

Personality, transformational leadership, trust, and the 2000 U.S. presidential vote

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Abstract:

This study of the 2000 U.S. presidential election replicates and extends Pillai and Williams' [Leadersh. Q. 9 (1998) 397] study of the 1996 presidential election. Data were collected at two periods from respondents across three regions of the United States to yield 342 matched sets of preelection variables and postelection measures. Transformational leadership and attributed charisma were strongly associated with reported voting behavior for candidates Bush and Gore beyond party affiliation. Important extensions to earlier findings are that perceptions of candidate proactive behavior, empathy, and need for achievement were shown to be related to transformational leadership and attributed charisma, with trust in the leader an important mediating variable between leadership perceptions and voting behavior. Implications of the findings for future research are discussed.

Article:

1. Introduction

Research on American presidents has clearly established the importance of leadership ability for evaluations of presidential greatness (Kenney & Rice, 1988). The extensive international media exposure and public scrutiny that are bestowed on the American president make leadership qualities critical determinants of effectiveness evaluations (Foti, Fraser, & Lord, 1982). Increasing national and international complexity has correspondingly increased the role of the government and expanded the public responsibility of those, such as the president, in positions of visible discretionary executive power and authority (Renshon, 1998).

Presidential personality and character are believed to hold the keys to performance in the office and have been scrutinized by voters during presidential campaigns in the past (House, Spangler, & Wokye, 1991). The evolving challenges of U.S. presidential leadership in the 21st century, punctuated by the tragic events of September 11, 2001, suggest that successful presidential leadership will be defined more by transformational and charismatic appeals that galvanize key constituencies worldwide around a sustainable vision than by concentrated regiocentric displays of power. Thus, evaluations of candidates' leadership ability and character are likely to play an ever increasingly important role in determining voting behavior in future elections. However, systematic examination of the influence of leadership on voting preference and choice has lagged behind other issues such as the state of the economy and party affiliation (Miller, Wattenberg, & Malanchuk, 1986). As we explain in the following paragraphs, the present study is an attempt not only to replicate an earlier study by Pillai and Williams (1998) but also to add value by extending some preliminary findings that suggest that leadership perceptions have a strong association with reported voting behavior.

Pillai and Williams (1998) investigated the impact of voters' perceptions of attributed charisma and transformational leadership of the Democratic (incumbent President Bill Clinton) and Republican (then Senator Bob Dole) candidates for the Presidency of the United States in the 1996 elections. Their study showed that leadership perceptions were positively associated with both intent to vote and actual voting behavior, after accounting for the impact of traditional variables such as party affiliation, during the 1996 U.S. presidential election. Although showing that holistic leadership evaluations are an important influence on voting behavior, their study provided no empirical insights into the antecedent conditions, such as evaluations of personality characteristics, which drive these leadership perceptions and the consequences of such perceptions for the vote.

Analysis of the trait inventories of presidential candidates from the National Election Studies data based from 1980 to the 1992 elections reveal that impressions of candidate character appear to play an important role in American electoral politics even after traditional predictors of voting, such as party identification, are held constant (Klein, 1996).

The primary purpose of this study is to extend the scope of Pillai and Williams' (1998) study in the context of the 2000 presidential elections and to include the interplay of proactive behavior, need for achievement, emotional empathy, transformational leadership, charisma, and trust with actual voting behavior. We believe that a more comprehensive model, incorporating both antecedent and mediating variables (to the relationship between leadership perceptions and voting behavior) will shed new light on voter decision making arising from evaluations of candidate leadership traits, enhancing our understanding of voter decision making. A second important purpose of this study is to replicate the study of Pillai and Williams in the context of the 2000 presidential elections with different presidential candidates, namely Vice President Al Gore and then Governor George W. Bush. Although replication studies are important for understanding the robustness of a phenomenon, their presence is regrettably uncommon in the leadership literature, a plight shared by most of the organizational literature (Hubbard & Vetter, 1996; Hunter, 2001).

Past research has shown that political leadership perceptions play an important role in voter preference and choice (e.g., Maurer et al., 1993; Shamir, 1994). Using leadership categorization theory, Maurer et al. (1993) examined the match between voters' perceptions of a candidate's traits and their prototype of an effective leader. In the context of the 1988 U.S. presidential elections, they found that the higher the prototypicality of a trait with regard to an effective political leader prototype, the stronger the relationship between perceptions of the candidate in terms of the trait, and whether the respondent voted for the leader. Shamir (1994) found that the level of perceived charismatic leadership and ideological position influenced voting preferences of Israeli voters during the 1992 elections for Israel's prime minister. In a study using both experimental and national election data, Rapoport, Metcalf, and Hartman (1989) found that voters were likely to make inferences about candidates from personality traits to campaign issues and from campaign issues to personality traits; however, inferences from issues to traits were much stronger and were based on implicit theories of politics and human nature.

A number of scholars have devoted their attention to assessing the factors that have contributed to outstanding leadership among U.S. presidents and found that presidential charisma and motive profile were related to electoral success (e.g., House et al., 1991; Simonton, 1988; Winter, 1987). Thus, leadership and individual characteristics appear to play an important role in the post hoc evaluation of presidential greatness and leadership potential; likewise, perceptions of candidate personality may play an important role in determining voter preferences.

Drawing on past research, we develop the model shown in Fig. 1 with dotted lines indicating proposed extensions to the relationships tested by Pillai and Williams (1998). We first examine the relationship of perceptions of presidential candidate proactivity, need for achievement, and emotional empathy to transformational leadership and attributed charisma, and in turn to voting preference and choice (Extension 1, Fig. 1). Next, we test the mediating role of trust in the relationship between transformational leadership and attributed charisma and actual voting behavior in an attempt to better explain how leadership evaluations affect voting behavior (Extension 2, Fig. 1). Finally, we examine the role of leadership in the relationship between individual characteristics (personality) and trust (Extension 3, Fig. 1). A review of the literature and rationale for including each of the variables in our study is discussed in the following section.

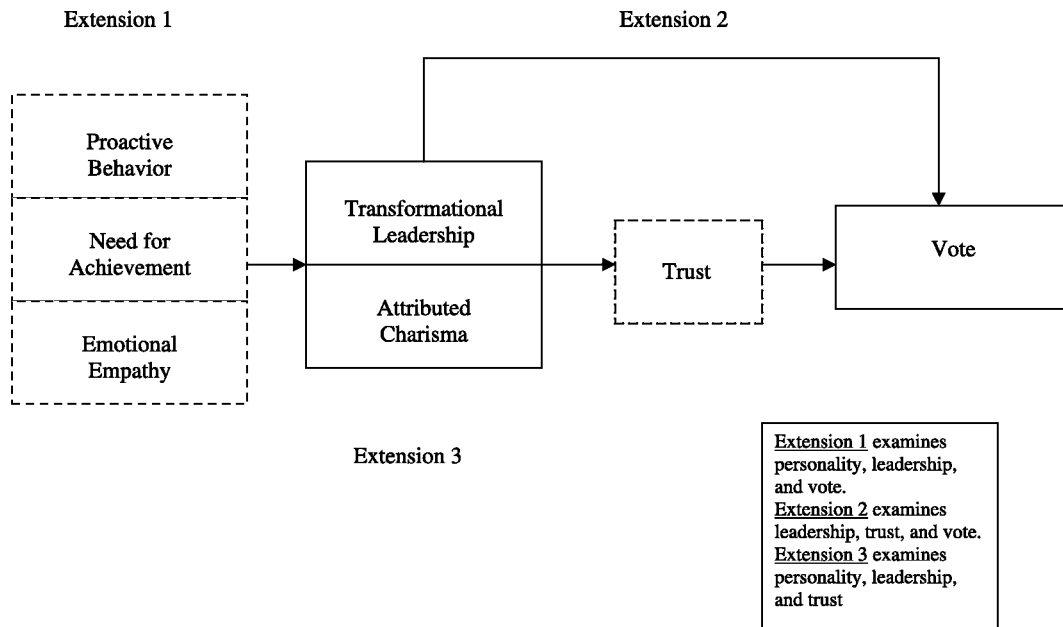


Fig. 1. Personality, leadership, trust, and voting behavior.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Transformational leadership, attributed charisma, and voting behavior

