

# Charisma as a Follower-centric, Cognitive-affective Construct: Initial Empirical Evidence

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## Abstract

*This paper reports an empirical study through which the researcher developed a scale to measure charisma as a follower-centric, cognitive-affective construct. The researcher undertook three related studies, which employed undergraduates and managers who were reading for the MBA in a large Sri Lankan University. The results indicate that charisma embraces two cognitive components (i.e., leader extraordinariness and leader archetypicality) and two affective components (i.e., reverence and passion); and it can be measured with a 16-item Likert-scale type measure with an adequate level of validity and reliability. Accordingly, the writer argues that leaders can manage their charisma by managing leaders' own revelation to followers and the process through which followers form beliefs about and emotions towards the leader.*

**Key Words** : Charisma, leadership, follower-centric approach and social psychology

## 1. Introduction

Weber (1947, p. 359) treated charisma as a follower-centric phenomenon and wrote that, "What is alone important is how the individual is actually regarded by those subject to charismatic authority...." Furthermore, he also thought of charisma as a multidimensional phenomenon. For instance, Weber takes both follower emotion and archetypicality (such as the genuine prophet) along with extraordinariness (Weber, 1947, pp. 359-360) as aspects of charisma. Even the contemporary literature treats leader archetypicality (Steyrer, 1998) or prototypicality (Popper & Sleman, 2001; Popper & Druyan, 2001), leader group prototypicality (Hogg, 2001), attitude of awe or reverential posture (Spencer, 1973), awe (Shils, 1965), and love and enthusiasm (Bendix, 1967; Spencer, 1973) as aspects of charisma.

While some of these dimensions of charisma such as leader archetypicality are cognitive,

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others such as enthusiasm are affective. Yet no significant attempt had been made to conceptualise charisma as a multidimensional, cognitive-affective phenomenon until Jayakody (2008) did it recently. Jayakody (2008), after an extensive literature review, theoretically established charisma as a cognitive-affective phenomenon and identified "leader extraordinariness," "leader archetypicality," "leader group prototypicality," "reverence with awe" and "love with enthusiasm" as dimensions of charisma. However, this construct is yet to be supported empirically, and it is towards this that the present paper intends to contribute. Thus, the intention of this paper is to present the initial empirical evidence for this new construct of charisma.

The rest of the paper is organized into four major sections. In the next section, having briefly discussed the new construct of charisma, the writer explains the antecedents and consequences of charisma. In the third section, the writer describes the development of a new scale of charisma and the research undertaken to assess its construct validity in detail. In assessing the validity of this new construct, the writer undertook three related studies, and these studies are discussed separately. The paper ends with a discussion on the implications of the proposed construct for theory, research and practice before outlining its limitations and providing directions for further studies.

## **2. Charisma as a Cognitive-affective Phenomenon: Dimensions, Antecedents and Consequences**

### **Dimensions of charisma**

Among the five dimensions of charisma that Jayakody (2008) identified, leader extraordinariness can be considered the most widely discussed facet of charisma. Extraordinariness, very often in theology and sometimes even in sociology, is interpreted as "perceived supernatural origin" (Carlton-Ford, 1992). On the contrary, Weber interprets extraordinariness as "apartness from ordinary" (Parsons, 1966, p. 662). Accordingly, Weber's use of terms like 'supernatural' and 'superhuman' should be treated as an attempt of setting charisma apart from ordinary rather than an attempt of establishing charisma as a supernatural, superhuman phenomenon. Being in line with Weber, in this paper, leader extraordinariness refers to the follower's belief that the leader towers above an ordinary person in many, if not in all, aspects of a human being.

Meanwhile, Neuberger, as cited in Steyrer (1998), argues that behind the category of leadership, there is a more basic dimension, which he designates as an archetype. Even Weber seems to think on the same lines though he called them sub-types of charisma. As Steyrer (1998) reported, Hummel identified 17 sub-types of charisma in Weber's writing while Steyrer (1998) and Olsson (2000) also add some more to this list. Based on Neuberger (cited in Steyrer, 1998), the archetype can be defined as the embodiment of "...the manifold phenotypes of one area of reality in a fundamental and typical way, thus representing the original..." Accordingly, leader archetypicality can be taken as an aspect of charisma and the present writer defines it as the follower's belief that the leader is an ideal representation of whom the follower expects the leader to be (i.e. a hero, a father, an Indian).

The third and final cognitive dimension of Jayakody's conceptualization of charisma is group prototypicality. Even though there is no evidence that Weber treats charismatic leaders as group prototypical, some contemporary writers (Knippenberg & Knippenberg, 2005; Ellemers et al., 2004) view charismatic leaders as prototypical. According to Knippenberg & Knippenberg (2005), group prototypicality is an exemplar that signifies what the group is. However, as Knippenberg & Knippenberg state in the same paper, group prototypicality does not necessarily mean that the leader possesses all the characteristics of the group but only some. Yet, they argue further that a leader becomes the ideal representation rather than the average representation of the group in respect of the characteristics that that leader possesses. Being in line with these writers, leader group prototypicality is referred to in this paper as the follower's belief that the leader is an ideal representative of the people to whom the follower belongs.

