

The Effects of Individual Differences and Charismatic Leadership on Workplace Aggression

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This study examined the effects of individual differences variables (trait anger, self-control, negative affectivity, attitudes toward revenge, and attributional style) and charismatic leadership on incidents of workplace aggression in a sample of 213 employees from a wide range of organizations. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses indicated that the individual differences variables accounted for 27% of the variance in workplace aggression and that charismatic leadership accounted for an additional 3% after controlling for individual differences. In addition, psychological empowerment partially mediated the relationship between charismatic leadership and workplace aggression.

Twenty years ago the term “going postal” was relatively unknown in American vocabulary. Now, the term has become a familiar phrase to describe various types of violence. For the period between 1993 and 1999 in the United States, an average of 1.7 million violent victimizations per year were committed against people who were at work or on duty, according to the National Crime Victimization Survey (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2000) Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses reported a total of 16,664 workplace nonfatal assaults and violent acts with lost workdays in 1999.

Although the impression derived from the increase in media reports over the last several years on the expanding phenomena of workplace violence is alarming, severe acts of violence involving direct physical assault represent relatively rare events at work (Neuman & Baron, 1998). However, workplace aggression is much more prevalent and may prove extremely damaging to individuals and organizations

(Neuman & Baron, 1998). Workplace aggression is employee behavior that is intended to harm current or previous coworkers or the organization to which they are presently or have previously been employed (Baron & Neuman, 1999; Martinko & Zellars, 1998). Workplace aggression ranges from subtle and covert actions to active confrontations, the destruction of property, and direct physical assaults (Barling, 1996; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). In this study, our measure of workplace aggression does not include items measuring assault or physical violence.

Given the seriousness of workplace aggression, researchers have attempted to identify situational and individual factors that influence aggressive behavior. A study by Douglas and Martinko (2001) suggests that individual differences play a large role in predicting workplace aggression, accounting for 62% of the variance in workplace aggression. Additional research also suggests that situational factors play an important part in predicting workplace aggression (Robinson & O’Leary-Kelly, 1998; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). For example, workplace situational factors, such as modeling of team members’ antisocial behaviors, accounted for almost 40% of the variance in workplace aggression (Robinson & O’Leary-Kelly, 1998). In a study examining situational influences on workplace aggression, perceptions of injustice in the workplace significantly accounted for 68% of the variance in retaliatory behaviors (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997).

Previous research suggests that both dispositional and situational factors are important predictors of workplace aggression. However, determining the relative importance of dispositional and situational variables has not been investigated in previous research. These studies tend to focus on either situational or

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dispositional variables without considering the joint effects of these variables on workplace aggression. Douglas and Martinko's (2001) study also raised the issue of whether situational variables make an incremental contribution after accounting for the effect of dispositional variables on workplace aggression. Apart from including demographic variables in their models (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997), studies focusing on the effects of situational variables on workplace aggression did not control for dispositional factors. The issue of the relative contribution of situational or dispositional variables on workplace aggression is still open.

This study is a replication and extension of Douglas and Martinko's (2001) study. In addition to focusing on dispositional factors that influence workplace aggression, we included a situational variable, charismatic leadership, in the model. We were interested in investigating whether charismatic leadership accounted for a unique amount of variance in workplace aggression, after accounting for dispositional factors. We focused on charismatic leadership for theoretical and practical reasons. First, previous research has focused and demonstrated the positive impact of charismatic leadership on individual outcomes. To our knowledge, there is no previous research examining the impact of charismatic leadership on workplace aggression. Second, from a practical perspective, given that workplace aggression is an important issue for organizations to tackle, identifying remedies to reduce workplace aggression is a crucial step. Given that charismatic leadership is associated with a wide range of positive outcomes, we believe that in the presence of a charismatic leader, subordinates are less likely to behave aggressively.