In the last decade, the focus of leadership research has shifted from traditional or transactional models of leadership to a new genre of leadership theories, which are proposed to have extraordinary effects on individuals and organizations (House & Shamir, 1993). The impact of this shift has rejuvenated the study of leadership (Hunt, 1999) and made theories of charismatic, visionary, and transformational leadership the most studied area of leadership over the last decade (Lowe & Gardner, 2000). The studies have revealed that these leadership behaviors may have a much greater impact on subjective and objective measures of performance than transactional (exchange-oriented) leadership (Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

Burns (1978) developed the initial ideas on transformational and transactional leadership through a qualitative analysis of the biographies of various political leaders. Transformational leaders motivate their followers to perform beyond expectations by activating followers' higher order needs, fostering a climate of trust, and inducing followers to transcend their self-interest for the sake of the organization (Bass, 1985). Transactional leaders motivate followers by making rewards contingent on expected standards of performance. Bass' (1985) current conceptualization of transformational leadership, as identified in the full range of leadership model (Avolio & Bass, 2002), treats charisma as a central aspect of transformational leadership, which is also composed of the dimensions of intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation.

Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990) reviewed the leadership literature and identified high performance expectations, intellectual stimulation, individualized support, fostering the acceptance of group goals, role modeling, and identifying and articulating a vision (the item content of the latter five are subsumed within Bass's three transformational subfactors) as the key behaviors of transformational leaders. With respect to charisma, Weber (1968) first used the term "charismatic" to describe a form of social authority that devolved on an individual because that person was believed to be endowed with the gift of divine grace. His conceptualization (in highly modified forms) has remained singularly influential throughout the years. Some researchers (Shamir, 1995; Yammarino, 1994) have argued that both transformational and charismatic leadership are operational at both the immediate follower and the distanced follower levels.

Social distance may be particularly relevant to leadership assessments of a national leader or candidate for election. This is because the vast majority of voters do not have a direct reporting relationship with the candidate. They have to make inferences about the candidate's personal qualities and charisma based on factors (e.g., staged media coverage) other than personal experience (Gardner & Avolio, 1998). As Waldman and Yammarino (1999) argue, distant followers rely on ideologically based vision and symbolic behaviors. House and Shamir (1993) suggest that charismatic, transformational, or visionary leadership behaviors activate motivational mechanisms that, in turn, affect follower self-concepts and result in heightened commitment, self-sacrifice, and performance. In the context of the presidential election, perceived transformational and charismatic leadership behaviors are expected to predict voting choice.

Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership will be positively associated with intent to vote and reported voting behavior.

Hypothesis 2: Attributed charisma will be positively associated with intent to vote and reported voting behavior.

2.2. Personality, transformational leadership, and attributed charisma

A study by Yagil (1998) showed that perceptions of extraordinary qualities were related to attributions of charisma for both close and distant leaders. Behavioral theories of leadership go beyond trait theories to focus on leader behaviors as opposed to attributes and suggest that particular traits lead to behaviors. Emrich, Brower, Feldman, and Garland (2001) found that the propensity of presidential speeches to convey images in words (clearly most relevant to distant leadership) was related to ratings of charisma and historian ratings of presidential greatness. Simonton (1988) found that U.S. presidents could be reliably differentiated on five personality dimensions, namely, interpersonal, charismatic, deliberative, creative, and neurotic. Furthermore, each dimension was related to broader personality traits, biographical experiences, and both objective and subjective indicators of performance.

There is very limited research relating personality dimensions to charismatic and transformational leadership and little evidence in the context of presidential elections (Bass, 1998; Judge & Bono, 2000). Bryman (1992, pp. 41–42) has suggested that "... it is very difficult to define charisma in such a way that some of its causes or consequences do not form part of the definition ... however, if we take the view ... that the concept of charisma is about a particular kind of social relationship between leaders and their followers, then the inclusion of these elements is only to be expected ..." (see also Yagil, 1998). A leader's charisma is not validated unless followers perceive that he or she has certain qualities. Our study attempts to test a model that explicates the relationship of voter perceptions of personality to leadership and its relationship with voting behavior. Our review of the literature indicates this study is one of the first that link these important variables in the political arena.

2.2.1. Proactivity

Bateman and Crant (1993, p. 103) define proactivity as "a dispositional construct that identifies differences among people in the extent to which they take action to influence their environments." Crant and Bateman (2000) showed that managers who scored themselves high on proactivity were rated more highly by their bosses on a measure of charismatic leadership. It is particularly important to examine the role of proactivity in the U.S. presidential personality because of the impact that presidential actions have in both the domestic and international arenas. Deluga (1998) argued that charismatic leaders employ many proactive behaviors such as demonstrating initiative, taking action, and enduring until goals are achieved and this may be especially true of charismatic presidents. His study used archival data to show that proactive behavior explained considerable variance in presidential rated performance and charismatic leadership. The proactive president is likely to exhibit political astuteness, personal determination, and the ability to surmount obstacles to achieve his or her goals (Deluga, 1998). Thomas Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory, Harry Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb, and George Bush's decision to help liberate Kuwait in the Gulf war in 1991 are some examples of presidential proactivity that have had far reaching consequences.

Deluga (1998) has empirically demonstrated that charismatic leadership incorporates more than proactivity as the common thread motivating behavior. Based on our review of the literature, we believe that proactivity may also be related to transformational leadership, which involves mobilizing followers with an appealing vision, challenging them to reframe problems, fostering the acceptance of group goals, and engaging in individual development activities. Thus, our model suggests a positive relationship between proactive behavior and attributed charisma and transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 3: Proactive behavior will be positively associated with transformational leadership and attributed charisma.

2.2.2. Need for achievement

Research on the need for achievement spans several decades (McClelland, 1985). Studies have shown that individuals who score high on the achievement motive show high self-confidence, prefer to take direct control, and assume personal responsibility for task performance (House et al., 1991). Bass (1985) suggests that transformational and charismatic leaders are high in need for achievement. Although there have been some mixed empirical findings regarding the positive effect of the achievement motive on transformational/charismatic leadership (e.g., Avolio, et al., 1996; House et al., 1991; Judge & Bono, 2000), it is plausible to argue that in order to set the challenging goals necessary for achieving the vision, leaders must have a high need for achievement. Further, to arouse followers' need for achievement and elicit extraordinary levels of performance, such leaders must be perceived as highly self-confident and possessing a high need for achievement themselves.

In the context of a presidential election, as candidates make their way through the grueling nomination process, it is unlikely that they would secure the nomination without being perceived as highly achievement oriented. This perception, in turn, is likely to drive leadership ratings, especially to the extent that perceived leader need for achievement fits voter prototypes for effective leadership. Therefore, we expect to find that to the extent that a candidate is perceived as having a high need for achievement, that candidate is also perceived as being transformational and charismatic.

Hypothesis 4: Need for achievement will be positively associated with transformational leadership and attributed charisma.

2.2.3. Emotional empathy

In recent years, the work of Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (1999) and Goleman (2000) have highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence (EQ) and leadership. One of the most important components of EQ is empathy. Empathy, in turn, may be particularly important to voters in a presidential election because they want to be assured that their president understands them and can relate to their needs. Bryman (1992, p. 49) observes that a leader who successfully lays claim to being regarded as charismatic has developed an understanding of what potential followers want, moulds his or her mission to what is felt will appeal to them, and focuses their attention to certain issues that are connected with what their followers want to hear.

As George (2000) suggests, leaders can successfully communicate their vision by accurately appraising how their followers feel and by influencing followers' emotions so that they are receptive to their goals for the organization. According to Renshon (1998, p. 219), "Empathetic attunement is the capacity to understand another by entering into an appreciation of the other's experiences, feelings, expectations, and perspectives." It is this interconnectedness with constituent value systems, rather than generic empathy, that voters appear to seek in presidential candidates and presidents especially in times of crisis. On the one hand, Bill Clinton was lauded for his ability to serve as mourner-in-chief, effectively expressing the nation's grief in times of tragedy. On the other hand, Jimmy Carter's effectiveness during the Iran hostage crisis was thought to be impaired because of his excessive empathy for the hostages, which precluded him from making some tough decisions (Renshon, 1998). Thus, it is important for the president to achieve a balance with regard to empathy.