Charisma, as said above, is not only a set of beliefs of followers but also a set of their emotions. Weber (1947, p. 360) states that charisma in a corporate group is an "...emotional form of communal relationship". Whereas Shils (1965) states that awe is what is common in all objects of charisma, Conger et al. (2000) state that charisma, which they operationalize in terms of leader behaviour, evokes reverence among followers. Weber also wrote that charisma "...implies a specific attitude of respect..." (Parsons, 1968, p. 662) and devotion (Weber, 1947, p. 359). According to Lindholm (2002, p. 65), Freud says that the leader is held not only in awe but also in passionate adulatory love. Meanwhile, Spencer (1973) believes that charisma possesses both awe and enthusiasm in different degrees. Considering this divide, the present writer conceptualizes that charisma is characterized by two affective dimensions, which he calls 'reverence with awe' and 'love with enthusiasm'. While the former refers to the follower's sentiments characterised by respect, admiration and fear towards the leader which are aroused when the follower interacts with the leader in person or otherwise, the latter refers to the follower's sentiments characterised by devotion and enthusiasm towards the leader which are aroused when the follower interacts with the leader in person or otherwise.

### **Antecedents of charisma**

Behaviours and qualities of leaders that are considered as aspects of behavioural charisma (Gerth & Mills, 1981, p. 262) in the leader-centric theories become antecedents of charisma, once charisma is thought of as a follower-centric phenomenon. This is because they, i.e., leader behaviours and qualities, simply become objects for follower cognition and affection. In addition, behaviours and qualities that are not usually recognized in leader-centric theories, but are known to incite a charismatic image such as contingent punishment and non-contingent reward (Atwater et al., 1997), as well as artefacts like dress (Perinbanayagam, 1971), can be taken as antecedents of charisma.

In addition, hereditary charisma and charisma of office (Weber, 1947:366), which are very often overlooked in the currently used scales can also be taken as antecedents of charisma, once charisma is measured in terms of follower beliefs and emotions. Certainly, this is very important, as the charisma of incumbents of secular organizations is rooted not only in personal charisma but also in both the hereditary charisma and the charisma of office.

Finally, what Bendix (1967) identified as “propagandistic manipulation” of charisma which modern dictatorship very often has utilized but Weber failed to identify (Bendix, 1967), can also be taken as an antecedent of charisma. In fact, the inclusion of the effect of propagandistic manipulation on charisma is important in the analysis of charisma of contemporary leaders, as propagandistic manipulation has been successful in making leaders charismatic in the eyes of beholders even when leaders lack genuine charisma, hereditary charisma and charisma of office.

Accordingly, when compared to the currently used scales, which only tap a limited aspect of behavioural charisma, the proposed scale of charisma covers the full spectrum of antecedents of charisma as it covers also hereditary charisma, charisma of office and the propagandistic manipulation of charisma. However, the reader is reminded that charisma is a function of, on the one hand, the antecedents mentioned above, and, on the other hand, the cognitive-affective process of followers. Therefore, what has been taken as antecedents of charisma is rather contextual, and is thus certainly beyond generalization. Weber seems to be aware of this issue, and that is why he states that the charismatic relationship thrusts followers to a “devotion to heroism, no matter which content it has” (as cited in Steyrer, 1998).

### **Consequences of charisma**

Consequences of charisma can be found at both the individual level i.e., follower and the group level, i.e., unit or organizational. However, charismatic effects at individual level are multitudes, and thus can be traced at different levels such as psychological and behavioural. For instance, comparing charismatic leadership with earlier theories of leadership, House (1992) takes emotional attachment to the leader, motivational arousal of the followers, trust and confidence in the leader, followers’ self-esteem and follower intrinsic motivations as consequences of the charismatic behaviours of leaders. Furthermore, he states that higher performance ratings and more satisfied and highly motivated followers are viewed as consequences of effective leadership. Charismatic leaders are also believed to result in certain follower behaviours such as extra-effort and self-sacrifice (Shamir et al., 1993). Finally, charisma is said to result in certain organizational outcomes such as realization of organizational goals and organizational cohesion.

In contrast to the antecedents, the notion of charisma advanced in this paper neither adds to nor detracts from the charismatic outcomes commonly found in the current literature. However, the present conceptualization opens up an avenue to analyse charismatic dynamics further as it provides a means to trace the consequences of charisma to its dimensions. For instance, charisma is known to cause both extra effort and trust and one cannot examine these relationships further as long as charisma is treated unidimensionally. Yet, with the present conceptualization, one can even examine which aspect of charisma causes which charismatic outcome. Accordingly, the present theorization of charisma along with the proposed operationalization of charisma will help us to analyse charismatic dynamics more rigorously than can be done at present.

### **3. Construction of a New Scale of Charisma**

A construct is meaningless if it does not approximate the phenomenon that it intends to signify. Thus, construct should be operationally defined; defined through a form of measurement. The development of measurement involves several steps of which the identification of dimensions/variables on *a priori* grounds (Bryman & Cramer, 1990, pp. 66-67) is the first step. Secondly, indicators should be identified and then items of the scale should be developed. Finally, the scale should be tested for its validity and reliability.

As the dimensions of charisma had already been identified (Jayakody, 2008), the researcher commenced the present empirical study by developing indicators and items for the new scale of charisma. Accordingly, the researcher developed about fifty items of which some indicators and items were drawn from existing scales, while others were original. Then, the writer worked together with a colleague to refine both the indicators and items of the scale, and 39 items were agreed upon. Afterwards, the items along with the operational definitions of dimensions were presented to two other colleagues who are familiar with the notion of charismatic leadership, and they were requested to comment on the precision, completeness and comprehensibility of items. Furthermore, they were also requested to suggest any other possible areas to be covered under each dimension. A few suggestions including two other areas to be covered (i.e., a feeling of being protected) resulted in 41 statements.

