an odd coded one. There were no distinct differences in demographics between two sub-samples. At first, two authors independently classed all the items into major themes (at least two) based on their own understanding, without communications. Results (Table 2) indicated

that two authors offered the same themes, which refer characteristics possessed by the leader and behaviors that the leader displayed in the leadership process. In addition, two authors listed possible categories (4 categories for one, 5 for another), and we found that four pairs of categories (80 percent) appeared alike. Through this process, we were convinced that two-themes of SLC should make sense, and that further subcategories may exist.

Table 2 Coding comparisons by two independent authors

Sub-sample One	Sub-sample Two
T1-*Leader characteristics*[a]	**T1-*Leader personal characteristics***
C1-*Morality*	**C1-*High morality***
Sense of responsibility	*Upright*
Tolerant	*Fairness*
Fairness	*Tolerant*
Teach others by own example	Empressement
Integrity	*Strong sense of responsibility*
Protect employees' benefits	Make deeds square with words
C2-*Leader capabilities*	**C2-*Outstanding capabilities***
High professional ability	*Persuasiveness*
High decision-making ability[b]	Strong ability in learning
Knowledge	*Communication ability*
Communication ability	*A wide range of knowledge*
High ability of lingual experssion	Judge ability
Wisdom	*Agile thinking*
C3-*Personality factors*	**C3-*Supernormal personality***
Self-confidence	*Courageous*
Optimist	Resoluteness
Courage	*Self-confidence*
Passion	Risk-taking

Character	*Appetency*
T2-*Leader-followers's interactions*	**T2-*Leading followers***
	C4-*Visional Inspiration*
Care for followers	*Foresight and sagacity*
Appetency	*Unique insights*
Motivate followers	*Designate directions*
Guide followers	*Ambitious goals*
Develop followers	*Demonstrate attractive visions*
Share with followers	**C5-Emotional motivation**
	Care for
	Guide
	Encourage
	Teach others by own example
	Share experiences
	Set good examples

Notes:

a. In the table, T stands for theme, C stands for category, and they were shown in bold. The rest were representative items in each category.

b. This item including items such as 'Foresight and sagacity' and 'unique insights', which were classed into 'visional inspiration' in sub-sample two.

c. Themes, categories, and items which were similar in two sub-samples were shown in italic in the table.

Based on above findings and recent studies on charismatic leadership, we proposed six possible categories. After reiterative discussions, all the authors of this paper agreed upon a six-category system, which could classify 636 items (10 items couldn't be properly classified, less than 2 percent) into mutually exclusive categories. For conciseness, we merged those similar items, while recording their frequency of occurrence. Finally, we generated an item pool contained 382 items.

Step 3: Internal reliability testing

As Landis & Koch (1977) mentioned, internal reliability is a measure used to examine the agreement between two people (raters/observers) on the assignment of categories of a categorical variable. To test the reliability of our designated categories, we recruited nine Chinese graduate students-majoring in business or management-to serve as test judges. They spontaneously formed 3 separate groups. We assigned all 382 items to each group. Definitions and several examples of our six-category system were also provided. Each group took part in half an hour training session in which they were familiarized with the definition of each category; they then tried some practice items and the training process didn't stop until they were able to totally distinguish between the six categories. After completing this, the nine judges worked independently to classify the assigned items into the 6 categories based on each group's collective opinion. Since each item in the pool was classified by three test judges independently, there were four possible outcomes: (a) full agreement—all three test judges classified the item correctly into its designated category; (b) two agreements—two of the three judges classified the item correctly; (c) one agreement; and (d) zero agreement.

Results (Table 3 below) show that 62 percent of the items were classified exactly the way as the researchers had intended, 23 percent had two agreements, and 15 percent had one or zero agreement. Given that 85 percent of the items had at least two agreements with researchers' category, we concluded that our six-category system was effective and reliable (Landis and Koch, 1977). These categories further formed dimensions of leader charisma in China, which is discussed in the following part.