Effects of Dispositional Factors on Workplace Aggression

Douglas and Martinko's (2001) research revealed that particular dispositional factors are significant predictors of workplace aggression. Trait anger, attribution style, negative affectivity, attitudes toward revenge, self-control, and previous exposure to aggressive cultures accounted for 62% of the variance in the respondents' self-reported incidence of workplace aggression. For the purpose of this study, we investigated all of these individual differences except previous exposure to aggressive cultures. Trait anger is a stable disposition that is consistent over time and context and can range from tepid annoyance to blind

rage (Speilberger, 1996). Douglas and Martinko found that trait anger was a statistically significant predictor of workplace aggression. Attribution style refers to the reasons individuals explain negative events (Martinko & Zellars, 1998). Previous research has found that when individuals tend to attribute negative workplace outcomes to other people or their employer and believe that these outcomes were controllable, workplace aggression will be higher than if individuals explain events as unintentional and uncontrollable (Douglas & Martinko, 2001; Martinko & Zellars, 1998). Negative affectivity is the propensity to be pessimistic, feelings of anxiety, and sensitivity to negative events. Although Douglas and Martinko found no effect of negative affectivity on workplace aggression, previous research suggests that negative affectivity is positively related to aggressive behavior (Berkowitz, 1993) and is related to interpersonal conflict (e.g., Spector, 1994). Douglas and Martinko advocated additional research on the relationship between negative affectivity and workplace aggression, so we decided to include this variable in our study.

The desire to seek revenge is the proclivity to inflict damage, injury, or punishment in return for an injury, insult, or perceived harm (Stuckless & Goranson, 1992). Douglas and Martinko (2001) found that desire to seek revenge was related to workplace aggression. Finally, individuals with low self-control manifest a "stable tendency to react offensively to minimal provocations" (Baron & Richardson, 1994, p. 212). Although Douglas and Martinko found no relationship between low self-control and workplace aggression, they did find that employees high in trait anger and low in self-control tended to be more aggressive at work. Although the aim of our study was not to examine interactions between the individual differences, we included low self-control as a variable in this study to examine its effects on workplace aggression. In conclusion, in an attempt to replicate Douglas and Martinko's findings, we proposed the following:

Hypothesis 1: Trait anger, negative attribution style, negative affectivity, the desire to seek revenge, and low self-control will be positively related to workplace aggression.

Effects of Charismatic Leadership on Workplace Aggression

Increased sensitivity to employees' viewpoints can effectively complement violence prevention programs (Nicoletti & Spooner, 1996). Johnson and

Indvik's (1994) *paths to prevention* of workplace aggression emphasizes empowering workers through compassionate leadership. Employees who feel empowered will maximize their effort, output, and contribution while simultaneously decreasing aggressive tendencies and reducing the propensity for workplace aggression within the organization (Johnson & Indvik, 1994). The issue of empowering employees seems particularly important when we consider the positive effects that charismatic leaders have on their followers. Charismatic leaders are the movers and shakers of the world, daring to challenge the status quo and empower their followers to perform beyond normal expectations. Charismatic leaders are visionary (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1985; House, 1977; Conger & Kanungo, 1987), arouse followers' motives (e.g., House & Shamir, 1993), are excellent role models (e.g., Bass, 1988; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; House, 1977), project a positive self-image and are optimistic (Bass, 1988; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; House, 1977), empower their followers (Bass 1988; House, 1977), and challenge the status quo to demonstrate commitment to their values and vision (Conger & Kanungo, 1987).

The majority of studies have demonstrated the positive impact of charismatic leadership on organizational effectiveness (e.g., Howell & Frost, 1989; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). However, there has been no research examining whether there is less workplace aggression in the presence of a charismatic leader. There is research suggesting that charismatic leadership is negatively related to harmful behaviors in the workplace. For example, Barling, Loughlin, and Kelloway (2002) found that transformational leadership was negatively associated with safety accidents; charisma is a large component of transformational leadership. Given that charismatic leaders are role models who do things that are moral and right (Bass & Avolio, 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; House, 1977), their followers are more likely to engage in productive rather than counterproductive behaviors. Charismatic leaders also challenge their followers to go beyond their own needs and to abandon self-serving behavior for the collective good (House, 1977). Given that counterproductive behaviors such as workplace aggression are detrimental to the organization, it seems likely that charismatic leadership through its emphasis on productive behaviors for the collective good is less likely to be associated with workplace aggression.