Bass (1998) suggests that empathy, which is an important component of EQ, is associated with transformational leadership. Empathetic leaders are viewed as having a greater likelihood of effectively mentoring and developing followers, an important role in the process of being viewed as a transformational and charismatic leader. In addition, empathy is important to individualized consideration that a leader shows his/her followers, which is one of the elements of transformational leadership (Avolio & Bass, 2002). Thus, we predict that empathy will be positively related to transformational leadership and attributed charisma.

Hypothesis 5: Emotional empathy will be positively associated with transformational leadership and attributed charisma.

With respect to the influence of personality and leadership on voting behavior, we explore the potential for leadership evaluations to play an important mediating role in the relationship between personality and vote (Extension 1, Fig. 1). As discussed in the previous sections, it is reasonably well established in the literature that several personality characteristics contribute to perceptions of transformational and charismatic leadership and that leadership perceptions influence voting behavior. We expect that leadership evaluations, specifically transformational and charismatic leadership evaluations, will explicate the relationship between personality and voting behavior (see Fig. 1).

Hypothesis 6: Transformational leadership will have a mediating effect on the association between personality characteristics and reported voting behavior.

Hypothesis 7: Attributed charisma will have a mediating effect on the association between personality characteristics and reported voting behavior.

2.3. The role of trust

In a study of the 1996 presidential election, Pillai and Williams (1998) showed that transformational and charismatic leadership predicted voting preferences and actual voting behavior, a relationship that may be mediated by trust in the presidential candidate. Bennis and Nanus (1985) suggested a direct relationship between transformational leadership and trust, inasmuch as effective transformational leaders must first earn the trust of their followers. Trust may also be important to transformational leaders because of the need to mobilize follower commitment towards the leader's vision (Bass, 1985). It is unlikely that leaders who are not trusted by their followers can successfully achieve commitment to a vision because a lack of confidence in the leader will reduce the appeal of the vision. Followers of transformational or charismatic leaders are usually expected to support the leaders in their attempts to change the status quo and to be ready to take risks.

Podsakoff et al. (1990) showed that trust, conceptualized as faith in and loyalty to the leader, was directly related to transformational leadership. In a recent meta-analytic review, transformational leadership was shown to be the most strongly related of 10 hypothesized antecedent variables to trust in the leader (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). McAllister (1995, p. 25) defines trust as an "individual's belief in, and willingness to act on the basis of, the words, actions, and decisions of another." Lewicki and Bunker (1995) argue that trust may result from a sense of identification with another's desires and intentions. Activities that strengthen identification-based trust, such as developing a collective identity, creating joint products and goals, and committing to commonly shared values (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995), have also been identified as characteristic of the relationship between transformational leaders and subordinates (Bass, 1985).

Thus, transformational and charismatic leaders may build mutual trust by developing a common vision that group members can collectively identify with and pursue with the objective of creating joint products. This identification-based trust develops because each party understands and takes on another's values due to the emotional connection between them (Lewicki, Stevenson, & Bunker, 1997). Our model posits a direct relationship between transformational leadership and attributed charisma and trust, which in turn is expected to predict voting behavior (Extension 2, Fig. 1).

Hypothesis 8: Trust will have a mediating effect on the association between transformational leadership and reported voting behavior.

Hypothesis 9: Trust will have a mediating effect on the association between attributed charisma and reported voting behavior.

It is possible that transformational leadership and charisma might be important mediating factors in the relationship between personality characteristics and the development of trust in a leader (Extension 3, Fig. 1). Perhaps the process by which personality evaluations affect trust is by driving perceptions of leadership abilities of the candidate. Voters might trust the candidate that they elect to lead the nation to peace and prosperity and protect them in times of crisis based on individual characteristics displayed. Thus, trust might be a critical element in the voting decision. The variables enclosed in dotted lines in Fig. 1 indicate the extensions tested here beyond the relationships examined by Pillai and Williams (1998).

Hypothesis 10: Transformational leadership will have a mediating effect on the relationship between personality characteristics and trust.

Hypothesis 11: Attributed charisma will have a mediating effect on the relationship between personality characteristics and trust.

2.4. Party identification and leadership

Party identification is considered to be a stabilizing influence on voting intentions. In the absence of any specific reason for doing otherwise, the voter's natural tendency is to vote for candidates of the party with which he or she identifies (Crespi, 1988). Shamir's (1994) study, set in the context of the 1992 Israeli elections, demonstrated that leaders' perceived charisma was strongly related to voters' ideological position. Party members are likely to rally behind and identify with a leader who they see as espousing a vision that advances the core agenda of the party. They are more likely to evaluate such a leader as being charismatic or transformational and party affiliation is likely to influence voting behavior (Pillai & Williams, 1998).

In summary our model proposes that personality characteristics, leadership, and trust are important predictors of reported voting behavior in the context of the U.S. presidential election. Our study attempts to extend previous work by examining the mediating role of leadership in (1) the way that respondents vote based on personality traits attributed to leaders and (2) the relationship between personality traits and trust in the leader. Finally, the role of trust in the leader is examined as a mediator in the relationship between leadership and reported voting behavior.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Five hundred and seventy-one students enrolled in business courses in the United States completed a preelection survey. After accounting for missing data, we used 418 responses for our preelection analyses. Approximately 43% of respondents attended a university in the west, 31.5% attended a university in the Midwest, and 25.7% attended a university in the southeast. The sample was gender balanced (52.8% male) with a mean age of 26.7 years. Over 80% (87.5% exactly) of the sample was completing a bachelor's degree and 12.5% was completing a master's degree. Sixty-six percent of the respondents were White, 8% Hispanic, 4% Black, 8% Asian, and 14% placed themselves in the "other" category. The average work experience for the sample was 6.5 years with over 80% currently employed. Finally, Democrats represented 28.6% of the sample, whereas 41.7% were Republicans, 20.6% were Independents, and 9.1% were in the "other" category. Respondents indicated that 51.3% intended to vote for Bush, 40.9% for Gore, and 7.8% for "other." These figures compare with 48% voting for Bush, 48% voting for Gore, and 2% that voted for Nader according to the census bureau analysis of major candidate voting patterns (US Census Bureau, 2001).

3.2. Procedures

Questionnaires were administered as a class activity 2 weeks before the 2000 U.S. presidential election. To replicate the previous study conducted by Pillai and Williams (1998), respondents were asked to rate the Democratic (Al Gore) and Republican (George Bush) candidates from the perspective of a direct subordinate. Specifically, respondents were asked to “describe how you believe that you would rate George W. Bush and Albert Gore if YOU were his immediate subordinate (follower or direct report or employee).” We recognized that as distant followers, responses would have to be based on observation and therefore suggested that “since you probably do not have first-hand knowledge concerning how his immediate subordinates would actually see him, please use your own judgment to answer each question.” We limited the survey to the two strongest candidates, excluding independent and less mainstream candidates, to increase rater knowledge of the rating targets and to limit rater fatigue. Each respondent rated both candidates on one of two forms that were distinguishable only by the order of candidate introduction. Approximately one half of the sample in each location rated Bush first and Gore second and the other half rated Gore first and Bush second to control for order effects. Study variables were measured in the same order across all versions of the survey. Both forms were randomly distributed to respondents. Information on actual voting behavior was collected 2 weeks after the election, again as a class activity. A personal code created by the respondents and placed on the preelection survey was also recorded on the postelection survey. This code was used to match pre- and postelection surveys and allowed the respondents to remain anonymous. Four hundred and sixty one postelection surveys were matched with preelection surveys and, after accounting for missing data, we used 342 matched responses for our analysis. The postelection samples, when compared with preelection surveys, shared a similar demographic profile in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, and party affiliation.