### **4. Study 1**

#### **Content Adequacy Analysis of Proposed Scale of Charisma**

##### ***Method***

Traditionally the content validity of a construct was established simply based on the researcher(s)' and/or a few other experts' subjective judgements. The process taken in this traditional approach is similar to the process that the researcher employed to develop the items explained in the previous paragraph. Moving a step further from this traditional approach, the present researcher decided to employ a combination of methods to establish construct validity. Accordingly, the researcher employed *Q- Factoring of Extended Data Matrix* (Schriesheim et al., 1993), the comparison of means of items with a *t* test (Hinkin & Tracey, 1999).

Following Schriesheim et al.'s (1993) recommendation to employ undergraduate and graduate students for content adequacy analysis, the content adequacy was analysed using the data collected from a sample of undergraduates of a Sri Lankan university. Having considered the level of English proficiency of the undergraduates participating in this study, the rating forms that were originally developed in English were translated into Sinhala - their mother tongue. The researcher who developed the scale himself translated it, and then the colleague who worked with the researcher to refine the indicators and items of the scale assessed the appropriateness of the translation. Both agreed on the final version. Certainly, this approach is not in line with the recommended method of translating questionnaires. Yet, as the researcher

who developed the scale is the one who translated it and the colleague who participated in the development of scale scrutinized the translation, the researcher believes that the scale is free from the issues of measurement equivalent.

Five separate pages (also known as rating forms) were prepared for the five dimensions of charismatic leadership. The name and the definition of one of the five proposed charismatic dimensions were presented at the top of each page, followed by a listing of all 41 statements. The sequence of the items was the same in all five rating forms; however, five versions of the set of rating forms were prepared by randomly arranging the rating forms in the rating form set in order to control the response bias that may occur from the order effect (Schriesheim et al., 1993). Each set contained a full page of instructions as to how the respondents were to complete the rating forms. The instructions asked the respondents to assess the extent to which each statement refers to the dimension of charisma that the respondents were being asked to rate on a five-point Likert-type magnitude scale from "non or hardly any" to "completely or almost completely".

### ***Participants***

The students who participated in the study were in their final year. They had learnt about leadership as a part of their management and organizational behaviour courses, yet their exposure to the notion of the charismatic/transformational leader was limited. Ninety-four sets of rating forms that were complete were considered for the analysis. In general, as Schriesheim et al. (1993) stated, it is possible to undertake Q-factor analysis even with small data sets (even thirty respondents), despite the fact that the factor analysis requires a significantly large data set. All respondents were Sinhalese, and all except 14 (who were Catholics) were Buddhists. Furthermore, other than 17 respondents, all the others were female (78%). The age of these respondents ranged from 20 years to 25 years and they did not have work experience. The researcher administered the rating forms during the second hour of a two-hour lecture with the permission of the lecturer taking the respective lecture and students took around 15 minutes to complete the rating forms.

### ***Analysis 1: Q-Factoring of Extended Data Matrix***

First, the researcher developed a data matrix where the rows represent items and the columns represent the five charismatic dimensions; thus, each cell represents the mean rating of each statement with respect to each charismatic dimension. Next, the correlation matrix was computed among the rows (statements) and across the columns (charismatic dimensions), and the matrix was then subjected to the Principle Component Factor analysis (Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization). A four-factor solution emerged in seven iterations. This solution retains 33 items that are positive and greater than the 0.6 loading cut-off point established by the researcher. However, it was also found that no more items would load even if the cut-off point was lowered to the generally recommended level, i.e., 0.4. Other than two items, the rest of the 31 items loaded on their respective theoretical categories – the proposed charismatic dimensions. The item "When I interact with my leader, I feel that he is a larger than life figure", which was supposed to load on "reverence with awe", also closely loaded on extraordinariness. Therefore, the researcher removed this item from the scale. The

item "When I interact with my leader, I feel devoted to him/her", which was supposed to load on "love with enthusiasm" loaded on reverence with awe. No item of leader group prototypicality emerged in the factor analysis and many of the items loaded negatively on either or both of "reverence with awe" and "leader extraordinariness," while reporting a significantly lower positive loading on leader archetypicality.

### ***Analysis 2: Comparison of Means of items with t tests***

Following Hinkin & Tracey (1999), after the data matrix was constructed, a t test was undertaken to compare the mean of each item across the five charismatic dimensions. This allowed the researcher to see whether the mean value reported for a particular charismatic dimension was statistically significantly higher than its reported mean values for each of the other charismatic dimensions. The analysis showed that 23 items could be appropriately classified into their respective charismatic dimensions.

### ***Results***

Initially, the researcher decided to select the final set of items of the measure based on the results of both Q-Factor analysis and t tests, taking 0.6 and 4 as cut off points for factor loading and mean value respectively. However, the item "My leader is in many ways a new ideal of human capabilities" was also selected as its reported mean value was 3.99; just .01 below the cut off point. The analysis together, as shown in Table 1, provides 17 items that meet both criteria.