Recent empirical research also suggests charismatic leaders increase their followers' cooperation within a team through empowerment and increasing

optimism (Jung & Sosik, 2002). Kark, Shamir, and Chen (2003) found that transformational leadership was positively related to social identification and followers' empowerment. Therefore, given the positive effects that charismatic leaders have on their followers, we believe that subordinates of charismatic leaders will feel less inclined to participate in workplace aggression. In addition, followers of charismatic leaders tend to maintain effective performance during stressful situations (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002), suggesting that when "the going gets tough," followers of charismatic leaders are less likely to engage in aggressive behavior.

Hypothesis 2: After controlling for individual differences, charismatic leadership will be negatively associated with workplace aggression.

Empowerment as a Mediator of the Relationship Between Charismatic Leadership and Workplace Aggression

Why do the followers of charismatic leaders feel less inclined to engage in workplace aggression? We investigated psychological empowerment as an explanation for why this might happen. Psychological empowerment has been defined as the increased intrinsic task motivation manifested in cognitions that reflect an individual's active orientation to his or her work role (Spreitzer, 1996). Empowerment consists of four cognitions that constitute an overall construct. These dimensions are meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Spreitzer, 1996; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Meaning involves the fit between a person's values and beliefs and work role requirements. Competence refers to self-efficacy specific to work or the task—the confidence that one can perform well within a particular work domain. Self-determination reflects autonomy in the choices and decisions an individual can make regarding work allocations. Finally, impact is the degree to which an individual can influence strategic, informational, or administrative decisions made at the organizational level.

Empowerment has been linked to charismatic leadership as an explanatory mechanism on why charismatic leaders have a profound impact on their followers. It has been suggested that charismatic leaders use empowerment strategies rather than control to arouse and transform followers' motives and also to achieve a position of influence (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Empirical research suggests that charismatic leaders can empower their followers through express-

ing confidence in their ability to perform at an exceptionally high level (Howell & Frost, 1989; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). To our knowledge, there is no existing research examining the effect of empowerment on workplace aggression. Bass (1998) has suggested that empowerment acts as a mechanism through which charismatic leaders raise their followers' performance level, and there is empirical evidence to support this (Jung & Sosik, 2002). Psychological empowerment influences subordinates' actions in different ways. Having control and finding meaning in one's work probably decrease subordinates' stress levels, leading to less aggressive behavior at work. Schat and Kelloway (2003) found that perceived control was directly associated with emotional well-being and less fear concerning workplace violence. Although they did not find that perceived control was a moderator of workplace violence, their findings suggested that when employees perceive a high degree of latitude in their work they are more likely to be emotionally healthy.

Psychological empowerment can reduce workplace aggression because it increases employees' perceptions of fairness at work. Spreitzer (1996) suggested that when employees are psychologically empowered they feel they have a "voice" in shaping and contributing to the practices and policies of the organization. Research examining the effects of perceptions of justice on retaliatory behaviors (including some workplace aggression behaviors) found that reasonably fair procedures moderated an individual's retaliatory tendencies that would otherwise be maximized by the combination of having low levels of both distributive and interactional justice (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). Given that psychological empowerment can result in employees experiencing autonomy, control, and fairness, we hypothesize that psychological empowerment will act as an intervening mechanism between charismatic leadership and workplace aggression.

Hypothesis 3: Psychological empowerment will mediate the relationship between charismatic leadership and workplace aggression.

