

Valency Type as a Determinant of Leadership Style Preference

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ABSTRACT

Based on Wilfred Bion's theory on groups, the two studies were conducted to test the hypothesis that individual valencies (Dependency, Fight, Flight, Pairing) and Work-tendency, in Bion's definition, influences the person's preference for a given leadership style. The subjects were selected based on their valencies as measured by the Reaction to Group Situation Test (RGST), and divided in groups comprising each 4 members with different valencies (pairing, fight, flight, and dependency) and one member with cooperation tendency. In the first study, the subject. These groups experienced five different leadership styles provided by trained leaders. The behavioral content of the leadership styles (Dependency, Fight, Flight, Pairing, and Work-oriented) was designed based on Bion's work. As hypothesized, the results supported the causal relationship between individual valencies and leadership preference. That is, the subjects preferred leaders whose leadership reflects their valencies more other leaders.

The most outstanding word in the title of the present article is certainly the concept of *valency*. Its outstanding is due to the fact that it is almost unknown outside the field of psychoanalysis, its birth field. Even in psychoanalysis, as demonstrated by the small number of studies, it has not been given the attention it deserves. Therefore, it is necessary to define it, and briefly describe other concepts with which it is

closely related.

The concept of valency is the result of extensive experience with therapy groups conducted by Wilfred Bion (a psychoanalyst of the Kleinian school) at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. Based on these experiences, Bion (1968) gradually developed a complete theory in group dynamics which, like the theories of Sigmund Freud (1921) and Kurt Lewin (1947), served as a source of theoretical influence for a number of researchers (De Board, 1978). Before discussing in details the concept of valency, it is necessary to describe briefly another concept from which it can not be divided, namely, the *basic assumption* concept.

The Theory of Basic Assumptions

One of the core concepts in Bion's theory is the one of *basic assumption*. Based on his observations of groups, he argued that whenever a group is involved in its basic task, that is operating on *work group*, it is always, to some extent, prevented from performing it by certain emotional states or concerns. Held collectively by the group, these emotional states, which Bion called "basic assumptions", are nonpurposive, instinctual, and beyond conscious control. Discussing the relationship between basic assumption and work group, Bion (1968) writes that:

"Work-group activity is obstructed, diverted, and on occasion assisted, by certain other mental activities that have in common the attribute of powerful emotional drives. These activities, at first chaotic, are given a certain cohesion if it is assumed that they spring from basic assumptions common to all the group" (p.146).

Bion argued that these group basic assumptions colours,

influences, and are reflected in every aspect of the group's activity. He found that groups usually experience, and are controlled by three distinct basic assumptions when functioning emotionally. However, only one basic assumption is dominant at one time, and the group can switch from one to another basic assumption at any given time.

The first basic assumption is referred to as the *basic assumption of dependency* (baD). According to Bion (1968), when a group is functioning under the influence of this basic assumption, it behaves as if it “*is met in order to be sustained by a leader on whom it depends for nourishment, material and spiritual, and protection* (p.147). The leader is expected to be omnipotent and omniscient, able to solve any difficulty the group may be confronted with. On the contrary the group behaves *as if* its members are inadequate and immature, unable to do and learn anything without the help of the leader. Under this assumption, the group become hostile to any real and scientific method that may help the group to grow, and lead to a victory of the work group over the basic group.

Named *basic assumption of pairing* (baP), the second one refers to an emotional state under which the group behaves *as if* its members have gathered to pair off and hope to give birth to a new, and as yet unborn Messiah-leader that will deliver the group from its fears and anxiety. The Messiah-leader is not necessary a person, it can be a plan, an idea, a new technology, or even the next season. The group activity is centered around this hope, and its maintenance as a hope, that is preventing it from being realized, owing to the conscious or unconscious fear that the hoped-Messiah or ideal will fail in its deliverance mission. For, as put by Bion (1968), “*only by remaining a hope does hope exist*

" (p.151).