This analysis suggests two important changes to the original formulation of charisma. First, it suggests, as stated previously, dropping leader group prototypicality from charisma. Secondly, the analysis indicates the necessity of calling the dimension "love with enthusiasm" as "passion" because the items loaded into this dimension are characterised by 'energising', 'awakening' and 'enthusiasm'. The term "passion" is preferred over "enthusiasm" as these three items reflect collectively what Lindholm (2002, p. 15) called passion "...inchoate internal drives, felt rather than known, which impel men and woman to act, often against their better judgment". Accordingly, this dimension -passion- refers to the follower's sentiments characterized by "energising", 'awakening' and 'enthusiasm', which arise when the follower interacts with the leader in person or otherwise. The item "When I interact with my leader, I feel devoted to him/her", which was supposed to measure "love with enthusiasm" (which is now called passion) at the stage of operationalization, was considered as measuring "reverence with awe" as it was classified into and loaded on that dimension.

**Table 1 : Results of the content adequacy analysis of the proposed scale of charisma**

Item	Leader archetypicality		Leader extraordinariness		Reverence with awe		Passion	
	Loading	Mean	Loading	Mean	Loading	Mean	Loading	Mean
My leader meets my expectations about the kind of person that I expect him/her to be.	.913	4.52						
My leader is the kind of person that I expect him/her to be.	.909	4.44						
My leader is a model of the kind of person that I expect him/her to be.	.919	4.39						
My leader displays the behaviour of the kind of person that I expect him/her to be.	.871	4.31						
My leader is an embodiment of the values of the kind of person that I expect him/her to be.	.876	4.02						
My leader has the same outlook that I expect him/her to have.	.858	4.17						
My leader is in many ways above any ordinary person I can think of.			.723	4.53				
My leader is in many ways a new ideal of human capabilities.			.788	3.99				
My leader shows me the potential of human beings that I otherwise thought impossible.			.706	4.32				
My leader is a new model of leadership, which I had not thought of previously.			.674	4.01				
When I interact with my leader, I feel obliged to respect him/her.					.845	4.41		



When I interact with my leader, I feel driven by an inner regard for him/her.					.849	4.27		
When I interact with my leader, I feel devoted to him/her.					.845	4.08		
When I interact with my leader, I feel intimidated.					.792	4.21		
When I interact with my leader, I feel energised.							.919	4.05
When I interact with my leader, I feel an awakening.							.999	4.36
When I interact with my leader, I feel enthusiastic.							.974	4.53

## 5. Study 2

### Confirmatory factor analysis of the proposed scale of charisma

#### Method

The purpose of this study was to empirically examine the construct validity of the new charismatic scale using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). CFA is capable of examining the pre-specified factor structure against an empirically derived structure and is thus ideal for testing the factor structure of charisma identified in Study 1. Furthermore, the researcher examined the prevalence of the second order factor model in the data since charisma is conceptualized in the present work as a construct consisting of four dimensions which converged into one higher order construct, i.e., charisma.

The researcher employed the maximum likelihood method available in Amos 16 and used the chi-square statistics ( $\chi^2$ ) to test the model fit to the data (Fan *et al.*, 1999; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Furthermore, comparative fit indices (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) and the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) were employed to determine whether the data fitted the model of the factor structure (Fan *et al.*, 1999; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The null hypothesis tested in  $\chi^2$  in the context of CFA is that the assumed covariance matrix is equivalent to the observed covariance matrix; thus, the failure to reject the null hypothesis is an indication of model fit. TLI and CFI greater than 0.90 indicate a good fit of data (Kelloway, 1998). A RMSEA value less than 0.08 indicates a reasonable model fit (Fan *et al.*, 1999) while a value close to 0.06 indicates a relatively good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). While  $\chi^2$  is considered to be sensitive to sample size (Fan *et al.*, 1999), CFI, TLI and RMSEA are known to be less influenced by the sample size.

### **Respondents**

Among the respondents, 73% was male. While 33% was less than 30 years old, 55% of respondents were reported to be of an age group of 30 to less than 40 years. Around 74% of respondents were working in the private sector while 20% were working in the public sector. Around 54% stated the CEO or a Manager, a level below the CEO, as his/her immediate supervisor, while 31% stated a Manager two levels below the CEO as his/her immediate supervisor. Eighty percent (80%) of respondents reported that they have a person-to-person interaction with the leader daily.

### **Measure**

This study employed the 17 items that were selected in the first study. The respondents were requested to state the extent to which each statement appropriately indicate the respondent's beliefs about, and emotions towards his/her immediate supervisor. All items were on a five-point Likert scale ("not at all" to "completely"). The items were drawn from the English version of the questionnaire that was initially developed. The English version was used, as all respondents were fluent in English despite the fact that the mother tongue of most respondents was Sinhala and that of a few was Tamil.