3.3. Measures

3.3.1. Proactivity

Latack (1986) developed a 17-item scale to measure active control strategies covering proactivity. A 5-point scale ranging from 1= hardly ever does this to 5 = almost always does this was used for responses. A sample item from this scale is “Tries to see difficult situations as an opportunity to learn and develop new skills.” Latack provided preliminary evidence of construct validity. The reliability coefficients (Cronbach’s alpha) were .90 for Bush and .90 for Gore.

3.3.2. Need for achievement

Medcof and Wegener (1992) developed a four-item scale to measure opportunities to satisfy the need for achievement. This scale was adapted to reflect actual need for achievement. For example, instead of having respondents indicate the extent to which the job is challenging, we asked them to indicate the extent to which the candidate “Prefers challenging jobs.” A 5-point scale ranging from 1 =strongly disagree to 5 =strongly agree was employed. The reliability coefficients were .87 for Bush and .84 for Gore.

3.3.3. Emotional empathy

A 30-item scale measuring emotional empathy was developed and its psychometric properties examined by Mayer et al. (1999). The scale was compared to the Epstein– Mehrabian emotional empathy scale (Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972) and found to have a high degree of content overlap. The researchers recommend using either a general form of the measure or separate subscales. For our research, a 10-item version was employed upon the recommendation of Caruso (2001). These 10 items reflect empathic suffering, positive sharing, and feeling for others. Sample items for each respective area are: “It makes him mad to see someone treated unjustly,” “Seeing other people smile makes him smile,” and, “He feels other people’s pain.” A 5-point scale ranging from 1 =strongly disagree to 5 =strongly agree was employed. The reliability coefficients were .93 for Bush and .92 for Gore.

3.3.4. Trust

The six-item measure of identification-based trust developed by Lewicki et al. (1997) was used. Identification-based trust suggests empathizing strongly with the candidates and identification with the goals espoused. A sample item from this scale is “This person and I share the same basic values” and “I know this person will do

whatever I would do if I were in the same situation.” A 5-point scale ranging from 1=not at all true of this person to 5 = definitely true of this person was employed. The reliability coefficients were .94 for Bush and .94 for Gore.

3.3.5. Transformational leadership

The 23-item measure of transformational leadership (transformational leadership inventory) developed by Podsakoff et al. (1990) was employed. The measure includes six transformational leadership behaviors: articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering the acceptance of group goals, high performance expectations, individualized support, and intellectual stimulation. We employed the 23-item measure to replicate the study of the 1996 election conducted by Pillai and Williams (1998). A 7-point scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree was employed. The reliability coefficients were .93 for Bush and .93 for Gore.

3.3.6. Attributed charisma

The eight-item scale of attributed charisma from the multifactor leadership questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 1991) was employed. A sample item is, “Displays a sense of power and confidence.” A 7-point scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree was employed. The reliability coefficients were .89 for Bush and .87 for Gore.

3.3.7. Party affiliation

Respondents indicated their party affiliation as Democratic, Republican, Independent, or other. For our analyses, the variable Democrat was coded 1= “democrat” and 0 = “all others” and Republican was coded 1= “republican” and 0= “all others.” 3.3.8. Intent to vote On the preelection questionnaire, respondents indicated their intent to vote for Bush, Gore, or other. For our analyses, intent to vote was coded for Bush as 1= “Bush” and 0 = “all others” and for Gore was coded as 1= “Gore” and 0= “all others.”

3.3.9. Vote

On the postelection questionnaire, respondents indicated who they voted for in the 2000 presidential election: Bush, Gore, other, or did not vote. For our analyses, vote was coded for Bush as 1= “Bush” and 0 = “all others” and for Gore was coded as 1= “Gore” and 0 = “all others.”

3.4. Background variables

The sample employed for this study was drawn from a variety of U.S. locations and ANOVAs revealed differences across groups for those from the West, Midwest, and Southern regions. We were interested in representing overall voting behavior of a segment of the populace rather than in investigating regional differences and thus, the eight background variables measured in the study were included as covariates in our analyses. These included age of the respondents, sex (coded as 1= female and 2 = male), education (coded as 1=less than high school to 6 = doctorate), race (coded as 1= White and 0 = all others), work experience in months, employment status (coded as 1= employed and 2 = not employed), occupation (contrast coded, 1= professional, — 1= supervisor/manager, 0 = all others), and language (coded as 1= English and 0 = all others).

3.5. Data analysis

For the purpose of replicating Pillai and Williams (1998), the dichotomous variable “vote” was employed as the dependent variable in a logistic regression (to test Extensions 1 and 2: Hypotheses 3–9). Pillai and Williams identified logistic regression as appropriate for research designs with dichotomous dependent variables and both continuous and categorical independent variables. Such regression is supported by the research methods literature (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). To test the extended model presented in Fig. 1, we also employed regression analysis (to test Extension 3: Hypotheses 10 and 11). To assess mediation, the three-step procedure suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) was employed.

Table 1

Bush: means, standard deviations, and intercorrelation matrix

Measures	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	
1. Age	26.67	7.68	(1)																	
2. Sex	1.47	.50	.07	(2)																
3. Education	3.34	1.02	.43**	.16**	(3)															
4. Race	.66	.47	.05	.03	-.07	(4)														
5. Work experience	79.03	77.91	.88**	.11**	.33**	.10**	(5)													
6. Employment status	1.19	.40	-.00	-.02	-.00	-.11**	-.11*	(6)												
7. Occupation	.01	1.16	-.03	.11**	-.11*	.01	.02	.12**	(7)											
8. Language	.84	.36	.01	-.01	-.14**	.50**	.12**	-.18**	.05	(8)										
9. Party affiliation: Republican	.41	.49	.09*	.00	.05	.21**	.11**	-.04	.00	.19**	(9)									
10. Proactive behavior	3.74	.58	.06	-.03	-.02	.18**	.06	.01	.01	.11**	.23**	(10)								
11. Need for achievement	3.64	.84	-.07	-.01	-.06	.09*	-.04	.02	-.00	.02	.29**	.55**	(11)							
12. Emotional empathy	3.56	.72	.07	-.03	.03	.13**	.05	-.06	.00	.07	.21**	.57**	.41**	(12)						
13. Trust	2.91	1.09	.10*	.06	.04	.16**	.13**	-.02	-.02	.11**	.42**	.50**	.44**	.53**	(13)					
14. Transformational leadership	4.79	.91	.03	-.01	-.02	.10*	.05	.02	.01	.04	.37**	.66**	.64**	.64**	.64**	(14)				
15. Attributed charisma	4.75	1.11	-.01	-.01	-.05	.09*	-.00	.00	-.01	.04	.36**	.62**	.61**	.54**	.62**	.84**	(15)			
16. Intent vote Bush	.51	.50	.07	.01	.02	.18**	.09*	-.05	.03	.14**	.60**	.36**	.37**	.39**	.59**	.49**	.49**	(16)		
17. Vote Bush	.42	.49	.23**	.06	.08	.21**	.21**	-.07	-.02	.19**	.45**	.31**	.25**	.34**	.48**	.40**	.37**	.62**	(17)	

For variables 1 through 16, $n=418$. For variable 17, $n=342$.* $p < .05$.** $p < .01$ (two-tailed).