The third basic assumption which can be held by the group is the one of *fight/glight* (baF). This basic assumption consists in behaving as if "*the group has met to fight something or to run away from it. It is prepared to do either indifferently*" (Bion, 1968: p.152). For, as discussed by Bion, fight and flight are the only two methods of self-preservation the group knows. When operating on this assumption, the group is characterized by what Anzieu (1984) called "*illusion groupal*", and comes very close to a group displaying what Janis (1972) called *groupthink*. This basic assumption has for direct consequence wasting energy in fighting or fleeing from fantastic enemies, without testing reality, and by keeping it at bay. For taking count of reality would lead the group to the frightening discovery that the real threatening enemy is within and not outside the group (De Board, 1978).

As discussed by Bion, all these basic assumptions share the characteristics of being defense mechanisms against the fears and anxieties the group experience arouses. Bion argues that these fears and anxieties have for prototype the fear and anxiety experienced by the child in its relationship with its early part-object (the breast) as described by Melanie Klein (1946, 1959). Based on his experience with groups, Bion was convinced that the phenomena described by Klein as characteristic of the two positions (paranoid--schizoid, and depressive) can be observed also within the group, and that the study of group would not advance without the help of some of the Kleinian concepts.

As can be noticed, Bion's theory shares with Bales (1950)'s work the distinction between the basic task (work group) and social emotion (basic assumption). However, they differ sharply in the fact

that Bion, unlike Bales, sees these two group aspects as “independent, crossed dimensions” (McGrath, 1984,p.155).

The Concept of Valency

Discussing the relationship between the group basic assumption and the role played by each group member, Bion (1968) argued that participating in a basic assumption “*requires no training, experience, or mental development*” (p.153). All what a member needs to participate in the group basic assumption is having the *valeny* corresponding to the basic assumption which dominates the group activity at a certain period of its history. Initially a word borrowed from physics, valency is used by Bion (1968) as expressing “*a capacity for instantaneous involuntary combination of one individual with another for sharing and acting on a basic assumption*” (p.153). The word “combination” does not mean here that members consciously co-operate with each other, but implies rather that members unconsciously aim at the same emotional goals (dependency, fight/flight, or pairing). According to Bion, “*A group acting on basic assumption would need neither organization nor a capacity for co-operation*” (p.170). He considers *co-operation* as the counterpart of valency in the work group.

Moreover, valency can be defined in terms of nature and degree. That is, each person has a valency of a given nature or kind (dependency valency, fight/flight valency, or a pairing valency). As put by Bion (1968), a person “*can have...no valency only by ceasing to be, as far as mental function is concerned, human*” (p.116). There are individual differences in terms of the valency degree; depending on his/her capacity for combination, a person can have a *high* or *low* valency. A person with a relatively low valency will be considered here as work-

oriented, or “co-operative”.

The psychological and behavioral content of a given valency is similar to the content of its corresponding basic assumption. That is, a dependency valency is characterized by a tendency to rely on others (group members, leader, etc.). The Fight/flight valency includes fighting with others, drawing others (especially the leader) into fights, direct and indirect hostility, criticism, boredom, avoidance of conflict, and withdrawal from the group activity (Hafsi, 1997). The most frequent expressions of pairing valency is a tendency of inviting and appealing, and the same time conveying and encouraging intimate and friendly interactions. The expression of pairing is a strong hope for a better group life, a strong expectation, and rather a futuristic and idyllic look at the here-and-now.

It should be noted that the author, based on the empirical work of Stok and Thelen (1958), prefers to divide the Fight/flight valency into Fight valency, and Flight valency, and deals with them separately (Hafsi, 1997). For, although they are triggered by the same stimulus, that is, the fear of a fantastic enemy, they operate two different kinds of defence methods.

The results of research in group dynamics have taught us the fact that the group is not merely the sum of its members, but they did not shed light on how the passage from the individual to group takes place. In other words, these results can not tell us how a given member comes to combine with other members to constitute a group with its mind and culture. This lack of information concerning the individual-group relationship constituted a kind of “missing link” which Bion’s concept of valency has helped us to restore.