Method

Participants

Data were collected from 213 (108 women, 105 men) employees from a wide range of organizations, including a telecommunications company (30% of the sample), a hospital (18%), a retail store (18%), an industrial maintenance

and cleanup company (17%), and an accounting firm (17%). Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 62 years, and their tenure in the organization ranged from 1 year to over 20 years; 55% of participants had worked in the organization between 1 and 5 years. Occupations included managerial positions (23%), professional positions (27%), technical positions (17%), sales positions (17%), clerical (10%), and semiskilled laborers (6%). The overall response rate was 35%. Participants were mailed self-addressed surveys to be returned anonymously to Willie Hepworth.

Measures

Trait anger scale. We used the 10-item Trait Anger subscale of the State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (Spielberger, 1996) to measure trait anger, with higher scores indicating higher trait anger (1 = *almost never* to 4 = *almost always*). The coefficient alpha was .83.

Negative affectivity scale. Participants completed the 11-item Negative Affectivity subscale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*) from the short form of the Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire (Tellegen, 1982), with higher scores indicating higher levels of negative affect. The coefficient alpha was .89.

Self-control scale. To measure self-control, we used the Self-Control subscale of the Personal Values Scale (Scott, 1965). The subscale consists of 20 Likert-type items on a 5-point scale (1 = *absolutely not true* to 5 = *absolutely true*) that measure the degree to which people demonstrate self-control. The coefficient alpha was .81.

Attributional style scale. The Organizational Attributional Style Questionnaire (Campbell & Martinko, 1998; Kent & Martinko, 1995; Martinko & Moss, 1999) was used to determine the extent a person manifests a hostile attributional style. The 28-item scale consists of 7-point Likert-type items that measure the extent individuals demonstrate a tendency to attribute negative workplace outcomes to external, stable, intentional, and controllable causes (1–7 scale). For example, survey participants read the following vignettes: "You receive a poor performance evaluation" and "You fail to receive a promotion that you wanted for a long time." Participants then responded to the following: "To what extent is this outcome caused by something about you (1) as opposed to being caused by other people or circumstances (7)?" "To what extent is the failure to receive the promotion caused by things that vary over time (1) versus things that are stable over time (7)?" "To what extent do you believe that another individual had control over this failure, from absolutely no control (1) to total control (7)?" Finally, "To what extent do you believe that another individual intentionally caused this failure, from not intentional (1) to totally intentional (7)?" Scores for each dimension were acquired by calculating the mean of the responses on that particular dimension. Then, a composite score for attributional style was obtained by determining the mean of the four dimensions. The coefficient alpha was .81.

Attitudes toward revenge scale. Ten items from Stuckless and Goranson's (1992) 20-item Vengeance scale were used to measure the respondent's attitudes toward revenge. The measure uses 7-point Likert type items, which determine the extent to which an individual maintains a positive attitude toward revenge (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). The coefficient alpha was .86.

Charismatic leadership scale. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X/Short Form) was used to measure perceptions of charismatic leadership of participants' immediate supervisor. Three 4-item scales—Attributed Charisma (AC), Idealized Influence (II), and Inspirational Motivation (IM)—were used as measures of charisma. A principal-components analysis was performed on the three MLQ scales. This analysis yielded one factor rather than the three factors posited by Bass and Avolio (1995). Awamleh and Gardner (1999), in a study of perceptions of charismatic leadership, achieved identical findings to this study. Further, the constructs tapped by these scales were originally conceptualized as measuring a single construct of charisma (Bass, 1988). Therefore, the AC, II, and IM scales were combined to produce a single measure of perceptions of charismatic leadership (0 = *not at all* to 4 = *frequently if not always*). Items included "Expresses confidence that goals would be achieved" and "Acts in ways that build your trust." The coefficient alpha was .96.