Table 2

Gore: means, standard deviations, and intercorrelation matrix^a

Measures	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.
1. Age	26.67	7.68	(1)																
2. Sex	1.47	.50	.06	(2)															
3. Education	3.34	1.02	.43**	.16**	(3)														
4. Race	.66	.47	.05	.03	-.07	(4)													
5. Work experience	79.03	77.91	.87**	.11**	.33**	.10*	(5)												
6. Employment status	1.19	.40	-.00	-.02	-.01	-.11**	-.10*	(6)											
7. Occupation	.01	1.16	-.03	.11*	-.11*	.01	.01	.12**	(7)										
8. Language	.84	.36	.01	-.01	-.14**	.50**	.11**	-.18**	.05	(8)									
9. Party affiliation: Democrat	.28	.45	-.05	-.12**	-.06	-.11**	-.04	.03	-.01	-.13**	(9)								
10. Proactive behavior	3.73	.59	.00	-.03	-.06	.01	.00	.11**	.01	-.05	.21**	(10)							
11. Need for achievement	3.73	.75	-.04	-.01	-.00	-.03	-.04	.06	.03	-.11**	.24**	.54**	(11)						
12. Emotional empathy	3.62	.68	.03	-.05	-.00	.05	.01	.01	.02	.01	.18**	.58**	.36**	(12)					
13. Trust	2.72	1.06	-.05	-.10*	-.04	-.13**	-.05	.02	-.07	-.17**	.47**	.45**	.41**	.45**	(13)				
14. Transformational leadership	4.62	.98	-.11**	-.08	-.05	-.04	-.13**	.09*	.05	-.09*	.25**	.37**	.44**	.39**	.40**	(14)			
15. Attributed charisma	4.60	1.11	-.15**	-.07	-.05	-.12**	-.13**	.05	-.04	-.12**	.28**	.57**	.60**	.47**	.59**	.57**	(15)		
16. Intent vote Gore	.41	.49	-.08	-.05	-.05	-.17**	-.09*	.07	-.04	-.16**	.50**	.30**	.26**	.32**	.60**	.38**	.37**	(16)	
17. Vote Gore	.27	.44	-.01	-.09	-.01	.01	.03	-.02	.00	.11*	.35**	.15**	.15**	.18**	.36**	.20**	.21**	.45**	(17)

For variables 1 through 16, *n*=418. For variable 17, *n*=342.

^a Reliabilities are shown on the diagonal.

* *p* < .05.

** *p* < .01 (two-tailed).

Table 3
Results of logistic regression analysis: George Bush^a

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Age	.00	.13*	.01	.12*
Sex	.27	.57**	.22	.56*
Education	-.09	-.07	-.07	-.06
Race	.28	-.06	.34	.04
Work experience	.00	.00	.00	.00
Employment status	-1.29*	.17	-1.09 [†]	.173
Occupation	.06	-.13	.08	-.09
Language	.09	1.07*	.11	.95
Party affiliation:	2.46**	1.51**	2.47**	1.50**
Republican				
Transformational leadership	1.338**	1.05**	-	-
Attributed charisma	-	-	1.11**	.81**
<i>N</i>	418	342	418	342
- 2 log-likelihood	344.65	333.33	346.88	338.51
χ^2	234.05**	136.09**	231.82**	130.91**

Model 1: intent to vote for Bush; Model 2: voted for Bush; Model 3: intent to vote for Bush; Model 4: voted for Bush.

^a *B* and the significance of the χ^2 improvement of the coefficient are reported.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

[†] $p < .10$.

Logistic regression and regression analyses were preferred to path or structural equation modeling (SEM) because the primary dependent variable is dichotomous. Kline (1997) notes that these types of variables (whether dependent or independent variables) require the use of specialized methods in SEM or special software and may yield results that are less well understood and interpretable. An added limitation faced if a path or SEM analysis had been employed was the need to adjust the model to reflect two separate samples (ending at trust for those who voted for Bush or Gore), which restricts sample sizes (192 voted for Bush and 123 voted for Gore), thereby increasing potential for sampling error (Kline, 1997).

The - 2 log-likelihood statistic indicates how well the model fits and is similar to the sum of squared errors in regression analysis (Hair et al., 1998). The chi-square test for the reduction in the log-likelihood value measures improvement due to the introduction of an independent variable and is similar to the F test in multiple regression analysis (Hair et al., 1998). Finally several R^2 -like measures have been developed to represent overall model fit in a manner similar to the coefficient of determination in multiple regression. Here, we report the Nagelkerke R^2 statistic that operates in a similar manner and represents an improvement over the Cox and Snell R^2 measures because it ranges from 0 to 1, making it comparable to the coefficient of determination (Hair et al., 1998).

4. Results

Tables 1 and 2 present the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for the variables examined. All the independent and mediator variables were related to the dependent variables of intent to vote and vote. Intent to vote and reported vote were strongly related as were transformational leadership and attributed charisma. Race, employment status, and language were strong correlates with the main variables of interest for Bush (Table 1) and Gore (Table 2).

Tables 3 and 4 present the results of the replication conducted (Hypotheses 1 and 2). For Models 1 through 4, intent to vote or vote was regressed on the background variables, party identification, and either transformational leadership or attributed charisma. Party affiliation and leadership (transformational leadership or attributed charisma) predicted intent to vote and vote for both Bush and Gore (Nagelkerke R^2 of .57 for intent to vote and .44 for vote for Bush; .42 for intent to vote and .25 for vote for Gore). One-way ANOVAs were also

run revealing significant main effects of party affiliation for both transformational leadership ($F=46.74$, $df=2,558$ $P<.001$; $F=23.39$, $df=2,558$ $P<.001$) and attributed charisma ($F=44.76$, $df=2,558$ $P<.001$; $F=27.39$, $df=2,558$ $P<.001$) for Bush and for Gore, respectively. There were also significant main effects for party affiliation for both transformational leadership and attributed charisma.

Table 4
Results of logistic regression analysis: Al Gore^a

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Age	.02	-.03	.06	-.01
Sex	.07	-.19	.05	.21
Education	-.12	.21	-.16	.19
Race	-.74*	-.11	-.53 [†]	-.01
Work experience	.00	.00	-.01 [†]	.00
Employment status	.56	.41	.55	.47
Occupation	-.199	-.06	-.11	-.03
Language	.04	1.31**	-.11	1.34**
Party affiliation: Democratic	2.23**	1.74**	2.19**	1.74**
Transformational leadership	.87**	.40**	—	—
Attributed charisma	—	—	.67**	.36**
<i>N</i>	418	342	418	342
- 2 log-likelihood	400.63	346.79	411.19	346.89
χ^2	164.20**	64.75**	153.65**	64.66**

Model 1: intent to vote for Gore; Model 2: voted for Gore; Model 3: intent to vote for Gore; Model 4: voted for Gore.

^a *B* and the significance of the χ^2 improvement of the coefficient are reported.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

[†] $p < .10$.

Table 5

Bush: results of logistic regression for effects of personality and transformational leadership on vote

Independent variables	<i>B</i>		
<i>Block 1</i>			
Age	.07		
Sex	.31		
Education	-.05		
Race	.69*		
Work experience	.00		
Employment status	-.45		
Occupation	-.09		
Language	.48		
- 2 log-likelihood	430.70		
Model χ^2 improvement	36.39**		
<i>Block 2</i>			
Party affiliation: Republican	2.03**		
- 2 log-likelihood	367.94		
Model χ^2 improvement	62.76**		
	Eq. (1) <i>B</i>	Eq. (2) <i>B</i>	Eq. (3) <i>B</i>
<i>Block 3</i>			
Proactive behavior	1.04**	—	.14
Transformational leadership	—	1.05**	.97**
- 2 log-likelihood	349.19	333.33	331.26 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	18.75**	37.17**	17.93 ^{a,**}
Need for achievement	.68**	—	.14
Transformational leadership	—	1.05**	.97**
- 2 log-likelihood	352.71	333.33	331.91 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	16.20**	37.17**	20.81 ^{a,**}
Emotional empathy	1.02**	—	.55*
Transformational leadership	—	1.05**	.79**
- 2 log-likelihood	342.88	333.33	328.01 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	27.27**	37.17**	14.87 ^{a,**}

^a Changes in comparison to Eq. (1).

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Table 6

Gore: results of logistic regression for effects of personality and transformational leadership on vote

Independent variables	<i>B</i>		
<i>Block 1</i>			
Age	-.01		
Sex	-.47		
Education	.22		
Race	-.25		
Work experience	.00		
Employment status	.74		
Occupation	-.02		
Language	1.02 [†]		
- 2 log-likelihood	396.76		
Model χ^2 improvement	11.62		
<i>Block 2</i>			
Party affiliation: Democrat	1.93**		
- 2 log-likelihood	347.94		
Model χ^2 improvement	48.82**		
	Eq. (1) <i>B</i>	Eq. (2) <i>B</i>	Eq. (3) <i>B</i>
<i>Block 3</i>			
Proactive behavior	.65*	-	.43
Transformational leadership	-	.40*	.31 [†]
- 2 log-likelihood	341.48	346.80	337.77 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	6.46*	7.82*	3.71 ^{a,†}
Need for achievement	.35 [†]	-	.15
Transformational leadership	-	.40*	.36*
- 2 log-likelihood	349.49	346.80	344.62 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	3.17 [†]	7.82*	4.87 ^{a,*}
Emotional empathy	.43*	-	.25
Transformational leadership	-	.40*	.34*
- 2 log-likelihood	343.91	346.80	339.31 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	4.41*	7.82*	4.60 ^{a,*}

^a Changes in comparison to Eq. (1).* $p < .05$.** $p < .01$.[†] $p < .10$.