Basic Assumption, Valency, and Leadership

The phenomenon of leadership plays an important role in all the basic assumptions, even in the baP where the leader is unborn and hoped-for, and is not necessary a person (according to Bion, 1968, "*it may be identified with an idea or an inanimate object*", p.155). When it happens that a primitive or *quasi* leadership exists, the leader is expected to have a partial and not a global vision of the group, if it is to continue to exist. Having a partial vision means perceiving the group as a gathering of independent members. This quasi leadership, which encourages intimacy, interacts with each group member but not with the whole group; he/she may be the leader for each individual member but not for the whole group. For the real leader in a group operating under baP is unborn, and should remain as such, that is, a hoped-for-leader. If the leader is born, the group loses hope, because this leader "*will inevitably fail to deliver the group from their fears*" (De Board, 1987; p.40) which are inherent in the group itself.

Leadership in a group dominated by baD is attributed with omnipotence and omniscience. The group behaves *as if* it is ignorant of anything and immature, unable to contribute anything, and, on the contrary, *as if* the leader has infinite power and knowledge. The example, given by Bion (1968), of an intelligent group member can be very illustrative. Asked why he did not contribute to the group discussion, this member said: "*I do not need to talk because I know that I only have to come here long enough and all my questions will be answered without my having to do anything.*" (p.147). Besides the leader, the group may resort also to the deification of some objects, ideals, norms, rules, gathering them, sometimes, in a form of bible.

The presence of leadership is more indispensable in a group operating under baF than under any other basic assumption, because of the importance of action for the group auto-preservation. The leader is expected to lead the group in its battle with and flight from their fantastic enemies. The Fight/flight leadership which values courage and promotes self-sacrifice among followers is based on paranoia and action.

The common characteristic of all these three types of leadership styles is the fact that they all are the creation of the group, and serve the group in its defence against coming into contact with reality, the dreadful reality of the group experience. Therefore, the basic assumption group, in contrast to work group, hinders the group development process and prevents the group from performing constructive work.

As discussed above, valency is "*the individual's readiness to enter into combination with the group in making and acting on the basic assumptions*" (Bion, 1968; p.116). Based on this definition, and the above briefly described Bion's theory of basic assumptions and leadership, the author developed a general hypothesis that the preference for a given leadership style is the result of the person's valency. To put it concretely, it was hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: A subject with a dependency valency (Dv) would prefer best a leadership style that encourages dependency on the leader.

Hypothesis 2: A subject having a fight valency (Fv) would prefer best a leadership style that encourages action, submission, competition, and displays aggressive behavior.

Hypothesis 3: A subject displaying a flight valency (Fv) would

prefer best a leadership style that encourages withdrawal from the task by engaging in non-task activity (joking, chatting, etc.).

Hypothesis 4: A subject characterized by a pairing valency (Pv) would prefer best a leadership style that encourages interpersonal communication and interaction, values individual opinions and ideas, and put more emphasis on pre-task activity (planning, thinking about methods, etc.) than on the task itself.

Hypothesis 5: A subject characterized by work or cooperation tendency (Ct) would prefer best a task-oriented and reality-based leadership style.

To test these hypotheses, the author conducted two studies, a survey and an experimental study, following the methodology described below.

STUDY 1

The first study is a survey which was conducted to investigate the relationship between the subject's valency and the kind of leadership behavior he would value or expect from the leader when the group is facing an emergency situation, or an accident situation.

METHOD

Subjects:

One hundred and thirty-four male undergraduate students served as subjects in the present study as a partial fulfillment of the requirements of an introductory course on clinical psychology.

Test materials:

RGST-Nu: In order to determine each subject's valency and cooperation tendency, a revised version of the Reaction to Group

Situation Test (RGST), initially developed by Stock and Thelen (1958), was used. The revised version (RGST-Nu) of the test consists of 28 items which present the subject with a particular emotional (Dependency, Fight, Flight, Pairing), and work stimulus-situation (Hafsi, 1997). Here is an example of these stimuli-situation: Item 12 (fight stimulus): “*When the group disparaged his idea, Taro...*” . The subject is instructed to fill the blank and complete the sentence. The subject's response is then scored according to a scoring manual developed by one of the authors (for more details, see Hafsi, 1997). The subject's valency or cooperation is determined based on the results of this test.