### **Results**

When the model is tested with all seventeen items, as shown in Table 2, all three indices (CFI, TLI and RMSEA) indicated that the data fits the model of the factor structure. However, the item "When I interact with my leader, I feel intimidated" loaded poorly on reverence with awe (factor loading .19), and the reported squared multiple correlation coefficient was .03. Therefore, this item was removed from the model and that resulted in a little improvement in the CFI and TLI, though no change was observed in the RMSEA. Accordingly, based on the value reported for the RMSEA, it can be concluded that there is a 'reasonable model fit' rather than a 'good model fit'. Having considered this fact, the researcher decided to test two other alternative models, namely, the single factor model and the two factors second order factor model (cognitive-affective model). In addition to CFI, TLI and RMSEA, the researcher, following Hair Jr. et al. (2006, p. 774) *et al.*, also considered two parsimony fit indexes namely the Parsimony Goodness-of-Fit Index (PGFI) and the Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI) to compare these competing models. The highest PGFI and PNFI means the best fit of model compared to the competing model. As shown in Table 2, the four factor second order model (with sixteen items) appeared to be better than the two alternative models. Therefore, a four factors second order model is considered appropriate and factor loading of dimensions and items are shown in Table 3.

**Table 2 : Comparison of alternative model of charisma using CFA**

Model	$\chi^2$	Df	GFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	PGFI	PNFI
<b>Four factor second order model (with 16 items)</b>	<b>179.503</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>.863</b>	<b>.945</b>	<b>.934</b>	<b>.079</b>	<b>.614</b>	<b>.738</b>
Four factor second order model (with 17 items) including intimidation	207.779	115	.851	.936	.925	.079	.640	.735
Single factor model	281.215	104	.781	.877	.858	.115	.597	.711
Two factor model (cognitive-affective model)	240.490	103	.811	.905	.889	.102	.614	.726

**Table 3 : Results of CFA of charisma**

	Leader charisma	Leader archetypicality	Leader extraordinariness	Reverence	Passion
Leader archetypicality	.92				
Leader extraordinariness	.87				
Reverence	.88				
Passion	.96				
My leader meets my expectations about the kind of person that I expect him/her to be.		.75			
My leader is the kind of person that I expect him/her to be.		.81			
My leader is a model of the kind of person that I expect him/her to be.		.88			
My leader displays the behaviour of the kind of person that I expect him/her to be.		.86			
My leader is an embodiment of the values of the kind of person that I expect him/her to be.		.91			

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My leader has the same outlook that I expect him/her to have.		.74			
My leader is in many ways above any ordinary person I can think of.			.62		
My leader is in many ways a new ideal of human capabilities.			.84		
My leader shows me the potential of human beings that I otherwise thought impossible.			.73		
My leader is a new model of leadership, which I had not thought of previously.			.68		
When I interact with my leader, I feel obliged to respect him/her.				.55	
When I interact with my leader, I feel driven by an inner regard for him/her.				.92	
When I interact with my leader, I feel devoted to him/her.				.69	
When I interact with my leader, I feel energized.					.84
When I interact with my leader, I feel an awakening.					.74
When I interact with my leader, I feel enthusiastic.					.88
<b>Variance extracted (VE)</b>	<b>.82</b>	<b>.68</b>	<b>.52</b>	<b>.54</b>	<b>.68</b>
<b>Construct reliability (CR)</b>	<b>.97</b>	<b>.92</b>	<b>.78</b>	<b>.74</b>	<b>.86</b>

Finally, convergent validity of charisma and each of its dimensions were examined following Hair Jr. et al. (2006, p. 808). According to these writers, a construct can be taken to possess an adequate convergent validity if it reports at least 0.5, 0.5 and 0.7 for loading estimates, Variance Extracted (VE) and reliability respectively. As shown in Table 3, the model meets all these benchmarks and thus can be considered to possess an acceptable level of convergent validity.

As the item that referred to the feeling of intimidation was removed from the dimension called reverence with awe, and the remaining items indicate “respect”, “inner regard” and “devotion” of followers rather than their fear, the researcher decided to rename this dimension as “reverence”. Thus reverence refers to the follower’s sentiments characterized by “respect”, “inner regard” and “devotion” which arise when the follower interacts with the leader in person or otherwise. This is, at least partially, in line with Conger et al. (2000) who assume that

charisma evokes reverence which is characterised by 'respect', 'esteem' and 'admiration'. Yet, this conceptualization deviates from Shils (1965) as well as Spencer (1970) who thought of awe as an aspect of charisma.

## **6. Study 3**

### **Further validation of charisma**

#### ***Method***

This study was undertaken to further assess the empirical validity of the proposed construct by providing evidence for reliability, convergent, discriminant and criterion validity of the construct. The approach that Conger and Kanungo (1998, pp. 81-92) employed to provide evidence for convergent and discriminant validity of the C-K scale was adopted in this study with the same purpose.

An on-line questionnaire survey (Saunders et al. 2003, p. 310) was used to collect the data. The researcher sent an e-mail to respondents. The e-mail, after briefing the respondents about the purpose of the study, requested the respondents to sign into the URL given in the e-mail as a hyper link to find the questionnaire and the instructions needed to complete it. The on-line survey was considered appropriate for this study for two reasons. On the one hand, it is appropriate as the respondents of the present study are used to the internet while on the other hand, the items of the scale are simple and can be organized on a single screen (Saunders et al. 2003, p. 283).