Table 3 Results of Reliability Test

(Compared with researchers' category)

Possible Results	Number of Items	Frequency	Accumulative
Full Agreement	236	62%	62%

Two Agreements	86	23%	85%
One Agreement	47	12%	97%
Zero Agreement	13	3%	100%
Sum	382	100%	-

RESULTS

Two themes of SLC

Based on our findings, SLC could be divided into two main themes, *charismatic personality* and *charismatic behavior*. Charismatic personality refers to a series of personal characteristics of the leader, which make followers attribute them as leader charisma. This theme accounts for 456 items of SLC (72 percent of 636 items in total), which could be further analyzed into three dimensions, named *high morality, outstanding talents*, and *attractive characteristics* for each. Another theme, called charismatic behavior, occupies 29 percent of the gross items. Similar to Conger and Kanungo's (1987) theory, charismatic behaviors stand for particular behaviors that the leader performs during the leadership process and can be attributed as leader charisma by followers. Moreover, leadership behaviors may comprise of the following three dimensions: *visional inspiration, character development,* and *morale stimulation*. Table 4 briefly presents the aforementioned results, including frequencies and percent of each theme and dimension.

Table 4 A Brief Structure of SLC

Themes	Dimensions	Frequency	%
1 ***Charismatic personality***			
1) *high morality*		114	18%t
2) *outstanding talents*		183	29%
3) *attractive characteristics*		159	25%
Subtotal		456	72%

2 ***Charismatic Behaviors***		
1) *visional inspiration*	35	6%
2) *character development*	46	7%
3) *morale stimulation*	99	16%
Subtotal	180	29%
Total	636	100%

Note: Due to rounding, the aggregation of percent is more than 1.

Charismatic personality

The first charismatic personality dimension of SLC is *high morality*: a leader with high level of morality will get along with followers, organizations, and the whole society following the social norm. Besides, the leader with high morality always value collective interest and organizational interest above his/her personal interest in China. This dimension totally accounts for 18 percent of the items.

Within our investigation, the most frequent statement about high morality lies in high moral standards beyond the common level (Howell and Avolio, 1992). Leaders who are perceived as charismatic are always set and accepted as moral examples in their organizations. Besides, charismatic leaders are labeled as integrity and righteous person in the followers' eyes (Gardner and Avolio, 1998). In terms of dealing with followers, high morality is reflected in the sense of fairness and justice. With respect to organizations, high morality can be attributed to a sense of responsibility to organizations and the society (Howell and Shamir, 2005). In several prior studies focused on China's leadership phenomenon, domestic scholars focused a lot on attentions to moral elements, especially on transformational leadership (Li and Shi, 2005) and paternalistic leadership (Cheng et al, 2004), indicating the importance of morality in leadership.

The second charismatic personality dimension of SLC is *outstanding talents*, which refers to a complex set of extraordinary capabilities and talents

attributed to a leader. These talents are associated with leadership practices that significantly surpass the ordinary level. In our study, this dimension included 183 items of leader charisma, becoming the most frequently (29 percent) mentioned dimension.

This dimension can be illustrated as following items: (1) expertise used to achieve organizational goals (Conger and Kanungo, 1987), including high levels of professional competence and exceptional abilities in decision-making; (2) excellent communicative abilities (Den Hartog and Verburg,1997) and strong interpersonal abilities (Shamir, 1995); (3) a wide range of knowledge and superb wisdom (Hoffman and Frost, 2006), and the leader turns to be distinguished innovator and learner; and (4) supernormal ability of self-regulation (Groves, 2005).

The final dimension of charismatic personality in SLC is *attractive characteristics*, which means distinct personality characteristics possessed by the leader. They can powerfully attract followers and generate positive influences. In our database, this dimension appears 159 items of the gross (accounting for 25 percent).