Leadership Preference Scale (LPS): The LPS was developed to determine the type of leadership the subject would prefer in a problematic situation. It was designed so that the subject is asked to evaluate on a 5-point scale five possible leadership styles (dependency, fight, pairing, flight and work) displayed as a response to the situation in question. The problematic situation here describes a factory which, as a result of an accident, suddenly stopped operating. The five leadership styles displayed as a reaction to this situation were described as follows:

1. **Dependency leadership**: The leader said to his subordinates “you don't need to do anything just leave it to me”, and started to think about the cause of the trouble.

2. **Fight leadership**: The leader summoned the subordinate who caused the trouble, asked him about the cause of the trouble, suggesting that he should take responsibility for the trouble.

3. **Pairing leadership**: The leader asked some subordinates to think about a “good” method so that the same trouble will not occur

again.

4. **Flight leadership:** The leader invited the subordinates to take a break and relax.

5. **Work-oriented leadership:** The leader tried to find out the cause of the trouble, and asked the subordinates to continue doing their work.

Procedure:

The subjects were administered the RGST-Nu and the LPS collectively at the end of a class. The experimenter read the stimuli-situations (items) one-by-one, allowing an interval of 20 seconds between two stimuli. The subjects were instructed to fill the blank, writing down the response as soon as possible, after the experimenter has finished reading the item. Moreover, the subjects were also asked to write the response in a free-association way, without thinking deeply about what they should write. The test lasted 25 minutes.

RESULTS

To test the hypothesis of the present study, which predict a relationship between the subject's valency type and the leadership style of his preference, ANOVA was performed. The results revealed highly significant differences between the different valency types regarding leadership type preference. That is, as indicated in Table 1, subjects tended to prefer the leadership style which reflects their valency type. To put it concretely, it was found that subjects with dependency significantly preferred more dependency leadership than other leadership styles ($F [4,134] = 71.90, p < .0001$). The same significant difference was found in the case of the subjects with flight valency. The latter subjects were

found to prefer fight leadership more than the other leadership styles ($F [4,134] = 15.30, p < .0001$). Similarly, the subjects classified as having a pairing valency showed more preference for pairing leadership than for other leadership styles ($F [4,134] = 44.10, p < .0001$). The same preference tendency was displayed also by the subjects characterized by flight valency. That is, the latter subjects valued flight leadership more than the other leadership types ($F [4,134] = 24.02, p < .0001$). Finally, the subjects displaying a work tendency showed significantly more preference for the work oriented leadership style ($F [4,134] = 35.02, p < .0001$).

Hence, the results revealed that, as hypothesized, the subject's valency is a determinant factor of his preference for a specific leadership style. In other words, the subject tends to value higher the leadership style which promotes the behavioral and emotional content of his valency. For instance, as described above, the behavioral and emotional content of dependency valency is characterized by the tendency to depend on the leader and other group members; therefore, the person displaying this kind of valency tends, as demonstrated by the results, to show preference for the dependency leadership.

However, although the results of the first study seem to be convincing, what they demonstrate precisely is only the fact that the subjects valued highly the leadership style at the attitudinal level, for they were not really operating under the leadership style they valued. In other words, even if a subject values, or displays a positive attitude towards a given leadership style, this does not necessary mean that he will value it in the same way when exposed or subjected to this leadership. Most of the leadership studies (see, Bass, 1981) which use questionnaire

Table 1. Relationship Between Valency and Attitudinal Preference of Leadership Style

Leadership Style	Valency Type				
	Pairing	Fight	Dependency	Flight	Cooperation
Dependency	3.1 (.89)	4.6 (.49)	1.7 (.59)	4.0 (.89)	3.7 * (.75)
Pairing	1.3 (.46)	3.8 (.73)	2.9 (.94)	3.6 (.81)	2.7 * (.92)
Fight	3.4 (1.35)	1.4 (.95)	3.1 (1.42)	3.1 (1.32)	2.4 * (.89)
Flight	3.8 (.86)	2.6 (1.06)	2.7 (1.01)	1.1 (.40)	4.0 * (.69)
Work	3.8 (.86)	2.2 (.89)	2.1 (.61)	3.1 (2.04)	1.3 * (.69)

Note: Values represent means (of each pair of subjects with the same valency) and standard deviations (in parentheses).