#### ***Participants***

Study 3 was undertaken among Managers reading for the MBA at the same university from which the respondents were drawn for the previous studies. An e-mail was sent to all MBA students, about 210, and forty four (44) managers responded to the questionnaire during the one week that was assigned for response. Though the response rate was around 20% which is below the norm which is (30%) (Saunders et al. 2003, p. 284), this is acceptable since the respondents were only given a week, instead of the two weeks which is generally advised (Saunders et al. 2003, p. 284). Among the respondents, 81% were male while 70% of the respondents were in the age group of 30 to 40 years. Another 20% were in their 20's and the remaining 10% were 40 years or above. Almost 80% of respondents were working in the private sector, and about half of the respondents had three years or more working experience with the leader being evaluated. Furthermore, another 30% had one year to less than three years working experience with the leader. Thirty four percent of the respondents treated his/her CEO as his/her immediate superior, while another 27% took the Manager one level below the CEO as his/her immediate superior. Finally, 80% of respondents reported to have person-to-person contact with their immediate superior who was treated as the leader.

### **Measures**

First, idealized influence, which is treated as similar to charisma (Bass, 1999), was considered appropriate to assess the convergent validity of the proposed measure. The writer employed items used to measure idealized influence in MLQ-5x. Second, the researcher included an item measuring the concept of "Manager as Administrator" in order to assess the discriminant validity. Since no appropriate measure that is also short was found, the researcher wrote an item - "My manager is just another administrator of day-to-day work" - to measure the concept of "Manager as Administrator". Finally, another four single item measure was included in the questionnaire, which was supposed to measure four criterion variables: follower extra-effort, follower personal satisfaction, personal identification and leader effectiveness. These constructs have been considered as consequences of charismatic/transformational leadership in the neo-charismatic leadership literature (Degroot *et al.*, 2000), and are thus suitable to be employed as criterion variables in the present study. The use of single item measures to provide both criterion and discriminant evidence was considered appropriate, since the purpose of this study is to provide the initial evidence for the construct rather than to develop a rigorous measurement scale (Conger & Kanungo, 1998, pp. 73-74). Furthermore, rather than the 16 item measure supported in the CFA, an initial 17 item measure was employed for this study too with the purpose of further examining the appropriateness of the item called "intimidation" as a variable of charisma.

### **Result**

Table 4 shows the results of the reliability analysis. The proposed measure of charisma as well as all its dimensions except reverence with awe exceeds the appropriate level of reliability (Cronbach's Alpha 7 as per Bacharcha, 1989). The Cronbach's Alpha reported for the dimension called reverence with awe was 0.6894, which rose up to 0.8113 once the item measuring 'intimidation' was dropped. Accordingly, this study also indicates the necessity of deleting this item from the proposed scale. Therefore, this item was not included in the analysis reported below.

**Table 4 : Analysis of reliability of the proposed scale of charisma**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>No. of items</b>	<b>Alpha</b>
Leader archetypicality	6	0.9484
Leader extraordinariness	4	0.9025
Reverence with awe	4	0.6894
Passion	3	0.8449
Leader charisma	4	0.9386
Idealized influence	10	0.9198

As said previously, convergent validity and discriminant validity were assessed examining the correlation between new scale of charisma and two other measures, i.e., idealized influence and Manager as Administrator, respectively. While the researcher found 0.89 ( $p < .01$ , two-tailed test) correlation between the proposed measure of charisma and idealized influence, no statistically significant correlation was found between the proposed scale of charisma and the single item scale of Manager as Administrator. So, the proposed instrument satisfies the criteria of both convergent and discriminant evidence, and thus the instrument can be considered to possess an adequate level of construct validity.

**Table 5: Correlation among charisma, idealized influence, non-charismatic leaders and dimensions of charisma**

		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Leader archetypicality						
2	Leader extraordinariness	.72*					
3	Reverence	.81*	.82*				
4	Passion	.86*	.82*	.83*			
5	Leader charisma	.92*	.91*	.93*	.95*		
6	Idealized influence	.90*	.70*	.84*	.84*	.89*	
7	Manager as an administrator	-.26	-.24	-.12	-.20	-.23	-.22

\* $p < 0.01$   
 2-tailed test.

Hierarchical regression analysis was performed to assess the criterion validity of the new scale of charisma. Hierarchical regression was chosen as it allows us to observe whether the new scale of charisma performs better than the ones currently used (such as idealized influence) in predicting the theoretical outcomes of charisma. As shown in Table 6, when idealized influence was entered in the first step, it explains a significant amount of the variance of outcome measures (between 39% and 54%). In the second step charisma was entered. As shown in Table 6, it explained an additional 12%, 14% and 16% of variance of leader effectiveness, follower extra-effort and personal identification, respectively. The analysis indicates that charisma does not add a significant additional explanation to follower personal satisfaction. Accordingly, the new scale of charisma can be considered a better predictor of leader effectiveness, follower extra-effort and personal identification while it is in no way better than idealized influence in predicting follower personal satisfaction.