Prior studies on charisma and personality have been productive (e.g., House and Howell, 1992; De Hoogh, et al., 2005). According to those representative items of this dimension, charismatic leaders firstly turn to be a person with a powerful self. In other words, he/she shall possess exquisite toughness (Peterson et al, 2009), steadiness, self-confidence (House and Howell, 1992) and courage; meanwhile he/she shall be a resolute and boldness man. Secondly, leaders perceived as charismatic are always a people person, meaning that the leader interacts well with followers. Thus, the leader has a strong appetency (Hetland and Sandal, 2003) and trust toward followers, and being magnanimous to followers. Thirdly, charismatic leaders usually have strong passion to their collective enterprise, together with positiveness and optimist to the future (Peterson et al., 2009). Yet above personality characteristics, different as they seen, have one thing in common – be perceived as attractive by followers.

Table 5 Charismatic personality of SLC

Characteristics	Items	Frequency
High morality	1. High moral standards beyond social norm	49
	2. Sense of fairness or justice to followers	12
	3. A righteous and integrity person	9
	4. Devoting all his/her energy to enterprise	8
	5. Strong sense of responsibility to job, organization and society	33
	6. A widely accepted moral example	11
Outstanding talents	1. High levels of professional competence	42
	2. Excellent and rhetoric communicative abilities	34
	3. Exceptional abilities of judgment and decision-making	21
	4. A wide range of knowledge	19
	5. Superb wisdom and deep thoughts	16
	6. Distinguished innovator and learner	15
	7. Strong interpersonal abilities	11
	8. Supernormal ability of self-management and regulation	11
Attractive *characteristics*	1. Exquisite toughness and staidness	10
	2. Strong appetency to followers	39
	3. Trust in followers	6
	4. Self-confidence and courage	6
	5. Positiveness and optimist to the future	8
	6. Strong passion to enterprise	8
	7. A resolute and boldness man	25
	8. Magnanimousness to followers	30

Charismatic behavior

The first behavioral dimension of SLC is *visional inspiration*, which is consistently seen as an important component of leader charisma in prior studies (Conger and Kanungo, 1997; House, 1977). In our study, visional inspiration refers to those behaviors connected with ambitious visions and goals. By providing, articulating (Conger and Kanungo, 1997; Bass and Avolio, 2000) and sharing compelling visions of the future, the leader holding a long-term standpoint elevates the followers' sense of mission during the leadership process. These leaders often forecast the approaching future with foresight and sagacity, and express strategic insights about organizational affairs. However, this dimension is not a major component in our investigation (only 6 percent), which could be explained by less emphasis in vision within the observed organizations.

The second behavioral dimension of SLC is *character development*, indicating that the leader develops followers' competences and shape their positive character through multiple means in the leadership process. In terms of character development, leaders who are perceived as charismatic always enthusiastically develop followers' strengths (Bass and Avolio, 2000) by empowerment (Arnold et al., 2000) and cultivating their qualities. Besides, these leaders usually spend time coaching (Bass and Avolio, 2000) and offering guidance to followers' work. They take delight in sharing their working experiences with followers as well. However, this dimension either does not arouse enough attentions in sampled organizations, reflecting in only 7 percent of all items.

The last behavioral dimension of SLC is *morale stimulation*, referring to the leader's ability to excite his/her followers' morale (Berlew, 1974) through heightening motivation, setting good examples and giving concern and care during the leadership process. This dimension can be illustrated as the following behaviors: forwardly take the lead in organizational businesses, experience happiness and setbacks of organizations collectively, constantly express individualized concern and love to followers (Bass and Avolio, 2000; Conger

and Kanungo, 1997), powerfully foster the collective cohesion, sincerely praise employees to motivate them (Atwater et al., 1997), and so on. In sum, this dimension accounts for 16 percent of all the items, and it turns to be the leading dimension in leadership behaviors.