Workplace aggression. We used Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly's (1998) nine-item Individual Antisocial Behavior Scale to measure workplace aggression. Participants indicated on a 5-point Likert scale (0 = *not at all* to 4 = *frequently, if not always*) the extent to which they had engaged in aggressive workplace behaviors during the last 6 months. The coefficient alpha was .80.

Psychological empowerment. We used Spreitzer's (1995) 12-item Psychological Empowerment Measure to assess psychological empowerment. Participants indicated on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*) the extent to which they agreed with each statement. The coefficient alpha was .88.

Results

Overview of Analyses

To test our hypotheses, we used a series of hierarchical regression analyses. We considered controlling for the effects of several demographic variables (i.e., gender, age, organizational tenure, position, and education level) in our analyses by including them in the first step of the hierarchical regressions. However, because correlational analyses revealed no significant correlations between these demographic variables and aggressive behavior, demographic variables were excluded from subsequent analyses. Douglas and Martinko (2001) also found no effects of gender, age, organizational tenure, position, or educational level on aggressive behavior.

Table 1 shows the correlations between all of the variables. All of the individual differences variables were positively related to workplace aggression. In addition, charismatic leadership and psychological empowerment were negatively related to workplace aggression.

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations Between Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Workplace aggression	0.79	0.52	—							
2. Charismatic leadership	2.17	1.08	-.28**	—						
3. Trait anger	2.19	0.58	.41**	-.17*	—					
4. Negative affectivity	1.86	0.82	.14*	-.11	.46**	—				
5. Self-control	2.94	0.49	.45**	-.12	.52**	.30**	—			
6. Attributional style	3.54	0.94	.24**	-.27**	.28**	.09	.17*	—		
7. Attitudes toward revenge	2.84	1.03	.31**	-.14*	.45**	.28**	.40**	.25**	—	
8. Psychological empowerment	5.21	1.07	-.21*	.37**	-.08	-.29**	.04	-.19*	-.12	—

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Hypothesis 1 and 2: The Effects of Individual Differences and Charismatic Leadership on Workplace Aggression

Table 2 shows the results of the hierarchical regression analysis, regressing workplace aggression on the individual differences variables and charismatic leadership. In Step 1 we entered the individual differences variables, and in Step 2 we entered the charismatic leadership variable. In support of Hypothesis 1, the set of individual differences significantly predicted workplace aggression, accounting for 27% of the variance in workplace aggression, $F(5, 207) = 15.34, p < .001$. Specifically, trait anger ($\beta = .21$) and low self-control ($\beta = .31$) were significant predictors of workplace aggression. The other variables, negative affectivity, negative attribution style, and attitudes toward revenge, were not related to workplace aggression. In support of Hypothesis 2, charismatic leadership ($\beta = -.19$) was negatively related to workplace aggression and accounted for 3% of the variance in workplace aggression after controlling for individual differences, $F(1, 206) = 9.35, p < .01$.

leadership was negatively related to workplace aggression after controlling for individual differences. The second step in establishing mediation is to demonstrate that the initial predictors correlate with the mediator. As shown in Table 2, charismatic leadership was positively related to psychological empowerment, after controlling for the individual differences variables, $F(1, 206) = 17.37, p < .001$. Third, the mediators must be related to the dependent variables with the independent variable included in the model. Finally, the relationship between the independent variable and the criterion variable must disappear when controlling for the mediator variable. If the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable is reduced but remains significant in the presence of the mediator, there is evidence for partial mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Table 3 shows the mediation effects. Psychological empowerment partially mediated the relationship between charismatic leadership and workplace aggression, accounting for 2% of the variance in workplace aggression after controlling for charismatic leadership, $F(1, 205) = 5.58, p < .05$.