* $p < .0001$

methods do not make a difference between these two conditions (exposed vs unexposed) when studying attitude towards leadership.

Therefore, for a complete test of the above discussed hypotheses, it is necessary to conduct a study designed so that the subjects will be exposed to the different leadership styles. That is the reason why the second study described below was conducted.

STUDY 2

The present is an experimental study which was conducted to further test the hypotheses concerning the relationship between valency and leadership preference developed in the first study.

METHOD

Subjects:

A total number of 50 male undergraduate students in clinical psychology participated in the experiment as a partial fulfillment of course requirements. The subjects were divided into 10 groups, so that each group has 4 members with different valencies (Dv, Fv, Flv, and Pv), and one member characterized by cooperation tendency (Ct). Five male assistants provided the groups with leadership; each assistant was trained in one leadership style, namely, Dependency, Fight, Flight, Pairing, and Work-oriented leadership styles.

The experiment was designed so that two groups (six pairs: Dv pair, Fv pair, Flv pair, Pv pair, and Ct pair) experience the same leadership style, and the experiment was conducted one group at one time. The behavioral content of each leadership was as follows:

Dependency: The leader encourages dependency by doing most of the work alone, making the group members feeling that they do not need to do anything, because the leader will do all the work instead of them and better than them. The communication flow is unilateral; it flows only from the leader to the group, and not vice-versa. The leader's attitude towards the group is that of a teacher towards passive pupils. This attitude is often expressed in terms of *"leave it to me, the task should be done this way, listen to me I'll teach you how to..."*, and so on.

Fight: The leader discourages any individual idea and opinion that runs counter to the idea or the opinion held by the leader and (obviously) the group. The leader does not interact with individuals, but with the whole group when giving instructions. He does not tolerate and criticizes openly the group members in case of non-participation or loafing.

creating scapegoats (Hafsi & Nishimura, 1996). Consequently, an important part of the time (normally devoted to the task) is used to criticize silent subjects (those who do not contribute "sufficiently" to the group task) and any aspect of the experiment (including the experiment method, the instructions, the experimental room, and the staff, namely, the experimenter and the assistant).

Flight: As mentioned above, flight leadership is basically not different from fight in terms of group aim. In both cases, the leadership aims at 1) diverting the group's attention from the group itself and the task, and 2) creating (in- or out-group) enemies and scapegoats. However, their differences resides in the method used to reach this aim. What characterizes behaviorally the flight leadership is avoidance of 1) conflicts by reducing to a strict minimum interpersonal communication and expression of individual ideas and opinions that may lead to conflicts; 2) avoidance of the task by resorting often to jokes, intellectual speculations, and spending time in matters unrelated to the task (news, leader's hobby and personal matters, etc.).

Pairing: Unlike the fight and flight leadership, pairing leadership encourages interpersonal communication and intimacy. Relatively non-directive, the pairing leader puts more emphasis on searching for the "best" method (the hope-for-method) to perform successfully the task than on the task itself. Most of the time is thus spent by the leader in proposing, criticizing, and rejecting methods.

Work-oriented: The work-oriented leader promotes the use of reality-based (scientific) methods to perform the task. Constructive ideas and opinion which do not obstruct the task process are welcomed and encouraged. Unlike the basic assumption leaders, the work-oriented leader

values time; he manages so that the task is performed in the scheduled time.

Test materials:

Before dividing the subjects into groups, it was necessary to determine each subject's valency and cooperation. Like in the first study, his task was conducted using a revised version of the Reaction to Group Situation Test (or RGST-Nu developed by Hafsi, 1997).

Procedure:

One week before the experiment, 141 students were administered the RGST-Nu Collectively at the end of a class, following the procedure used in the first study (Study 1). However, owing to a relatively irregular distribution in terms of valencies, only the 50 subjects described above were selected to participate in the experiment.

As mentioned above, the subjects were divided in 5-member groups based on the results of RGST-Nu, and the thus selected groups were asked to participate in the experience. When the group came at the indicated time, the experiment assistant led them in the experiment room where the leader was waiting. They were asked to sit down around a table, and wait for the instructions which were transmitted to them by the experimenter through an interphone.