Table 6 Charismatic behaviors of SLC

Behaviors	Items	Frequency
Visional inspiration	1. Forecast the future foresightedly with sagacity	12
	2. Handle with various affairs insightfully	9
	3. Look far ahead compared with colleagues or competitors	8
	4. Provide inspiring strategic and organizational goals	10
	5. Articulate a compelling vision of the future	13
Character development	1. Constructively guide followers' work	15
	2. Enthusiastically develop followers' strengths through cultivating their competencies and quality	16
	3. Empower followers actively and offer them ample opportunities	8
	4. Share work experiences with followers selflessly	11
	5. Respect followers fully	9
Morale stimulation	1. Forwardly take the lead in the organization	13
	2. Share happiness and setbacks with followers without any complains	10
	3. Constantly express individualized concern and love to followers' work and life	34
	4. Powerfully foster organizational cohesion	11
	5. Sincerely praise followers and motivate them	21
	6. Show understanding to followers and protect their benefits	20

DISCUSSION

First, using an inductive approach, we first identified the dimension of SLC in China. The present study finds that SLC is a complex set of charismatic personality and charismatic behaviors. The charismatic personality comprises of three dimensions: *high morality, outstanding talents, and attractive characteristics*. The charismatic behavior also comprises of three dimensions: *visional inspiration, character development, and morale stimulation.* Although, in the prior researches literature, the concept of SLC is not defined, there is plenty of research about the charismatic leadership and its individual antecedents in the existing literature. According to our definition on the SLC, we view the charismatic leadership and its individual antecedents as the sources of leader charisma.

Compared with the related research literature, our results using the Chinese data are generally quite supportive of the prior literature (Table 7). The three behavioral dimensions of SLC are similar to the prior results of Bass (1985), Conger and Kanungo (1992, 1994),Conger et al.(1997), and Javidan and Carl(2004). And, the three personality dimensions of SLC are also consistent with the prior results (House, et al., 1991,1992; Shamir,1995; Hoffman et al, 2006; Howell et al,1990; Ashkanasy et al,2002; George,2000; Javidan ＆Carl,2004).

Our findings in the present study contribute to new evidence that charismatic leadership may transcend cultural boundaries. Javidan and Carl(2004) provided an empirically verified profile of charismatic leadership among Canadian managers and produced empirical evidence of its robustness and generalizability to a different cultural setting. Using confirmatory factor analysis, the profile that they developed using Canadian data is compared with a profile of Iranian managers. The results demonstrate that despite major cultural differences between the two countries, there are core similarities in the profiles across the two cultures. The profile is also consistent with the results in the others Western countries. As Javidan and Carl (2004,p687) argued:

'Charismatic leadership may be distinguishable from other types of leadership due to its deep and substantial roots in human psyche. It is anchored in a particular type of relationship between the leader and the followers where the leader's influence and success is driven by his ability to connect to the follower's quest for morality, autonomy, and achievement. This possibility certainly provides the motivation for a potentially fruitful avenue of cross-cultural research that focuses on basic human needs as well as cultural values and beliefs.'

There is also general empirical support for the concept of charismatic leadership and its impact on managerial effectiveness and subordinate effort and satisfaction in several countries（Hater and Bass, 1988; Cheng et al, 2004; Robinson and Bligh, 2010）. The preliminary findings of the GLOBE project showed that visionary and inspirational leaders who have integrity and are decisive, are universally admired. This type of leadership was called 'charismatic/value based' (House et al, 1999; Javidan and House, 2002). Despite such universality, there was still a large range in the average scores of the participating countries, 4.5 to 6.5 on a 7-point scale (Javidan ＆Carl,2004).

Table 7 Comparison to the results in the existing literatures

SLC in the Present Study	Charismatic Behavior and Its Individual Antecedents in the Existing Literature
Charismatic Behaviors	***Charismatic Behaviors***
Visional inspiration Character development Morale stimulation	inspiration leadership, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985);strategic vision and articulation, sensitivity to environment, sensitivity to member needs, personal risk, and unconventional behavior(Conger and Kanungo, 1992, 1994;Conger et al., 1997);vision, credibility, self-sacrifice, intellectual challenge (Javidan and Carl,2004)
Charismatic Personality	***Individual Antecedents of Charismatic Behaviors***