For the first part of our extension (Hypotheses 3, 4, and 5), results indicated that for both Bush (Tables 5 and 7) and Gore (Tables 6 and 8) proactivity, need for achievement and emotional empathy had positive relationships with reported voting behavior. The results for Hypothesis 6 indicate that transformational leadership mediated the relationship between proactivity and vote, need for achievement and vote, and emotional empathy and vote. The results for Eqs. (1) and (2) (Block 3) indicate that the independent variables were positively related to vote. The results for Eq. (3) for each test of mediation (Block 3) indicate that there was full mediation for Gore (all three independent variables) and Bush (for proactive behavior and need for achievement). The results for Bush indicate that transformational leadership partially mediated the relationship between emotional empathy and vote (the magnitude of the coefficient for emotional empathy was reduced but it continued to be related to vote in the presence of transformational leadership). The Nagelkerke R^2 ranged from .43 to .44 for the final model [Eq. (3)] for Bush and from .24 to .27 for Gore.

Table 7
 Bush: results of logistic regression for effects of personality and attributed charisma on vote

Independent variables	<i>B</i>		
<i>Block 1</i>			
Age	.07		
Sex	.31		
Education	-.05		
Race	.69*		
Work experience	.00		
Employment status	-.45		
Occupation	-.09		
Language	.48		
- 2 log-likelihood	430.70		
Model χ^2 improvement	36.39**		
<i>Block 2</i>			
Party affiliation: Republican	2.03**		
- 2 log-likelihood	367.94		
Model χ^2 improvement	62.76**		
	Eq. (1) <i>B</i>	Eq. (2) <i>B</i>	Eq. (3) <i>B</i>
<i>Block 3</i>			
Proactive behavior	1.04**	-	.34
Attributed charisma	-	.80**	.67**
- 2 log-likelihood	349.19	338.51	335.15 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	18.75**	31.99**	14.03 ^{a,**}
Need for achievement	.68**	-	.21
Attributed charisma	-	.80**	.71**
- 2 log-likelihood	352.71	338.51	335.99 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	16.20**	31.99**	16.71 ^{a,**}
Emotional empathy	1.02**	-	.67**
Attributed charisma	-	.80**	.59**
- 2 log-likelihood	342.88	338.51	329.58 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	27.27**	31.99**	13.29 ^{a,**}

^a Changes in comparison to Eq. (1).

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

Results for Hypothesis 7 for both Bush (Table 7) and Gore (Table 8) indicate that attributed charisma mediated the relationship between proactivity and vote and need for achievement and vote. The results for Eqs. (1) and (2) (Block 3) indicate that the independent variables were positively related to vote. The results for Eq. (3) (Block 3) indicate that there was mediation. The results for the relationship between emotional empathy and vote supported full mediation for Gore. The results for Bush indicate that there were incremental or augmenting effects (Bass, 1985) of attributed charisma on the relationship between emotional empathy and vote. Thus, for attributed charisma and emotional empathy, each explains additional variance over the other in predicting voting behavior. The Nagelkerke R^2 ranged from .42 to .45 for the final models for Bush and from .24 to .27 for Gore.

Table 8
Gore: results of logistic regression for effects of personality and attributed charisma on vote

Independent variables	<i>B</i>		
<i>Block 1</i>			
Age	-.01		
Sex	-.47		
Education	.22		
Race	-.25		
Work experience	.00		
Employment status	.74		
Occupation	-.02		
Language	1.02 [†]		
- 2 log-likelihood	396.76		
Model χ^2 improvement	11.62		
<i>Block 2</i>			
Party affiliation: Democrat	1.93**		
- 2 log-likelihood	347.94		
Model χ^2 improvement	48.82**		
	Eq. (1) <i>B</i>	Eq. (2) <i>B</i>	Eq. (3) <i>B</i>
<i>Block 3</i>			
Proactive behavior	.65*	—	.35
Attributed charisma	—	.36*	.28 [†]
- 2 log-likelihood	341.48	346.89	338.39 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	6.46*	7.73*	3.09 ^{a,†}
Need for achievement	.35 [†]	—	.08
Attributed charisma	—	.36*	.34*
- 2 log-likelihood	349.49	346.89	344.84 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	3.17 [†]	7.73*	4.65 ^{a,*}
Emotional empathy	.43*	—	.21
Attributed charisma	—	.36*	.32*
- 2 log-likelihood	343.91	346.89	339.09 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	4.41*	7.73*	4.83 ^{a,*}

^a Changes in comparison to Eq. (1).

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

[†] $p < .10$.

Table 9
 Bush: results of logistic regression for effects of leadership and trust on vote

Independent variables	<i>B</i>		
<i>Block 1</i>			
Age	.07		
Sex	.31		
Education	-.05		
Race	.69 *		
Work experience	.00		
Employment status	-.45		
Occupation	-.09		
Language	.48		
- 2 log-likelihood	430.70		
Model χ^2 improvement	36.39**		
<i>Block 2</i>			
Party affiliation: Republican	2.03**		
- 2 log-likelihood	367.94		
Model χ^2 improvement	62.76**		
	Eq. (1) <i>B</i>	Eq. (2) <i>B</i>	Eq. (3) <i>B</i>
<i>Block 3</i>			
Transformational leadership	1.05**	-	.71 *
Trust	-	.79**	.45**
- 2 log-likelihood	333.33	336.38	326.21 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	37.17**	34.12**	7.11 ^{a, *}
Attributed charisma	.80**	-	.51 *
Trust	-	.79**	.53**
- 2 log-likelihood	338.51	336.38	328.08 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	31.99**	34.12**	10.43 ^{a, **}

^a Changes in comparison to Eq. (1).

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

For the second part of our extension, results for Hypothesis 8 indicated that for both Bush (Table 9) and Gore (Table 10), trust mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and vote. The results for Eqs. (1) and (2) (Block 3) indicate that the independent variables were positively related to vote. The results for Eq. (3) (Block 3) indicate that there was partial mediation for Bush and full mediation for Gore. The results for attributed charisma (Hypothesis 9) for both Bush and Gore are the same as for transformational leadership with trust mediating the relationship between attributed charisma and vote. The Nagelkerke R^2 ranged from .45 to .46 for the final models [Eq. (3)] for Bush and from .30 to .31 for Gore.

The results for the third part of our extension were varied. The results for Hypothesis 10 for both Bush and Gore indicated that transformational leadership and proactive behavior had incremental effects over each other in predicting trust. The same pattern of results was found for the effects of transformational leadership and emotional empathy on trust. With respect to need for achievement, the results for Bush indicated that transformational leadership fully mediated the relationship between need for achievement and trust, whereas the results for Gore indicated that transformational leadership and need for achievement had augmenting effects over each other for trust. Results also indicated that for Hypothesis 11, with respect to Bush and Gore, attributed charisma and proactive behavior had incremental effects over each other in predicting trust. The same pattern of results was found for the effects of attributed charisma and emotional empathy on trust. Results indicated that for both Bush and Gore, attributed charisma mediated the relationship between need for achievement and trust. There was evidence of full mediation for Gore and partial mediation for Bush.