Hypothesis 3: Psychological Empowerment Will Mediate the Relationship Between Charismatic Leadership and Workplace Aggression

The first step in establishing mediation is to demonstrate that the initial predictors are correlated with the criterion (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Charismatic

Discussion

The aim of this study was to replicate and extend the study by Douglas and Martinko (2001), through examining the effects of individual differences variables and charismatic leadership on workplace aggression. In addition, we examined psychological empowerment as a mediating factor in explaining

Table 2
Workplace Aggression and Psychological Empowerment Regressed on Individual Differences and Charismatic Leadership

Variable	Workplace aggression	ΔR^2	Psychological empowerment	ΔR^2
Step 1		.27**		.10**
Trait anger	.21**		.06	
Negative affectivity	-.10		-.26**	
Attributional style	.06		-.09	
Attitudes toward revenge	.08		-.05	
Self-control	.31**		.15*	
Step 2		.03**		.07**
Charismatic leadership	-.19*		.28**	
Overall R^2	.28		.15	
(Overall F)	(14.86**)		(7.01**)	

Note. All changes in R^2 reported are adjusted for shrinkage. Entries are standardized betas in final step.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 3
Empowerment as a Mediator of Charismatic Leadership and Workplace Aggression

Variable	Workplace aggression	ΔR^2
Step 1		.27**
Trait anger	.21**	
Negative affectivity	.11	
Attributional style	.05	
Attitudes toward revenge	.07	
Self-control	.33**	
Step 2		.03*
Charismatic leadership	-.15*	
Step 3		.02*
Psychological empowerment	-.15*	

Note. All changes in R^2 reported are adjusted for shrinkage. Entries are standardized betas in final step.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

why charismatic leadership might be negatively related to workplace aggression.

Most of our hypotheses were supported. First, in replicating Douglas and Martinko's (2001) study, we found that the set of individual differences variables accounted for 27% of the variance explained in workplace aggression. Specifically, trait anger and self-control were related to workplace aggression. The positive relationship between trait anger and workplace aggression confirms previous findings, suggesting that individuals who are predisposed to experience anger are more likely to be aggressive in the workplace (Douglas & Martinko, 2001). We also found that individuals low in self-control tend to be more aggressive at work. However, Douglas and Martinko did not find a relationship between low self-control and workplace aggression, although they did find an interaction between trait anger and self-control such that the relationship between trait anger and workplace aggression was stronger when self-control was low. Although our findings do not replicate Douglas and Martinko's, the results confirm previous research on the tendency of low self-control individuals to be more aggressive (Hynan & Grush, 1986). Similar to Douglas and Martinko's findings, negative affectivity was not related to workplace aggression.

However, unlike Douglas and Martinko (2001), we did not find that negative attribution style and attitudes toward revenge were related to workplace aggression. Douglas and Martinko's study was the first to investigate the relationship between negative attribution style and workplace aggression. One possible

reason for the lack of congruency between our findings and Douglas and Martinko's findings are the differences in our samples. We included participants from a wide range of organizations, whereas Douglas and Martinko's participants were limited to two organizations. Differences in organizational climate might moderate the influence of attribution style and attitudes toward revenge on workplace aggression. The literature suggests that employees are less likely to retaliate against their employers when they perceive procedures to be fair (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). A positive climate might have existed in some of our organizations, resulting in employees perceiving their organizations to be fair. Given that the organizations included in our study ranged from a telecommunications organization to an industrial cleaning company, it is likely that the climate and culture within these organizations vary. This effect might have moderated the effect of these individual differences on workplace aggression. Future research could investigate additional organizational and situational factors as moderators of the effects of individual differences on aggression. As Douglas and Martinko (2001, p. 17) noted, "we fully expect that the interaction of individual and situational factors will provide the best explanation for the variability in the incidence of workplace aggression."