High morality	
Outstanding talents	strong conviction in the moral righteousness(House, et al., 1991);sacrifice, personal example; rhetorical skills; honesty (Shamir,1995); cognitive ability (Hoffman et al, 2006);risk-taking propensity(Howell et al,1990);self-confidence(House et al, 1992);positive moods and emotions(Ashkanasy et al,2002);emotional intelligence(George,2000);tenacity, eloquence(Javidan and Carl,2004)
Attractive personality	

Second, in this study, we refer to the concept of SLC in the first time. We contend that SLC is a kind of objective reality attached to the leader, which could be the raw material of leader charisma and it is mainly comprised of charismatic personality and charismatic behavior. We argue that there is a complex mechanism by which the SLC can possibly emerge charisma in the eyes of followers. In this mechanism, there are three key elements: SLC of the leader, attribution pattern of follower, and the contexts or situations (Figure 1).

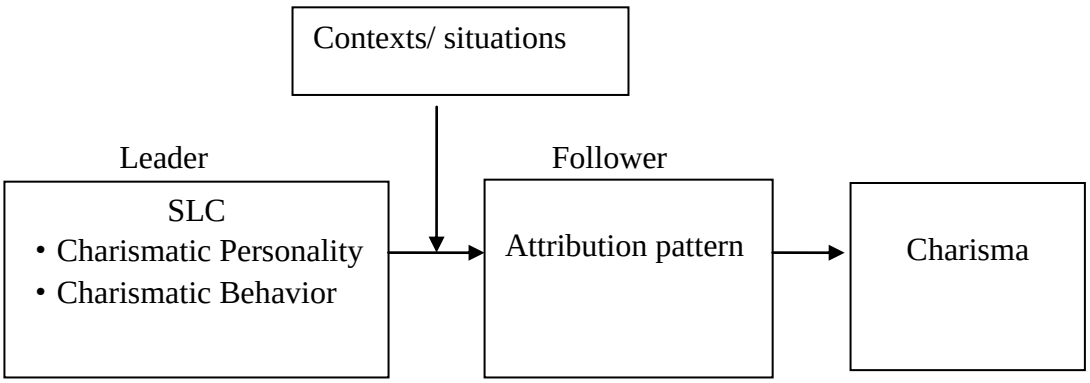

Figure 1 The Primary model of charisma emerging

In line with the results of this study, there are two different components of SLCs: charismatic personality, and charismatic behavior. The former is more stable than the latter, and the latter is more dynamic than the former. In the process of the emerging of charisma, the follower's attribution style is a key element. According to Meindl(1990) , charismatic leadership is largely a

follower-driven phenomenon, and inter-follower social contagion process are more relevant to the explanation of charismatic leadership than anything the leader does or says. The results in the prior studies showed that the follower's personal characteristics, personal values and belief systems will affect their attribution pattern (Sosik, 2005; De Hoogh, et al. 2005). Contexts or situations are the other important element in the mechanism. They can moderate the relationship between the leader's charisma source and the follower's attribution pattern. Different contexts or situations may make different personal qualities and behaviors in leaders more or less attractive, persuasive, and effective because potential followers may be more or less receptive to that type of leader (Beyer, 1999).

We believe that distinguishing the SLC from charisma is very important for the charismatic theory. It puts forward a new perspective in understanding the prior arguments of the charismatic leadership. The first argument: is the charismatic leadership a common or rare phenomenon? As pointed out previously, some scholars argued that charisma is indeed a rare phenomenon (Beyer, 1999; House, 1999), on the contrary, others believed that charisma is a common phenomenon (Bass, 1998; Kouzes and Posner, 1995; Shamir, 1995).

We argued that many leaders, including political leaders, top managers, and middle managers have SLC. We also believed that SLCs are different from ordinary traits and behaviors. For example, SLC, such as articulation of an ideological vision, taking exceptional risks, making exceptional self-sacrifices in the interest of the vision, and behaving in ways that are unconventional can hardly be characterized as 'ordinary behaviors'(House,1999). At the same time, there is strong theoretical argument for the view that charismatic leader possess a variety of characteristics and behaviors that distinguish them from non-charismatic leaders (Javidan ＆Carl,2004). Further, according to our model, charisma emerges from the interaction of all of these elements: SLC, follower's attribution pattern, and contexts or situations. In other words, all of the three elements must be present to some degree for charisma to occur. So, we believed that the charisma may be a rare phenomenon.