Self-introduction: As they were not familiar to each other, first, they were instructed to introduce themselves to each other in not more than three minutes. The purpose here is to allow the leader to express himself (following a scenario) and let the subjects have an idea of the kind of leadership that can be expected.

Task: After the subjects have introduced themselves, the group was instructed to start performing the task, following the leader's instructions. The content and the way leader gives the instructions depends on the leadership the leader was trained in. The task consisted in writing a story based on one of the plates from the Japanese version of the Thematic Aperception Test (TAT). The group were given the TAT plate and asked to write an original story in 30 minutes. After completing the task, the leader left the room, and the other group members were asked to fill in a questionnaire.

Questionnaire: The questionnaire comprised two different 5-point subscales, with point-1 designating the strongest agreement, and point-5 the strongest disagreement with each item. The first subscale (8 items) was used to measure the subject's preference for the leadership style he experienced. The second subscale (11 items) was designed to measure the subjects cognition of the leadership style. It was necessary to examine whether the subjects' perception of the leadership --under which they were functioning--corresponded really to the leadership the leader was trained in and was supposed to provide the group with. Therefore, the subjects were asked to evaluate the leadership style (to which they were subjected) on five leadership behaviors, namely, pairing, fight, dependency, flight, and work. When the subjects have completed the questionnaires, the experimenter explained to the subjects the main aspects of the experiment, thanked them, and promised them a feedback of the results during the class.

RESULTS

Before analyzing the relationship between valency and leadership, an analysis of the subjects' perception of the experimental

Table 2. Comparison of Leadership Style on Each Leadership Behavior

Leadership Style	Leadership Behavior				
	Pairing	Fight	Dependency	Flight	Work
Pairing	1.8 (.52)	3.9 (.56)	3.7 (.52)	4.2 (.58)	3.8 * (.85)
Fight	3.9 (.61)	1.8 (.42)	3.9 (.66)	3.1 (.76)	3.5 * (.47)
Dependency	3.8 (.52)	4.0 (.56)	2.5 (.52)	4.2 (.58)	3.5 * (.85)
Flight	3.8 (.54)	4.3 (.54)	3.9 (.49)	1.6 (.43)	4.1 * (.65)
Work	3.8 (.42)	3.6 (.36)	3.7 (.67)	3.7 (.94)	1.7 * (.81)

Note: Values represent means of the pair of subjects with the same valency and standard deviations (in parentheses).

* $p < .0001$

leadership conditions was conducted. The aim of this analysis was to find out whether or not these leadership conditions were sufficiently and correctly perceived by the subjects. In other words, it was necessary to determine if, for instance, the dependent leadership was really perceived by the subjects experiencing it as arousing and promoting dependency during the experiment. All the five experimental leadership conditions were thus tested for consistency in this fashion.

As indicated in Table 2, the results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) demonstrated that the subjects have correctly identified each leadership style. As described above, the subjects evaluated each

Table 3. Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Valencies and Preference of Leadership Style

Valency Type	Leadership Style				
	Pairing	Fight	Dependency	Flight	Work
Pairing	.48 ***				
Fight		.30 ***			
Dependency			.76 ***		
Flight				.21 *	
Cooperation					.30 **

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .001$; *** $p < .0001$

leadership style on five leadership behaviors, namely, pairing, fight, dependency, flight, and work. The results revealed the same tendency for each leadership style. That is, the subjects evaluated their leader on the behavior corresponding to his leadership higher than on the other four behaviors. To put it concretely, the evaluation of the pairing leadership was significantly higher on the pairing behavior than on the other behaviors ($F(4,49) = 22.2, p < .0001$). In the case of fight leadership, the difference between the evaluation on fight behavior and other behavior was similarly highly significant ($F(4,49) = 22.7, p < .0001$). The same highly significant difference ($F(4,49) = 8.4, p < .0001$) was found between the evaluation of the dependency leadership on dependency behavior and other behaviors. Similarly, the flight leadership was perceived as displaying significantly more flight behavior than other behaviors ($F(4,49) = 42.8, p < .0001$). The work-oriented leadership was also evaluated higher on work behavior than on other behaviors ($F(4,49) = 17.8, p < .0001$). Based on these findings, we can thus conclude that the