We also found that after controlling for individual differences variables, charismatic leadership accounted for 3% of the variance in workplace aggression. To our knowledge, this is the first study to find that charismatic leadership is negatively related to workplace aggression and further adds to the literature on charismatic leadership. The small amount of variance explained by charismatic leadership raises the issue of the importance of situational versus individual differences in explaining workplace aggression. However, Rosenthal and Rubin (1982) have argued that small values of r^2 can represent important and dramatic effects. Even an important variable may account for small percentages of variation. One way to ascertain the importance of the effect sizes reported in this study is to compare them with effect sizes found in similar studies. In a recent study (Bono & Judge, 2003) examining the effects of charismatic/transformational leadership on job performance, the variance explained in subordinates' performance ranged from 2% to 5%. Another recent study also found that transformational/charismatic leadership accounted for 3% of the variance explained in performance for U.S. Army platoons participating in combat simulation exercises (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). Consequently, our effect sizes are not

atypical of other studies in this area. However, this low effect size still raises the issue of the importance of charismatic leadership in predicting workplace aggression. Future research might focus on identifying additional situational factors that account for variance in workplace aggression.

There are some practical implications of this study. For example, the contribution of charismatic leadership in explaining part of the variance in workplace aggression has implications for selection and training and development. For example, training and developing managers to be charismatic might help mitigate the incidence of workplace aggression. Recent evidence suggests that individuals can be trained to exhibit charismatic leadership behaviors (Towler, 2003). Obviously, this is the first study to examine the effect of charismatic leadership on workplace aggression, so these present findings need to be viewed with caution. These findings need to be replicated across different settings to establish the boundary conditions of this effect.

This study also examined psychological empowerment as an explanation for why charismatic leadership might be negatively related to workplace aggression. The findings showed that psychological empowerment partially explained the relationship between charismatic leadership and workplace aggression. This suggests that charismatic leadership, in part, is negatively related to workplace aggression through providing subordinates with work requirements that fit their values, through increasing subordinates' task confidence, through allowing autonomy, and through allowing subordinates to "voice" their opinions concerning organizational decisions. Future research could examine other explanations such as perceptions of interactional justice. If subordinates believe they are being treated in a fair and equitable way, then they are probably less likely to be aggressive; charismatic leaders tend to promote trust and commitment to the organization. It is possible that trust in the organization also mediates the relationship between charismatic leadership and workplace aggression.

There are several limitations to this study. First, the use of self-report data may increase the possibility of common-method variance. However, the presence of nonzero correlations between several of the study's variables suggests that common-method variance is not a major limitation. However, future studies could include the use of more objective data or other source data to reduce the possibility of mono-method bias. A second limitation of the research is the use of cross-sectional data. Future research inves-

tigating the long-term effects of charismatic leaders on the health of their subordinates is needed. Finally, the response rate of 35% was low and raises the issue of bias because the sample that participated in the study might not reflect the population of interest. For example, individuals who chose not to respond might have been the most aggressive and uncooperative. The issue of low response rate and bias is an important issue in organizational health psychology (Schalm & Kelloway, 2001). However, in a recent meta-analysis investigating the relationship between response rate and effect size, Schalm and Kelloway (2001) found a small, statistically nonsignificant relationship ($r = -.15$) between the two variables. Given that Schalm and Kelloway stated that this finding suggests that nonresponse is not likely to result in substantial bias in the results of a survey, we do not believe that our low response rate is a major obstacle in interpreting the results of our study. However, the results should be viewed with some caution given the low response rate; one might expect a higher response rate given that the study's topic is of interest to employees.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that both dispositional and situational factors are related to workplace aggression. This study is unique in examining the relationship between charismatic leadership and workplace aggression and identifying those mechanisms that facilitate the relationship. Future research could expand on the development of charismatic leaders by examining whether individuals who are trained to be charismatic are able to reduce workplace aggression. In addition, prevention programs that focus on empowering individuals within the workplace also appear to be helpful in reducing workplace aggression. Spreitzer (1996) found that a lack of role ambiguity, strong sociopolitical support, access to information, and a participative climate were positively related to psychological empowerment. Future research could focus on whether these types of situational factors alleviate workplace aggression. The findings in this study provide direction for future investigation and have practical implications for reducing the problem of workplace aggression.

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