The second argument: is the charisma in itself a transient or lasting phenomenon? Some scholars argued that charisma is transient (Beyer,1999), others scholars argued it is lasting(House ,1991, 1999). We believe that different SLC will produce different effects. The charismatic personality of SLC that is more stable located in the leader maybe produce lasting influence on the followers, on the contrary, the charismatic behavior of SLC that is dynamic in the relationship between leaders and followers maybe produce transient influence on the followers.

Finally, many scholars view the charismatic leadership (House, 1977), and transformational leadership (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985, 1998) as the same phenomenon. We don't agree with this point. We argued that they are different leadership theory. Bass and his colleagues (1985, 1996) defined transformational leadership primarily in terms of the leader's effect on followers and the behavior used to achieve this effect. But, the original charismatic leadership theory by Weber described how followers attribute extraordinary qualities to the leader (Yukl, 1999) and the attributions are determined jointly by characteristics of the leader, subordinates, and situation (Conger ＆Kanungo, 1998). Transformational leadership theory focused on leader's transformational behaviors that motivate followers by making them more aware of the importance of task outcomes and inducing them to transcend their own self interest for the sake of the organization. However, charismatic theories focused on leader's extraordinary personality and behavior that were attributed by followers who identify strongly with the leader. We believe that, among transformational leaders and charismatic leaders, there are different SLC that can be attributed as charisma by different followers in different contexts. For transformational leader, the key SLC is transformational behaviors, and for charismatic leader, the SLC includes extraordinary personality and behavior.

Limitations and future research directions

We acknowledge two limitations of this study. The first limitation is the source of the sample. In this study, there are 106 participants who are from

several cities of mainland China, most of them are business managers, and a few from other fields. The prior studies showed that the notion of charisma was also applied to prominent figures in large social systems, for example, to top-level political, military, religious (Shamir, 1995). So, in the future study, it is necessary to increase the number of participants who are from other fields to generalize these results. Second, in the current study, we measured the sources of leader charisma based on reports by followers or subordinates. Future studies might conduct more methods, such as interviewing or observing leaders directly, to obtain plentiful data.

Although, there are several limitations of samples and sources of data in the current study, the core aspects of six dimensions of SLC that we found in China were supported by the prior studies. We also believed that cultural value orientations in a country will determine the optimum leadership profile for that country (Triandis, 1994). For example, some scholars suggests that Paternalistic leadership (PL) is the prevalent leadership style in Chinese business organizations and is different from Western leadership as it manifests some indigenous characteristics (Cheng et al, 2004). In the present study, we found that in the total items of SLC, there are 456 (72 percent) items were attributed as charismatic personality, and only 180 (29 percent) items that were attributed as charismatic behaviors. It is also quite possible that the specific personality and behaviors relating to the same concept may be different in different cultures. Future research is needed to test the degree of trait and behavior similarities and difference in a cross-cultural context. At the same time, distinguishing between charisma and SLC may promote a better understanding of the complex mechanisms underlying the development of charismatic leadership. Further research on SLC is needed to explore its relationship with the other elements, such as follower’s value, personal characteristics, and the environment context. Finally, in future, it is also very important to investigate SLC and leader charisma in the same sample and study the different effects of different SLC on leader charisma.

CONCLUSION

In the current study, we not only proposed the concept of SLC, but also through one inductive study, we identified six dimensions of SLC that seem to correspond to previous research of charismatic leadership in the extant Western literature. At the same time, we developed a primary model to explore the mechanism that how the SLC are attributed by followers. Finally, beyond providing some insight into the nature of charismatic leadership in the Chinese context, our study also offers new evidence from China that charismatic leadership may transcend cultural boundaries.

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