Table 4. Relationship Between Valency and Preference of Leadership Style

Leadership Style	Valency Type				
	Pairing	Fight	Dependency	Flight	Cooperation
Pairing	1.8 (.90)	4.2 (.50)	3.4 (.70)	3.6 (.50)	4.1 * (.60)
Fight	3.7 (.45)	1.7 (.20)	4.1 (.20)	3.4 (.20)	3.3 ** (.40)
Dependency	3.1 (.20)	4.4 (.30)	1.9 (.10)	4.6 (.20)	4.4 *** (.40)
Flight	3.7 (.50)	3.1 (.60)	3.7 (.10)	1.8 (.10)	4.7 ** (.20)
Work	3.4 (.60)	2.6 (.10)	4.1 (.30)	4.4 (.10)	1.6 ** (.40)

Note: Values represent means (of each pair of subjects with the same valency) and standard deviations (in parentheses).

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

the five leadership conditions were adequately perceived by the subjects, by evaluating highly each leadership on its corresponding behavior.

To test the hypotheses developed in the present study, the correlation between the subject's valency and his leadership preference was first analyzed. As indicated by the correlations (Pearson correlations) matrix in Table 3, there were significant positive correlations between the valency type and leadership preference. That is, the pairing valency was found to be significantly correlated with pairing leadership preference ($r = .48, p < .0001$), fight valency with fight leadership preference ($r = .30, p < .0001$), dependency valency with dependency leadership

preference ($r = .76, p < .0001$), flight valency with flight leadership ($r = .21, p < .05$), and cooperation tendency (cooperation) with work-oriented leadership preference ($r = .30, p < .001$).

This finding motivated further investigation of the relationship between valency type and leadership preference. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) with valency type and leadership preference (preference for pairing, fight, dependency, flight, and work-oriented) was also conducted. As indicated in Table 4, the results supported all the 5 hypotheses developed in the present study. That is, as hypothesized, subjects with Pv tended to prefer best the pairing leadership more than subjects with other valencies ($F(4,9) = 4.39, p < .06$); subjects with Fv displayed preference for fight leadership more than other subjects ($F(4,9) = 29.9, p < .001$); subjects with Dv preferred dependency leadership ($F(4,9) = 51.6, p < .001$); subjects with Flv showed preference for flight leadership ($F(4,9) = 16.9, p < .01$), and those with Ct (cooperation) for work-oriented leadership ($F(4,9) = 19.9, p < .01$).

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Hence, as suggested by the findings of the present study, there is a close relationship between the person's valency (in Bion's terms) and his/her leadership preference. In other words, valency influences or determines the person's preference for a given leadership style.

This finding has several implications for the study and understanding the effectiveness of leadership, and the leader-follower relationship. However, the most important implication concerns the contingent (Fiedler, 1967) and relative aspect of the leadership phenomenon. In spite of the relatively limited number of data, the results suggest that, unlike what most of leadership theories (see Bass, 1981) argue, leadership is the result of the group's culture and, to be more specific, the basic assumption under which the group is operating, and, as a matter of fact, the members' valencies. Addressing this topic, Rice (1965) writes that *"If the appropriate assumption is dependent, the leader has to be dependable but realistic; if pairing, potent, but with due regard to the limitations of his potency; if fight, constructively aggressive, brave but not foolhardy; if flight, able to extricate the group from a difficult situation, but not coward; nor must he expect to be able to solve all the group's problems in the process of extrication."* (p.27).

Based on Bion's psychoanalytical experience with groups, the present study constitutes one of the attempts the author (Hafsi, 1996; 997) has been making to submit psychoanalytical hypothesis to laboratory testing. For the author shares with many psychoanalysts and psychoanalytically-oriented researchers (e.g., Silverman, 1975; Masling & Schwartz, 1979; Greene & Rosenkrantz, 1986) the belief that without

laboratory or empirical testing in general, no real and significant (theoretical and methodological) progress is possible in psychoanalytic group psychology. Lastly, the author hopes that the findings of the present study will stimulate further research to test Bion's original and creative hypotheses concerning groups.

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