Table 10
Gore: results of logistic regression for effects of leadership and trust on vote

Independent variables	<i>B</i>			
<i>Block 1</i>				
Age	-.01			
Sex	-.47			
Education	.22			
Race	-.25			
Work experience	.00			
Employment status	.74			
Occupation	-.02			
Language	1.02 [†]			
- 2 log-likelihood	396.76			
Model χ^2 improvement	11.62			
<i>Block 2</i>				
Party affiliation: Democrat	1.93**			
- 2 log-likelihood	347.94			
Model χ^2 improvement	48.82**			
		Eq. (1) <i>B</i>	Eq. (2) <i>B</i>	Eq. (3) <i>B</i>
<i>Block 3</i>				
Transformational leadership	.40**		-	.17
Trust	-		.72**	.66**
- 2 log-likelihood	346.80		330.29	329.15 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	7.82 *		24.32**	17.65 ^{a,**}
Attributed charisma	.36 *		-	.01
Trust	-		.72**	.72**
- 2 log-likelihood	346.89		330.29	330.29 ^a
Model χ^2 improvement	7.73 *		24.32**	16.66 ^{a,**}

^a Changes in comparison to Eq. (1).

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

[†] $p < .10$.

5. Discussion

We conducted the study over the course of a presidential election with real leaders and collected reported voting behavior, a unique aspect of this research in addition to the focus on personality, leadership, and trust to explain voting behavior. The findings show that both leadership ratings and party identification are related to voting preference and choice, and that, in combination, these variables can predict the vote for a particular candidate.

This replicates the findings of the [Pillai and Williams \(1998\)](#) study of the 1996 election, reemphasizing the importance of leadership evaluations and party identification on voting behavior. Interestingly, based on the correlations between intentions to vote and reported voting behavior, it appears that intent to vote is predictive of actual voting behavior ($r = .62$ for Bush and $.45$ for Gore) but that the stability of the relationship can vary marginally by candidate.

This investigation goes beyond the earlier study and examines the role of personality characteristics and trust in the voting decision. The results show that candidate personality characteristics such as proactivity, need for achievement, and emotional empathy may drive leadership evaluations, which in turn may predict voting behavior. The results also show that trust in the candidate mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and attributed charisma assessments and voting behavior.

Most work with transformational leadership has examined the effects of transformational leadership on the follower without examining attributes of the leaders themselves ([Ross & Offermann, 1997](#)). As [Bass \(1998, p. 122\)](#) observed, "When it comes to predicting transformational leadership and its components, there is no

shortage of personality expectations, however, the empirical support has been spotty.” The present study found support for predictions that personality attributes such as proactivity, need for achievement, and emotional empathy drive ratings of transformational leadership and attributed charisma, which had a strong relationship with actual voting behavior. Thus, it appears that voters may evaluate their candidates’ personality in addition to their leadership ability as they ponder their choice for president. Our findings that proactivity and emotional empathy were related to transformational and charismatic leadership are noteworthy because previous studies have shown some support for these relationships although not in the context of a presidential election.

The significant relationship between need for achievement and leadership ratings, however, runs counter to some previous studies of need for achievement and presidential charisma/transformational leadership. House et al. (1991) found the achievement motivation of U.S. presidents to be inversely related to archival measures of presidential effectiveness. This finding also runs counter to those of Judge and Bono (2000), who were surprised to find that conscientiousness, with achievement as one of its major facets, was not related to transformational leadership. However, Judge, Bono, Ilies, and Gerhardt (2002) did find conscientiousness to be related to leadership in general (corrected correlation of .28), with a stronger relationship to leader emergence (corrected $r=.33$) than leader effectiveness (corrected $r=.16$). Differential findings may also have been observed because previous presidential studies examined leaders who were already elected to the presidency or appointed to leadership positions in industry (rather emphasis on measuring leadership effectiveness). Finally, paper and pencil measures of achievement motivation, such as those used here, have been argued to be very different from the original, projective, and TAT measures emphasized by McClelland (1985). House et al. (1991) used such a TAT approach.

This study assesses voter perceptions of personality and leadership potential of candidates running for election (emphasis on the emerging leader). Perhaps striving for achievement is more salient to raters when candidates are seeking a leadership position than when they are already established leaders. Although it can be argued that Al Gore was already elected vice president in the Clinton administration and George W. Bush was a two-time governor, both candidates may have been striving to assert that they were not simply caretakers of prior agendas, those of former presidents Bill Clinton and George H. Bush, respectively, but had significant ambitions of their own. It is also possible that the relationship between need for achievement and leadership is the result of individuals’ implicit theories about the candidates’ personality and leadership. Voters may have an image of their ideal candidate as someone who has a strong motivation to achieve great things in his presidency. They may then discern this from the candidate’s vision for the country as expressed during his campaign. The finding with respect to proactivity complements, to some extent, Judge and Bono’s (2000) finding that “extraversion” was related to the elements of transformational leadership including charisma. Further, the relationship between transformational and charismatic leadership and empathy complements Judge and Bono’s finding that the big five characteristic, agreeableness, was strongly related to both charisma and transformational leadership.

The measure of emotional empathy that we used was a subscale of a measure developed to assess EQ. EQ has increasingly been identified as an important predictor of effective leadership (George, 2000; Goleman, 2000). The perception that a candidate understands followers and is able to connect with their needs and aspirations is clearly an important factor in leadership evaluations and the voting decision. During the Bush–Clinton debates in the 1992 election, former President Bush was perceived as a man who did not empathize with ordinary Americans because he did not know the price of everyday grocery items! Empathy is also important after a president gets elected because the president has to “sell” his vision to the country. In times of national crisis, for example, people need to know that their leader understands what they are going through, especially when that leader may be asking their constituents to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of the collective.

It is interesting that in our study, the relationship between empathy and leadership was stronger for George W. Bush in comparison to Al Gore. Gore was portrayed in the popular press as being stiff and wooden. The partial mediating and incremental effects rather than solely mediating effects of leadership on the relationship between empathy and voting behavior for Bush indicate that for his supporters, perceptions of empathy remained salient

in the presence of strong leadership traits. The finding that trust mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and attributed charisma to voting behavior for both George W. Bush and Al Gore is noteworthy.

This relationship underscores the importance of trust to the leader–follower relationship in the context of both close and distanced leader–follower relationships. It appears that voters who rate their candidate as transformational and charismatic develop trust in them and this influences their decision to vote for that individual. It would be interesting to explore in greater detail the process by which trust is established in the candidate, the role the media and advertising play in influencing voter perceptions of trust, and whether negative advertising helps erode trust in the candidate who is placing the ads or the candidate who is the target of those ads.

Finally, the mainly incremental effects of individual characteristics (proactivity, need for achievement, and emotional empathy) and leadership perceptions over each other in predicting the degree to which respondents trusted the candidates highlights the importance of these variables. Identification with the leader is one of the important effects of transformational and charismatic leadership (Pillai, Schriesheim, & Williams, 1999). As this study shows, perceptions of candidates having what might be considered strong or even key personality characteristics may be just as important as leadership for value identification. This identification may strengthen the probability to vote for a particular candidate over another. With the important role played by trust in predicting voting behavior (indicated by our findings), the ability of candidates to portray the character traits and leadership characteristics most valued by voters may provide an advantage in any electoral campaign. Future research will need to continue to examine the personality characteristics and leadership behaviors that are perceived as critical in influencing trust in the candidate.

5.1. Limitations and implications for future research

The Pillai and Williams (1998) study sampled voters in the southeastern United States exclusively. In the current study, we sampled voters living in states in the southern United States, in a West Coast state, and a Midwestern landlocked mountain state. Future research might extend this improved sample diversity further to be truly reflective of all U.S. regions (e.g., northeast, northwest, and plains states). Within our three-state sample, we did find some variance across states but we generously interpret this finding as being reasonably representative of regional differences in the electorate, a naturally occurring phenomenon. The average age of our sample was 27.6 years, which is younger than the average age of the U.S. population. One U.S. census bureau report, however, noted that by November 2000 about 40% of the voting age population would be ages 25–44 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Election reports by the census bureau (2001) indicated that approximately 43% of the individuals reporting that they voted in the 2000 presidential election were between the ages of 18 and 34 (approximately 86% of our respondents fell into this age range). Though our sample is representative of a substantial portion of the U.S. population, future research should explore whether these findings can be replicated in more mature voting demographic groups.