**Table 6: Comparison of the effect of idealized influence and charisma on selected consequences of charisma**

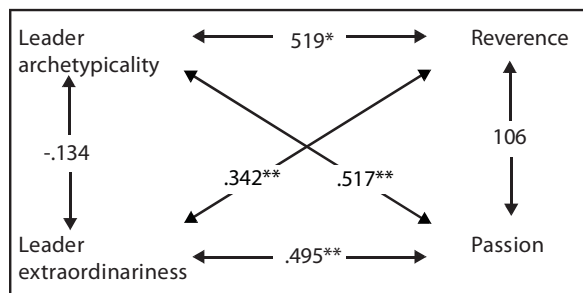
Variance explained (n = 44)								
	Follower extra effort		Follower personal satisfaction		Personal identification		Leader effectiveness	
	$\Delta R^2$	$F(\Delta R^2)$	$\Delta R^2$	$F(\Delta R^2)$	$\Delta R^2$	$F(\Delta R^2)$	$\Delta R^2$	$F(\Delta R^2)$
Idealized influence	.39	26.25*	.54	48.71*	.50	41.42*	.48	39.30*
Leader charisma	.14	16.16*	.03	3.19	.16	18.21*	.12	12.86**
Hierarchical regressions								
Step/variables	Follower extra effort		Follower personal satisfaction		Personal identification		Leader effectiveness	
	Beta	T	Beta	T	Beta	t	Beta	T
1. Idealized influence	.62	5.12*	.73	6.98*	.71	6.44*	.70	6.27*
2. Idealized influence Leader charisma	-.17 .90	-.78 4.02*	.36 .39	1.75 1.79	1.79 .85	-.23 4.27*	.03 .76	.13 3.59**

\*  $p < .00$

\*\*  $p < .001$

Finally, in order to observe the nature of the relationships among these dimensions further, especially to observe any possible spurious relationships among the dimensions of charisma, a series of partial correlation was run among these dimensions (Bryman & Cramer, 1990, p. 23). The findings are given in Figure 2.

**Figure 1: Partial correlations among charismatic dimensions**



\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

Two-tailed test.



As shown in Figure 2, the relationship between leader archetypicality and leader extraordinariness became statistically insignificant when reverence and passion were controlled, while the same was observed between reverence and passion when the cognitive variables were controlled. This indicates that the two cognitive components of charisma are independent of each other while the two affective components of charisma are also independent of each other. Further, though correlations among cognitive components and affective components declined once the spurious relationships were eliminated, still, a lower to moderate relationship was found among two cognitive components and two affective components. The correlations reported between leader archetypicality and the two affective components are, in general, similar in magnitude. The least association reported among the charismatic dimensions can be found between leader extraordinariness and reverence, while leader archetypicality and reverence reported the highest association. However, the present study did not explore the direction of causality of cognitive dimensions and affective dimensions.

## **7. General Discussion**

The purpose of this paper is to provide initial empirical evidence for the new charismatic construct that Jayakody (2008) established theoretically. Based on the literature, Jayakody conceptualized charisma as a multidimensional, cognitive-affective construct that subsumes leader extraordinariness, leader archetypicality, leader group prototypicality, reverence with awe, and love with enthusiasm. Extending this work further, the present study operationalized it with a Likert-scale type measure and then tested for its construct validity in three related studies.

This empirical study shows adequate construct validity and indicates the possibility of operationalizing it with 16 items. Yet, it also suggests two modifications to the five-dimensional model of charisma that Jayakody (2008) proposed. Firstly, leader group prototypicality failed to remain as a dimension of charisma in the content adequacy analysis. Secondly, the analysis indicates the aptness of redefining reverence with awe and love with enthusiasm as reverence and passion respectively. Among these modifications, the second modification -the renaming of affective dimensions- is not theoretically problematic because both reverence and passion are still in line with the current theorisation of charisma. For instance, Spencer (1973) states that an attitude of awe or reverential posture as a character of charisma, while Lindholm (2002) seems to establish passion as the innermost temperament of charisma. Yet the deletion of leader group prototypicality from charisma challenges the current theorization of charisma and thus deserves further illumination.

Is the inadequacy of scale items the reason for the exclusion of leader group prototypicality from the scale of charisma or a manifestation of culturally charged charismatic leadership? While the first possibility seems to be problematic, the second possibility cannot be ruled out simply based on the present study. The items used to tap leader group prototypicality cannot be treated inadequate as some of these items were drawn from the scale that Knippenberg & Knippenberg (2005) used to measure leader group prototypicality, and those items have shown adequate validity in their study. Yet, the second possibility, a manifestation of culturally

charged leadership, cannot be dropped as the Sri Lankan culture is found to be hierarchical (Nanayakkara, 1992, pp. 42-3; Liyanage, 1996), thus followers may expect their leaders not to be similar to themselves. However, the present study did not attempt to address this latter possibility; this issue -the appropriateness of leader group prototypicality to be treated as a dimension of charisma- should be re-examined in future research.

## **8. Theoretical implications**

First, the emergence of leader archetypicality as a dimension of charisma questions the adequacy of the neo-charismatic theorization of charisma as the neo-charismatic theorization has not recognized leader archetypicality as a dimension of charisma. The leaving out of leader archetypicality is indeed problematic, as Weber thought that the source of charismatic magnetism rests in those whom Weber designated as prototypical charismatic leaders (i.e., leader archetypicality) such as shamans and prophets (Lindholm, 2002, p. 30). Accordingly, the present operationalization of charisma is in agreement with Weber's conception of charisma, and thus contributes to the advancement of the theory of charisma.

Second, the reestablishment of charisma as an emotionally charged phenomenon can be taken as yet another contribution of the present study to the theory of charisma. Both Weber (1947) and Lindholm (2002) considered charisma as an emotional phenomenon, yet this emotional content of charisma has lost its place in both the MLQ and the C-K scale, which may simply be due to the heavy emphasis of the neo-charismatic paradigm on what Burns (as cited in Krishnan, 2005) called ideological, transformational leadership rather than idolized, heroic leadership. For instance, while the MLQ contains an item which refers to the leader's enthusiastic communication, the C-K scale does not identify follower emotions as a separate dimension, despite the fact that it consists of items that refer to follower 'excitement', 'inspiration' and 'surprise'.