Studies have shown that the closer polls are to an election, the more accurate their predictions become (Crespi, 1988). This is an advantage of polling close to the election. The 2-week postelection window in this study should have allowed the respondents to accurately recall their decisions but do not preclude the respondent from engaging in some revisionist history responses in an attempt to affiliate with the winner. Future studies could be designed to monitor leadership evaluations at various points during the campaign, instead of just the period close to the election. This would help researchers understand how voting preferences change over the course of the campaign, possibly triggered by important revelations about the personality and leadership ability of the candidate. It would also be interesting to track leadership ratings of incumbent presidents throughout their term to assess the degree to which these ratings rise and fall in conjunction with the popularity ratings.

The fact that we studied distanced leadership rather than close leadership may also have influenced the ratings. Voters usually lack the direct knowledge needed to gauge the merits of rival candidates. Few voters know the candidates personally and may therefore rely on conjectures when making judgments about personality,

character, and performance (Simonton, 1993). However, voters are routinely called upon to elect their leader, the American president, without actually having met the candidate or having worked for him (and someday her), as is true with the vast majority of the electorate. With the 24-hour news cycle and the intensive television coverage of major events and figures, it is likely that the distinctions between close and distant leadership become blurred. Through this intensive exposure, many voters may come to feel that they “know” the candidate personally, increasing their confidence that they can judge personal qualities and leadership ability quite effectively. Television plays a major role in bringing candidates into the “living room” and this may foster perceptions of closeness and intimacy with the candidate. With respect to the type of media, 80% of our respondents indicated that they were most strongly influenced by the Internet, news, debates, convention, or the radio.

In the domain of personality research, there are several studies that support assessments of personality at a distance (Simonton, 1993). It is possible that with the extensive media attention and access to the internet, which is the hallmark of a modern presidential election, voters are able to assess candidate characteristics such as proactivity, need for achievement, and empathy based on symbolic actions and ideological identification. There may, however, be some aspects of the charismatic/transformational leadership phenomenon that are particularly susceptible to physical or social distance and others that are not affected. As stated earlier, Yagil (1998) showed that perceptions of extraordinary qualities and attributions of charisma were not affected by distance. Howell and Hall-Merenda (1999), on the other hand, found that transformational leaders produced higher follower performance in close versus distant leadership situations. Future studies should examine other factors (e.g., the role of media coverage, nationwide vs. local elections) that determine assessments of close and distant charismatic and transformational leadership in the context of elections.

We examined only a limited number of personality characteristics. We selected those personality characteristics that have been shown to be related to transformational and charismatic leadership and presidential leadership in particular. Future studies could focus on including other personality characteristics for a more thorough assessment of the relationship among personality, leadership, and voting preferences. It might also be interesting to study the specific combination of personality characteristics and situations that determine the election of one candidate over the other. The personality characteristics that are deemed critical in times of peace and prosperity may be very different from the personality characteristics deemed critical for leadership during war and recession.

As we write this limitation section, positive public opinion of George W. Bush’s presidency is approaching unprecedented levels and he is receiving high marks from the press for being a leader with a clear vision, the necessary decisiveness to wage a tough war on terrorism, and empathy for the negative consequences for some of his decisions. This public persona is in stark contrast to the characterization of Bush in the months preceding the World Trade Center bombings when his legitimacy and fitness for the position were being questioned following a very closely contested election mired by recount process fiascos.

Another limitation in this study is that our measures of personality and leadership were not obtained at different points in time and thus we could not establish causality in the modeling of the relationships. However, we can make a literature-supported argument that personality characteristics are antecedents of leadership evaluations and that trust is usually a consequence of leadership (Bass, 1998; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Judge & Bono, 2000; Judge et al., 2002; Podsakoff et al., 1990). This argument is consistent with a trait-based perspective, which suggests that an individual’s traits lead the individual to behave in a particular manner. An alternative view, consistent with a social-cognitive perspective, would suggest that perceivers use traits to evaluate targets. Lord and Maher’s (1993) work on implicit leadership theory shows that individuals match leadership traits to a leadership prototype to make inferences about leadership ability.

Transformational leadership assessments are particularly susceptible to the above effect and the implicit theory research has shown that there is a relatively high correlation between individuals’ leadership prototypes and ratings of transformational leadership. It might be plausible that inferences on candidate personality are drawn

from behaviors observed and given that most voters are not in regular contact with the candidates (especially presidential candidates), they may rely on inferences about personality traits and leadership. These inferences in turn may drive their trust in their leaders and subsequent decision to vote for them. In future studies, it may be useful to obtain personality ratings from independent sources, perhaps by using qualitative methods such as content analyses of biographies, news and magazine articles, and other sources.

The high correlations among the leadership and personality variables examined in this study suggest the need for future research that examines the extent to which certain traits that are exhibited in specific leadership behaviors are distinct. Indeed the field has shown considerable recent enthusiasm for explorations of the link between personality with transformational leadership, leadership emergence, and leadership effectiveness (Judge & Bono, 2000; Judge et al., 2002,). The personality variables included in our study, by definition, measured these leaders' personal attributes and specific sets of needs whereas leadership variables focused more on specific leader "behaviors." The use of self-reports, however, limits the conclusions that can be drawn because common method variance might influence our results.

Even so, recent work suggests that the bias caused by self-reports might be overstated (Crompton & Wagner, 1994; Spector, 1994). Still it is possible that common source or method variance produced inflated correlations. As previously indicated, the nature of our study necessitated asking respondents to report on personality and leadership variables observed.

After we had gathered our data, a study by Lindell and Whitney (2001) appeared in the literature. This study used a "marker variable" (designed into the study ahead of time) to adjust for possible same source bias. In spite of the above point concerning possible overstatement of such bias, we might well have used this marker variable approach in our work but were unaware of it. Evidence has shown that other empirical adjustments often extract meaningful variance along with that attributed to common source (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Thus, we judged such adjustments to be inappropriate. At the same time, we hoped to shed more light on the concern by using Crompton and Wagner's (1994) "domain notion." Their meta-analysis allowed for comparison of self-report versus multimethod correlations for each of 27 domains or clusters of variables (e.g., job satisfaction with organizational commitment). Unfortunately, such data were not available for the personality and leadership variables of interest in our study. Therefore, we could not get a preliminary assessment of the likelihood of the problem. Based on the above arguments, we did not attempt a statistical adjustment nor could we assess whether or not we were likely to have a problem. Future research should focus on multiple data sources to further our understanding of the relationships among variables relating to personality characteristics and leadership and at the very least when the marker variable technique should be used.

Switching now to the cross-sectional aspect of our study, Spector (1994) argues that cross-sectional questionnaires can be a useful tool in exploratory examinations of the relationships between variables and therefore is one of the major research methods used in organizational behavior. An alternative model might specify that behaviors observed by followers influence their assignment of specific personality traits to those leaders. Previous research, however, suggests that personality traits are antecedent to attributions of leadership and they are relatively stable over time (Bass, 1998). Longitudinal studies are needed to help delineate the differential impact that traits and behaviors have in predicting outcomes. Although the Deluga (1998) study on presidential proactivity and charisma was not longitudinal, he was able to show that charismatic leadership explained variance in performance outcomes over and above proactivity but the reverse was not true. We did obtain actual voting information from the same individuals a little over 2 weeks after the presidential election, thus introducing a temporal dimension to our model and analyses.

Our study did not include other possible variables that might affect voting behavior such as real GNP growth, inflation and interest rates, the role of the media, and opinions about specific issues. Noneconomic issues that the study excluded included those surrounding the preservation of peace and upholding a strong international presence. There may also be other factors that power economic change. In general, most voters are likely to be able to handle only a few predictors that they can then manipulate in an additive fashion (Simonton, 1993).

In the 2000 election, it appeared that there were not many critical issues that would prompt the voters to swing wildly from their political affiliation bases. The 2004 elections may present another set of factors altogether! The attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent war on terrorism have dramatically changed expectations and perceptions of leaders at the national and local levels (e.g., President Bush and his cabinet, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani). This is likely to be reflected in voters' decisions in future elections, at least in the near term, especially the 2004 presidential elections. Our results suggest that candidates who can display (or can persuade voters they possess) characteristics such as proactive behavior, empathy, and a high need for achievement may enhance evaluations of their leadership capabilities thereby enhancing voter trust and ultimately securing their vote.

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