Finally, the contradiction between Weber's conception of charisma and that of Shils seems trivial when charisma is operationalized as a cognitive-affective phenomenon. According to Shils (1965), Weber's focus is on a concentrated, intense charisma; a charisma of person, whereas charisma also exists in a less intense, dispersed form throughout the various positions of an institution and across the institutions in society. However, the present theorisation treats both personal charisma and the charisma of office rather as antecedents of charisma than charisma per se. Hence, this new operationalization of charisma can be taken as a more accurate approximation of the charisma of contemporary organizational leaders whose charisma is determined, among other things, as consisting of both personal attributes and the charisma of their offices.

## **9. Implications for Research**

Firstly, the proposed construct allows researchers to investigate many propositions connected with charisma, which cannot yet be examined with behaviourally operationalized charisma. For instance, the psychoanalytic theory suggests that charisma is a result of a longing for a

father, and qualities or characters that followers attribute to the leaders are the qualities and characters that the followers perceive in their parents (Popper, 2004). Researchers cannot examine this proposition with behaviourally operationalized charisma as such scales fail to tap the attribution that followers make to their leaders. Yet, using the proposed construct of charisma, the researchers can test this proposition by examining the association between the qualities and characteristics that followers ascribe to their own parents and the charisma of their leaders.

Secondly and finally, the scale used in this study is a more parsimonious yet comprehensive scale of charisma compared to many leadership scales being used currently. This allows researchers to investigate a greater number of constructs than they can investigate along with other leadership measures, i.e., the transformational leadership scale, while still keeping the instrument short. This also prevents neo-charismatics from their practice of item deletion when they are in need of short instruments (De Vries et al., 1999). In fact, the parsimony of scale should not be treated lightly; as Tejada et al. (2001) stated, shorter measures are always preferred for surveys than longer ones.

## **10. Practical Implications**

The main lesson for leaders is that charisma is in the cognition and affection of followers rather than in their own behaviours and qualities. Yet, the subject of follower cognition and affection is the leader. Accordingly, charisma in the final analysis is mainly, but not exclusively, a function of, on the one hand, follower cognitive-affective dynamics and, on the other hand, the leader as exposed to followers. Hence, leaders should pay attention to both their revelation to followers and cognitive-affective dynamics of their followers.

As far as the revelation of leader to followers is concerned, what leaders should understand is that what is important in being charismatic is not who they 'really' are but how they present themselves to their followers. Accordingly, the present paper suggests that leaders themselves can construct charisma by actively managing how they expose themselves to followers, even though it does not exclude the possibility that leaders' passive exposure too results in charisma. In other words, this suggests the possibility of leaders using impression management techniques (Gardner & Avolio, 1998) as well as well-planned promotional strategies to construct their charismatic image.

When the followers' cognitive-affective dynamics are taken into account, it can be said that the meaning attached to a leader is more important than the leader himself/herself, i.e., the behaviour of the leader. Certainly, what behaviour is considered charismatic is contextual, and even a simple, routine behaviour like sending an e-mail may result in the sender being perceived as charismatic by others, if that behaviour sets the sender apart from the rest. Accordingly, the lesson for leaders is not to look for what behaviours are considered charismatic but to look for what quality of behaviours is interpreted as charismatic.

## **11. Directions for Further Validation of the Proposed Measure**

As the present study supports the notion that charisma is a multidimensional, cognitive-affective construct, and the scale developed in the present study shows adequate construct validity, researchers can extend their effort to validate this scale further. In such studies, researchers should employ large samples, as the sample size of both the second and the third study is below the accepted norms despite the fact that the second study meets the criteria stated by Hair, Jr. et al. (2006, p. 742) for CFA. It is also necessary to employ different types of samples as the operationalization of this construct of charisma might be influenced by the nature of the sample, i.e., managers reading for the MBA, employed in this study.

The method of data collection of the present study might result in the common method variance because the data on charisma as well as criterion variables was collected from the same source (Degroot et al., 2000). Therefore, any further assessment of the psychometric properties of the proposed measure of charisma should address this issue. One way of overcoming this problem is to collect data on criterion variables from different sources. Alternatively, data on charisma and criterion variables may be collected within an appropriate time interval (i.e., 2 weeks), if data on both charisma and criterion variables are to be collected from the same source.

Finally, the causality among the dimensions of charisma is yet another area that researchers should examine further. As the cognitive-affective model states that affect depends on cognition while the independence hypothesis states that "...affect and cognition involve separate and partially independent systems..." (Anand et al., 1998), the relationship between the cognitive and affective dimensions of charisma would be an interesting area to explore.

## **12. Conclusion**

In summary, the researcher supported empirically that charisma is a multidimensional, cognitive-affective and follower-centric phenomenon. This study concludes that charisma consists of leader archetypicality, leader extraordinariness, reverence and passion, and can be measured with a 16-item Likert-scale type scale with adequate levels of validity and reliability. Finally, based on the empirical evidence of the present study, the researcher argued that charisma is mainly, but not exclusively a function of, on the one hand, follower cognitive-affective dynamics and, on the other hand, the leader as exposed to followers. Hence, the researcher further claims that leaders can manage their charisma through managing their revelation to followers and by influencing the cognitive-affective dynamics of their followers.

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